



THE MOUNTBATTEN SCHOOL

HMC/SCG

September 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

We would like to congratulate Year 10 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

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Head of Year Message

The next five terms culminating in the GCSE exams are a very busy and important period in a student's school career. There is coursework, homework, revision, tests and exams. It can be a difficult and stressful time for both your child and yourself with concerns about progress, whether they will hit their target level, if they are working hard enough and if they really "don't have any homework".

You may have many questions regarding your child's academic progress. We want to assure you of our wholehearted support in regard to welfare and academic success, and of our commitment to answering and resolving queries and concerns you may have.

Mr Marshall
Head of Year

Key Dates

Wednesday 22 September - *INSET day*
Thursday 25th November - *Parents' Evening*
Friday 26 November – *INSET day*
Monday 28 February – *INSET day*
Monday 20 June – *INSET day*
Monday 13th June - Friday 24th June - *Year 10 Exams*

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

Summer Term

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

English

Your child will be studying English Language and English Literature, these are two separate GCSEs and our exam board is *Pearson Edexcel*. Students will be set two 45 minute homework tasks each week which are completed in a separate blue homework exercise book. We also use an online platform called GCSEPod which shares videos and quizzes to help students revise. Homework tasks will often link to GCSEPod. All homework tasks and resources will be shared in your child's Google Classroom.

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This term students will be studying *Romeo and Juliet*. Students will need a copy of the play which we are able to offer to students for a school discounted rate of £3.00. If your child has Pupil Premium funding this text will be issued automatically. This text can be purchased via the school's online SCOPAY system accessed through the school website.

Maths

Year 10 will be taught in sets. They will receive cumulative assessments throughout the year to ensure that at least good progress is being made. They will receive a standardised written weekly homework that focuses on the retention of key skills. This is posted on Google Classroom and should be completed with full workings in the back of their exercise book. GCSE revision guides/workbooks are still available for purchase via the school's online SCOPAY system. If you are unsure which tier of entry to purchase, please contact your child's teacher.

Science

Students have been placed in sets based on the exams that we expect them to take at the end of Year 11. This year, students will continue to study the material they will need for these exams. Term will begin with a recap of the key material covered last year.

The first of 2 important assessments will take place in the week commencing 14 Feb 22 [additional detail can be found here](#).

Students in Year 10 are expected to spend 90 minutes completing homework for Science, though students who are off track may need to put in more time. All homework for Year 10 students is designed to promote a little and often approach to revision with the aim of consolidating and improving the revision resources made in Year 9. The exact work given will depend on the student's set as they are preparing for slightly different exams. [Additional information can be found here](#).

Drama

In Year 10, students will begin their Drama course by studying the set text 'Blood Brothers'. All students (copies will be provided for PP students) will need to purchase a copy of the text. Please ensure that you buy the correct version, using the listed ISBN number: 978-0413767707.

To support your child with this unit, you may wish to purchase the following play guide: CGP GCSE Drama Play Guide – Blood Brothers: ISBN 978-1782949664. During this unit, students will be issued with fortnightly written homework tasks which will be posted on Google Classroom.

Following on from this, students will begin their Devising Drama unit. This comprises 40% of the final grade. Please ensure that students have either Mountbatten leggings or black tracksuit bottoms when participating in these practical workshops. During this unit, students will be expected to rehearse weekly after school whilst producing their examination pieces.

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Fine Art and Photography

In Year 10, students' first project is titled 'Collections and Curiosities'. This overarching theme initially inspires teacher-led work in class that recaps their artistic skills and then moves on to more independent project work as the course progresses. There is an expectation that students continue their projects outside of their normal lessons. Homework is weekly and will be set on Goole Classroom. To help with this we offer after school clinics where their teacher will be on hand to support with additional direction.

Students' research and development work for both subjects is presented in a black A3 sketchbook and they transport their work to and from school in their A2 folder when necessary.

We ask students to purchase this sketchbook and folder at the start of the year and will be issuing our order form for our bespoke 'Art Packs' that contain the materials they need to get started. If your child is pupil premium, the basic pack will be supplied to your child.

Photography students should purchase the '*Photography and Art Student Starter Pack*' costing £17.20, this pack includes A3 black presentation pack, A2 folder and white gel pen

Art students should purchase either the '*Photography and Art Student Starter Pack*' as above, **OR** '*Fine Art Student Pack*' costing £44.64, this pack includes A2 project bag, water soluble colour pencil system, 3 starter set 6x22ml 06 A3 black paper sketchbook, synthetic brush set of 10 sketching pencils and set of 6 white gel pens.

There is no expectation that you must purchase them from the school. You may, however, find the products that are supplied are more expensive through other providers should you need to purchase them separately. We do get our packs that we offer at a discount through an educational supplier, non-profit to the school, so we believe these are value for money.

Music Technology

Over the RSL course, students will have three units of coursework to complete. These deadlines will be communicated via Google Classroom, once they have been released by the exam board.

Music

The performance aspect of the GCSE Music course accounts for 30% of the final grade, so your child should be working on an appropriate repertoire with their instrumental/voice teacher as well as practising on a regular basis at home. Please make contact with the Music Department if your child is not receiving regular lessons on their instrument/voice.

Having missed so many performance opportunities, it is essential that students attend all appropriate rehearsals and place a high priority on these. We aim to resume a full programme of performances throughout the coming year.

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Another 30% of the GCSE Music course is devoted to composition. Students will need to produce two compositions by February half term in 2023.

The final component of the GCSE Music course is the Listening and Appraising paper, which accounts for the final 40% of the qualification. This 1.5 hour written examination will fall in the GCSE period in May/June 2023.

If you have signed up for music lessons, they should be paid as per the details on your contract via your SCOPAY account.

History

We follow the Edexcel GCSE History specification and study the following topics: 'Crime and Punishment and Whitechapel', 'Weimar and Nazi Germany', 'Early Elizabethan England' and 'Superpower Relations and the Cold War'.

Revision guides are published by Pearson and Hodder and can be purchased through the school.

All homework and resources will be available on Google Classroom.

All Year 10 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)

As we commence the GCSE course, students will have time to investigate the concepts of GCSE RE and we would love it if you can ask them what they have been learning in lessons. To help your child we offer the OUP Religious Studies revision guide, this is available to purchase on the school system for £6. It is available elsewhere but normally cost around £10.

Each week students will be set a homework quiz on Google Classroom plus one piece from the class teacher, we would recommend that students ensure that they catch up on any missed work.

Geography

During the Autumn Term in Year 10, we will be exploring the interactions that exist within small-scale local ecosystems, with some close links to your studies in Biology. We will then study the characteristics, opportunities, challenges and management strategies presented in tropical rainforest and cold environments, with Malaysia and Svalbard as our respective case studies.

We follow the AQA GCSE Geography specification and there are a variety of resources available on Google Classroom and the AQA website to support revision. We would also encourage students to purchase the revision guides to support them in their independent studies. The details of these resources can be found on Google Classroom.

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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 10, during Core PE, follows a pathway curriculum. Students get the option of which pathway they follow. The pathway options are: competition, aesthetics and recreation.

Furthermore, students get the option to complete the Sports Leaders Level 2 and Dance Leaders Level 2 qualification during their Core PE lessons. This is a recognised qualification through Sports Leaders UK.

For those who have opted for an additional qualification, we offer three accredited courses: AQA GCSE PE, AQA GCSE Dance & OCR Cambridge Nationals Sport Studies.

Students follow this course for two years and each course has practical and theoretical elements. For further information about each of the courses please refer to our PE website.

<https://sites.google.com/themountbattenschool.org/peandsport?authuser=1>

All resources and homework are shared on Google Classroom.

Revision guides are published by Pearson and Hodder and can be purchased through the school.

Food Technology

We are delighted that your child has opted to study Food, either as a GCSE or Technical Award. We will be working on developing and enhancing a range of high-level skills, and this will mean that your child is cooking on a more regular basis. We will give students ingredients lists one week in advance, and would like to stress how important it is that they bring ingredients to ensure they can fully participate in all lessons and make good progress.

We ask that ingredients are weighed out at home and are brought to school in suitable 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 and students that our Food rooms are 'nut free', so please ensure that no nut products are sent in with ingredients.

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Computing

In Year 10, students will be studying for the OCR GCSE (9-1) Computer Science (J277) qualification. Students will be studying topics from Paper 2: Computational thinking, algorithms and programming. In the first term they will be studying Unit 2.2 Programming Fundamentals and will undertake a programming project using Python.

To support their in-class learning, it would be useful for students to have access to Python at home. Python IDLE can be downloaded for free from <https://www.python.org/> or students can use the online Google Collaboratory application which can be accessed by logging into their Google school account. Students will receive homework every week which will be posted in Google Classroom. Revision guides are available via school or can be purchased from many retailers – please check that you are purchasing the OCR J277 specification with examination from 2022.

Modern Foreign Languages (MFL)

Thanks to the language skills they have acquired during Lower School, students are entering their Upper School studies well prepared to do a GCSE in French/Spanish. They will already know how to understand and express themselves on a wide range of topics and will continue to further develop their skills as well as to thoroughly prepare for their final GCSE examination papers.

In Year 10, students will be expected to complete 2 homework tasks lasting 40-45 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.

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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](#).

Careers

We would like to invite Year 10 students and their parents/carers to our annual Careers Fair on **Thursday 30 September**. The event will run from 6-8pm. In attendance will be local colleges and a variety of employers, informing students of post-16 opportunities available to them.

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.

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.

If you have any IT issues or require any assistance, please contact IT Services at itservices@mountbatten.hants.sch.uk.

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.

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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.

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 5minutes 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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