



THE MOUNTBATTEN SCHOOL

HMC/SCG

September 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

We would like to congratulate Year 8 on a really great start to the new term.

We know that there is always a lot of information when you start a new school year. To make things easier for you, we have streamlined communication to reduce email traffic as we know that this can be overwhelming and emails can all too easily get lost in inboxes.

The rest of this letter provides important information from other areas of the school – you may want to save it somewhere safe for future reference.

Our new school website will be launched later this term. We shall also be sending out a weekly newsletter; this is currently in the final stages of development and we hope will further improve communication between school and home.

Don't forget to follow our school social media accounts on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). Instagram has additional content, letting you see the daily life of Mountbatten through the 'stories' feature. You can see the best of these in our 'highlights'.

Why not make a cup of tea, settle into the sofa and peruse the latest updates from around the school.

Yours sincerely

Heather McIlroy
Executive Headteacher

Whitenap Lane Romsey Hampshire SO51 5SY
t: 01794 502 502 f: 01794 502 501 e: info@mountbatten.hants.sch.uk
w: www.mountbatten.hants.sch.uk Company No. 07560175

Head of Year Message

I was so impressed with the hard work, resilience and determination shown by Year 8 students during their first year at Mountbatten. I was absolutely delighted to see that they were able to finish on a high and exceed their target of achieving 65,000 achievement points by the end of the academic year. This is a mammoth feat and of course now provides students the challenge of beating last year's total! I am very excited to support them along this journey - I have no doubt that they will rise to the challenge.

After a far from normal first year at Mountbatten, Year 8 has never been more important. Our theme for the year will be around making the most of all opportunities available in and outside of school. I know that we have a hugely talented year group and so it will be fantastic to finally see these talents being fully explored this year. Taking an active role in the wider school life of Mountbatten, including joining extra-curricular clubs, will ensure we continue to demonstrate and develop the key behaviours of our 3D curriculum.

I would like to wish all Year 8 students a happy, healthy and successful second year here at The Mountbatten School.

Mr Waters
Head of Year 8

Key Dates:

Wednesday 22 September - *INSET day*

Friday 26 November – *INSET day*

Monday 28 February – *INSET day*

Thursday 10 March - *Year 8 Mini Options Evening*

Thursday 24 March - *Year 8 Parents' Evening*

Monday 20 June – *INSET day*

Autumn Term

Half Term 25 October – 29 October

Term Ends Friday 17 December

Spring Term

Term Starts Tuesday 4 January

Half Term 21 February – 25 February

Term Ends Friday 8 April

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Summer Term

Term Starts: Monday 25 April
Half Term: 30 May – 3 June
Term Ends: Tuesday 19 July

English

Our Lower School curriculum has been carefully crafted to help students develop their love of literature and prepare them for the work required in the years ahead – the texts studied in Year 8 never fail to inspire students to enjoy reading and encounter new ideas. The Year 8 texts are linked through the theme of response and rebellion. Students begin by studying the classic Victorian text A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens. Students are given numerous opportunities to read non-fiction texts, to write creatively and to write extended pieces in an academic style.

Year 8s are taught in the same groups for English and Humanities. All students are set weekly homework. Every week, students are set 10 vocabulary words to learn. Students are expected to learn the meaning of these words using the website Quizlet. Every week, their teacher will post a link to these words via Google Classroom. Quizlet allows students to use a variety of techniques to learn their meaning; these will be tested in class every week. Students should also attempt to learn the correct spelling of the word but teachers will always focus on testing the meaning. We encourage students to create a Quizlet account using their school email address. This allows their teachers to see what revision has been done as homework and can support students who find learning new words difficult to demonstrate their efforts. One other homework related to the curriculum will be set every fortnight.

Maths

Year 8 will be taught in sets. They will receive weekly online homework set on the 'HegartyMaths' platform instead of the standardised skills format that was used in Year 7. Details of each week's homework will be explained verbally in class and shared on Google Classroom.

Science

An overview of Science in Year 8, including how we set homework, what is expected of your child and how they can maximise progress.

Useful links:

[Click here to access the year 8 student website](#). Your child can access this website from the student portal and can find a range of information, such as topics they will study this year, homework timetable, BBC bitesize and Quizlet links to help with revision and details about exams. It allows access to all of the resources used in lessons, including presentations for every lesson and worksheets. Therefore, if your child happens to miss a lesson due to absence, they can use this website to catch up on missed work.

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[Click here to access Science information for parents' website](#). You can also access this website from the parent portal and it contains curriculum information, homework timetables, exam information and guidance on helping students to develop good study habits. We hope you find this useful.

At the start of every topic your child will receive a 'knowledge organiser' to stick into their book. This is an A4 sheet containing the minimum knowledge required to access the topic. An example can be found at [this link](#) and all knowledge organisers are available on the student website. Throughout the year, your child may be set homework to learn a knowledge organiser in preparation for the topic ahead. Research shows that this is an effective way of improving progress. Your child's class teacher will explain how to do this.

Students are expected to spend 40-60 minutes each week completing science homework. This will consist of tasks set to support work completed in class and a weekly online multiple choice quiz set according to [this timetable](#). These quizzes are intended to help embed the key ideas taught in lessons and are intended to be completed with students using their notes and the knowledge organiser for the topic. The pass mark is therefore 90%. Students are expected to make as many attempts as necessary to reach the pass mark. They are strongly advised to use the feedback provided once the test is submitted to copy correct answers into their next attempt allowing them to concentrate on correcting any questions where they have made errors.

If your child achieves 100% in all quizzes throughout the year, they will become part of the '100 club' as recognition of their resilience and hard work.

If you would like additional information please contact your child's Science teacher.

Music

The benefits of learning a musical instrument are well documented, and include improved academic attainment, social mobility and a sense of wellbeing. For this reason, in an ideal world, Mountbatten School would like every child to be learning an instrument. It is not too late to request music tuition for your son or daughter!

The Music Department offers lessons on a wide variety of instruments and voice. We have some instruments which are available to hire.

The lessons cost £95 per term (£120 for individual piano lessons). Students eligible for Pupil Premium funding pay half this amount. If you have signed up for music lessons, they should be paid as per the details on your contract via your SCOPAY account.

Please contact the Music Department for more information clare.loadman@mountbatten.hants.sch.uk or complete a Music Tuition Contract [form](#).

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History

This term, students will be exploring the African Kingdom of Benin before learning about the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. They will then study the impact of the Industrial Revolution and the British Empire in the 18th and 19th centuries.

All homework and resources will be available on Google Classroom.

All Year 8 students are welcome to attend The History Club which will run one afternoon break each week. Please ask your History teacher for more details.

Religious Education (RE)

We are really looking forward to our year ahead, and hope your child comes home with the many questions we have been exploring in lessons.

Each week the students will be set a homework task, this will be in Google Classroom in addition to the students writing it in their planners. Each homework should take 30 minutes and no more, if it is taking more or less time please let the class teacher know so that the homework can be adjusted.

Geography

In Geography we aim to foster passion, curiosity and intrigue for the natural and man-made world whilst developing critical and sustainable thinking among our students.

During the first term of Year 8, students will evaluate how likely Romsey is to flood in the future. This includes a fieldwork trip to our local river to collect data as part of their investigation - we would highly advise bringing your wellington boots if you have them as there may be an opportunity to get into the river!

We encourage our students to engage with Geography in the news as this will closely link with what we study in class and will deepen their geographical understanding. All lesson and homework resources are available on Google Classroom.

Physical Education (PE)

Year 8 are taught in sets and will follow a curriculum specific for their set. During the academic year students will take part in six sports one per half term.

At the end of each unit of work students will complete a practical assessment.

Our extra-curricular programme offers students the opportunity to take part in a raft of sports.

We strongly encourage students to get involved in a club to engage them physically, socially and mentally. You can find what sports we have on offer through our PE [website](#).

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The majority of the clubs are free to access and students will receive tuition from an experienced staff body and external coaches.

Design and Technology (D&T)

In recent years we have asked parents to support the work we do by making a voluntary financial contribution towards the costs of the students' project work (Graphics, Resistant Materials and Textiles). This enables students to keep the project work they make when it is finished. It also lets them embark on some costly project work that normally would not be possible.

We are very grateful for the continued support of parents at The Mountbatten School and would like to ask for parental support again this year. Please could we ask that you make a voluntary contribution of £15.00 in support of your child's work. We cannot stress enough that this support is greatly appreciated and does make a big difference to what we can offer to your child in terms of their Design and Technology experience. If you are unable to pay the full amount, then any payment will be greatly received.

To maximise your donation, we are going to be claiming gift aid. In doing so the school will benefit from additional income. You can make your donation via your SCOPAY account by clicking on 'Design & Tech Contribution 21/22'. And if you are happy for us to claim the gift aid on your donation please click the link here and complete the google [form](#).

Food Technology

Students studying Food Technology will be required to bring ingredients to their practical lessons. Teachers will inform students about what is needed one week in advance. This will form one part of their Design and Technology rotation. We ask that ingredients are weighed out at home and are brought to school in suitably sized containers for storage. Please could you also ensure that your child is provided with an empty container to take their cooked food home in and that this is clearly labelled with their full name and tutor group.

We would also like to take this opportunity to remind parents/carers and students that our Food Technology classrooms are 'nut free', so please ensure that no nut products are sent in with ingredients.

Modern Foreign Languages (MFL)

Our Lower School schemes of work have been written with the view of developing our students' communication skills, encourage collaborative work and collaborative thinking, problem solving and resilience and build in curiosity for the wider world.

Year 8 language learners will learn how to manipulate and use essential grammar skills that are the foundation of the language. They also learn about cultural differences by learning about French and Spanish speaking cities/countries. Students watch authentic videos and read authentic texts about the

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lifestyle of people in different countries around the world thus developing their curiosity about different cultures.

In Year 8 students will be expected to complete 2 homework tasks lasting 30 minutes each week. One will be vocabulary learning from the latest vocabulary list in their blue exercise book. The vocabulary homework each week will be tested in class to check learning. The second piece of homework will be a practice task usually set on Google Classroom with all the resources required.

Updates from around the school

The Library

It is fantastic to welcome everyone back to the Library and meet all our new Year 7 students. We are open before tutor time, at morning and afternoon breaks for students to browse and change books. Every student can borrow 3 books for 3 weeks. We are passionate about loaning out our wide selection of vibrant books to our school community. Equally, we need students to develop good habits of personal responsibility and return or renew their library books on time, thus ensuring that a comprehensive range is available for all our students to choose from.

epraise

Last year, we introduced a new system called 'epraise' in our school. This software is designed to improve student engagement and motivation and to support parental involvement. It's proved really popular with teachers, parents/carers and students alike.

We would like to remind parents/carers that you too can have an epraise account to access information about your child. There is a great app so that you can receive notifications when they receive an epraise point, demerit or detention on your phone.

Please use the email address you have given us to set up an account. Hopefully you will find this process straight forward and easy. Please see our [FAQ guide](#) if you do experience any problems. There is also a parent guide to epraise [here](#) and a useful video about how to get started with epraise [here](#).

Finance

A link to SCOPAY can be found on the school website.

Please contact finance@mountbatten.hants.sch.uk with any problems or queries. You need to make sure that you only buy the items you need, there will be items available to purchase that may not be relevant to your child.

Calculators and filled pencil cases are available to purchase via SCOPAY for all students at all times. We will endeavour to deliver the purchases to your child within the week, but this may at times take longer.

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If you wish to change the daily limit of spending on your child's cashless catering account, you should write a note in their planner for your child to show the catering team.

IT Services

We would like to share a '[Parent Guide to Google Classroom](#)'. Google Classroom is an online platform that we use to set homework and will be used weekly by all staff and students. As a guardian, you can get email summaries about your student's activity in Classroom.

SIMS Parent is a system to view detailed information about your child(ren). We have shared a '[Parent Guide to SIMS Parent](#)' which goes into detail about setting up an account. IT Services will send an invitation email to create an account on Monday.

Lockers

We have a limited number of lockers available for students. These are prioritised for GCSE PE students. If you would like to arrange a locker for your child, please contact attendance@mountbatten.hants.sch.uk.

Support with online homework

As you will know, school homework is increasingly set online. This has presented problems for some households, especially over the lockdown periods, but also during 'normal' times. We want to make sure that none of our students are disadvantaged by this and that we are doing our best to support households where it is needed. We have written a short questionnaire to ask parents/carers to tell us about the IT equipment their child is able to use at home and the quality of their Internet access.

We would really appreciate you completing this [linked questionnaire](#) to help us get an idea of any problems there are and what action might be needed. All responses will be treated in strict confidence and not shared with anybody outside of our school.

This questionnaire is very similar to the one we sent out in the last summer term. Please only complete it if you have not completed a questionnaire like this before, or your circumstances have changed since then.

Lateral Flow Tests

The Department for Education has issued guidance stating that home testing should continue. Tutors have distributed a new home test kit. We are asking that all students complete a lateral flow test every Wednesday and Sunday evening. Please report your result to [NHS Test and Trace](#) and the school's [Google Form](#). Following a positive LFD test at home, a confirmatory PCR test should be booked online and the student should self-isolate while awaiting the result.

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Transport

Bluestar have informed us that they have been keeping a close eye on the 654 and it is still struggling with traffic on Winchester Road. Therefore they are going to retime the morning 654 journey to start 5 minutes earlier from this **Monday 13 September 2021**. A revised timetable can be found [here](#).

To confirm:

- the 504 will be unchanged;
- the morning 654 will leave Chilworth 5 minutes earlier;
- the afternoon 654 will be unchanged.

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