



## THE MOUNTBATTEN SCHOOL

IRE

October 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

### **Welcome to The Mountbatten School!**

It is a pleasure to be getting to know our new Year 7 students! They continue to make an excellent first impression at the start of this term, following on from the success of the first transition day before the summer holidays.

Making the transition from primary to secondary school is a significant milestone. The school recognises the enormity of this moment in time. It can appear daunting for so many people. What I hope is that over the next few weeks, students come to know our school for what it is; an amazing place to grow, to learn and to meet new people. I am very excited to see everything that our Year 7 students will go on to achieve this year as they continue to put their best foot forward in all aspects of school life.

Year 7 have a theme for the year, which is "In it to win it". As a school we recognise the importance of extra-curricular provision and offer an extensive timetable of activities. This is where your child will be able to further pursue and explore the various passions that they may have. It is also where, for many students, they develop a sense of belonging and pride in their school. We will therefore be strongly encouraging all students to take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. We appreciate your support with this.

You may have many questions relating to the social, emotional or academic wellbeing of your child as well as their academic progress. Please contact your child's tutor in the first instance who will be happy to help.

Yours sincerely

Mr Rice  
Head of Year 7

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### **Key Dates:**

<b>Thursday 12 October</b>	- Year 7 Meet the Tutor Evening
<b>Wednesday 29 November</b>	- INSET Day
<b>Tuesday 2 January</b>	- INSET Day
<b>Wednesday 3 January</b>	- INSET Day
<b>Thursday 8 February</b>	- Year 7 Parents' Evening
<b>Monday 19 February</b>	- INSET Day
<b>Tuesday 18 June</b>	- INSET Day

### **Autumn Term**

Half-Term	23 October – 27 October
Term Ends	Friday 15 December (Half Day)

### **Spring Term**

Term Starts	Thursday 4 January 2024
Half-Term	12 February – 16 February
Term Ends	Thursday 28 March (Half Day)

### **Summer Term**

Term Starts:	Monday 15 April
Half-Term:	27 May – 31 May
Term Ends:	Tuesday 23 July (Half Day)

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## Curriculum Update

### English

Every Lower School year group studies a variety of texts that have been carefully chosen to ensure students develop an awareness of literature from different ages and perspectives. In Year 7, to reflect their own new experiences, the texts studied are linked through the theme of 'new beginnings and journeys'. To begin with, students will study a retelling of Homer's epic poem 'The Odyssey'. Students will also be encouraged to complete creative writing inspired by the text.

Year 7s are taught in their tutor groups throughout the entire year. Every week, students are set 10 vocabulary words to learn as part of their weekly homework – this will also include a task related to their literary studies. Students are expected to learn the meaning of these words and we encourage them to use the website *Quizlet*. These will be tested in class every week. Students will also have access to SparX Reader to complete their independent reading each week. Teachers will track students' reading each week as part of their weekly homework. Further information and deadlines are available via Google Classroom.

The English department is extremely lucky to have use of our wonderfully well-stocked Library. All Year 7 classes have one lesson per week in the Library. This lesson is an important opportunity for students to enjoy reading a modern text as a class.

### Maths

Year 7 have been placed into ability sets. There will necessarily be a large focus on Number topics to ensure that students are secure in these and can apply their skills to non-routine problems. Some data handling topics will also be covered in order to support other subjects such as Science and Geography. Each student has been set up with an account for the Sparx Maths online platform from which they will be set personalised weekly homework tasks. Details of each week's homework will be explained verbally in class and shared on Google Classroom.

### Sparx Maths Homework

Sparx Maths homework has commenced for Year 7. Students have had an introductory lesson where they were guided through Sparx Maths, its features and how to get started. Sparx Maths is an online platform that supports all students with independent learning of maths that is personalised at a level that will optimise progress and develop confidence.

To ensure a successful experience with Sparx Maths homework, please take note of the following:

- Your child's class teacher will post the homework instructions and a link to the Sparx platform on Google Classroom. Students will have one week to complete it.

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- If your child encounters challenges while completing their homework, we encourage them to watch the support videos which accompany each question. If further assistance is needed, students must reach out to their teacher for help with specific questions in advance of the deadline. This can be done in class or via email.
- Homework is considered complete when your child achieves a 100% score on their personalised tasks.
- Students who achieve 100% on their homework will be rewarded with an epraise point.
- Once the compulsory homework is complete, students have the opportunity to continue their learning by completing their personalised Target and XP Boost tasks.
- You will be sent important notifications related to Sparx Maths homework via email, so please ensure that your email addresses are up-to-date with the school.

## **Science**

Information about the content that will be taught in Year 7, the November and summer exams and the homework Year 7 students will be expected to complete, can be found on our [Year 7 website](#). The website also provides resources to allow students to read ahead, catch up if they miss lessons and revise for tests.

## **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 child!

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: [musicdepartment@mountbatten.school](mailto:musicdepartment@mountbatten.school). Alternatively, complete our Music Tuition contract and email it to [finance@mountbatten.school](mailto:finance@mountbatten.school).

Here is the music extra-curricular information for all students: [Extra-curricular Music 2023-2024.pdf](#)

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## **History**

In History, our aim is to inspire young historians who are curious and excited to learn about the past so that they have a better understanding of the world we live in today.

This term, Year 7 students will be learning about migration to early Britain before moving on to the Norman Conquest and exploring the medieval period in more depth.

All homework and resources will be available on Google Classroom.

## **Geography**

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

During the first term of Year 7, students will explore our local area whilst developing their geographical skills. Later this term, Year 7 students will investigate the factors that influence our weather and climate. This will include creating an 'at-home' weather recording station to collect local weather data!

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.

## **RE (Religious Education)**

Our vision is to enable students to make meaning of the world they live in, through critical thinking, questioning and evaluating in order to empower students to make informed choices about world views and contemporary moral issues.

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!

During their first term of Year 7, students will inquire into their own World view and what that means for them and the world they live in. We will also be inquiring into Humanism and what it is to be an atheist. After half-term, students will then inquire 'What is the vision of Christianity?'

All homework and resources will be available on Google Classroom.

## **PE (Physical Education)**

Year 7 will be taught in tutor groups during the first half-term. During this period, students will be tested in a range of fitness tests and across a range of team and individual sports. We will then use this data to set your child based on their practical ability.

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After October half-term, students then follow a curriculum covering a range of different sports for the remainder of the academic year. Students will take part in the activity for half a term, developing and mastering skills before completing an end of unit assessment. Students will undertake five sports across the remainder of the academic year and complete an end of unit assessment in each.

Our extra-curricular programme offers students the opportunity to take part in a range of different sports. We strongly encourage students to get involved in a club to engage them physically, socially and mentally. You can peruse the sports we have on offer through our [school website](#).

The majority of the clubs are free to access and students will receive tuition from an experienced member of staff and external coaches. Clubs started on Monday 12 September.

We do have a number of extra-curricular clubs run by external coaches. Students can sign up for those clubs via the following website:

<https://personalbesteducation.com/juniors/after-school-clubs/>

If you wish for your child to join the Taekwondo club run by former Commonwealth Champion, Max Cater, then you can sign up by completing the letter on our [school website](#).

### **Design Technology**

Year 7 are taught in mixed ability groups and will rotate around the different technology disciplines over the academic year as part of the technology rotation. This will give the students a flavour of the different technology disciplines, Resistant Materials, Graphics, Food, Textiles and Computing. To help cover the cost of the products that the students make in design technology we encourage parents to make a voluntary contribution, a letter with details of how to make a voluntary contribution will be sent out in due course.

### **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.

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## **Modern Foreign Languages (MFL)**

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

In Year 7, students are encouraged to become confident communicators by working on their pronunciation skills as well as asking and answering questions across a variety of topics. They also learn how to give opinions and how to agree and disagree with each other in a respectful way!

Students will be expected to complete one vocabulary learning homework task, lasting 30 minutes, every other week starting from October half-term. The vocabulary homework will be tested formally in class to check learning.

## **Computer Science**

In Year 7, students have two half-terms of Computer Science as part of their Technology rotation. This year, students will learn about staying safe online, programming a game to teach others about e-safety. They will also learn about the hardware of a computer and issues with computing and the environment.

Students who are interested in programming at home can use Scratch at <https://scratch.mit.edu> - those who want to challenge themselves and try Python can download the IDLE editor at <http://www.python.org> and there are lots of resources online for them to learn from.

We also run a Computer Science club on Thursday lunchtimes in IT2 - all are welcome!

## **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, and at morning and afternoon breaks for students to browse and change books. Every student can borrow 4 books for 3 weeks. We have a wide variety of books to loan out and are always happy to receive recommendations/requests to provide new books that we do not have. It is important that students develop good habits of personal responsibility and renew or return their library books on time, ensuring that all of our students can enjoy the library and the range of books that we offer.

All Year 7 students will shortly be emailed their library login details in order to access the Library catalogue remotely, to browse and reserve books, write and read book reviews.

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## epraise

We use a system called 'epraise' in our school. This software is designed to improve student engagement and motivation and to support parental involvement. It has proved very 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 straightforward 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

The Mountbatten School's careers programme is broadly based on the Career Development Institute's framework, which covers the following six learning areas:

- grow throughout life,
- explore possibilities,
- manage career,
- create opportunities,
- balance life and work
- and see the big picture.

From Year 7, students receive weekly careers education during tutor time, which was kick started with our Work Enrichment Day, recently. This was an all-day event where students took part in a variety of careers activities including an introduction into careers, emergency aid training, a tour of an ambulance and an insight into NHS careers, as well as guest speaker and some exciting entrepreneurial tasks.

During the year, we will continue to work with a broad range of visitors talking about different careers and training pathways, as well as taking part in activities during National Apprenticeship Week and National Careers Week. All upcoming events will be advertised on the Careers Google Classroom, the weekly newsletter and the Careers department Instagram account.

Whilst one-to-one careers interviews with our Career Adviser are routinely scheduled with Year 9 students and above, all students are able to request a careers interview, if required. This can be done via your child's tutor or the school's Head of Careers, Mrs Shakya.

If you would like to contribute to the school's careers provision by talking to students about your job or business, are able to offer a work experience placement to our Year 10 students or are a former student yourself and would like to feature on our alumni information wall, please get in touch with Mrs Shakya at [ssa@mountbatten.school](mailto:ssa@mountbatten.school).

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## **Finance**

Payments for your child's trips, cashless catering and more can be made via [SCOPAY](#).

Please contact [finance@mountbatten.school](mailto:finance@mountbatten.school) 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 parent/carer, 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.

If you have any IT issues or require any assistance, please contact IT services at [itservices@mountbatten.school](mailto:itservices@mountbatten.school).