



THE MOUNTBATTEN SCHOOL

EML

October 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

Head of Year 8 Message

As my last year group has now finished their Mountbatten journey, it is excellent to be leading such an incredible year group. Over the last few weeks, it has been wonderful to start to get to know the year group and already witness some of their achievements!

I would like to take this opportunity to briefly introduce myself. I have been teaching History at The Mountbatten School for the last six years. As previously mentioned, I was Head of Year to the Class of 2023 and am now continuing the excellent work of Mr Rice, in becoming the Head of Year 8. I am very much looking forward to getting to know Year 8 over the next couple of weeks and will be working closely with students and colleagues, to ensure a smooth transition for us all.

The Year 8 theme of the year is "Impact". Year 8 will be challenged to consider the impact they have on themselves, those around them and to their educational journey. We have started off the year with students reflecting on the positive impact they have had on ten students in The Gambia. Last year they raised over £3,500 which has gone towards sponsoring ten students to attend the Mansa Colley Bojang School for the next academic year.

With such a talented year group, I am certain we will have lots to celebrate over the coming year, both academic success and the development of key qualities in our 3D curriculum.

I would like to wish all Year 8 students a happy, healthy and successful second year. I look forward to working with you all over the course of the year ahead.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Murrell
Head of Year 8

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Key Dates:

Wednesday 29 November	- INSET Day
Tuesday 2 January	- INSET Day
Wednesday 3 January	- INSET Day
Monday 19 February	- INSET Day
Thursday 22 February	- Year 8 Mini Options Evening
Thursday 14 March	- Year 8 Parents' Evening
Tuesday 18 June	- 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

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 have been chosen to encourage 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 Shakespeare's villains in a variety of plays, followed by 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. Every week, students are given 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. This year, we have introduced an exciting new reading tool called SparX Reader which we will use as a weekly homework tool to encourage students to read independently. Further information and deadlines are available via Google Classroom.

Maths

Year 8 will be taught in ability sets. They will receive personalised weekly online homework set on the Sparx Maths platform. Details of each week's homework will be explained verbally in class and shared on Google Classroom.

Sparx Maths Homework

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.
- 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.

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- 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 8, the November and summer exams and the homework Year 8 students will be expected to complete, can be found on our [Year 8 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.

Alternatively, complete our Music Tuition contract and email it to finance@mountbatten.school.

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

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, students will be exploring the African kingdom of Benin before learning about the transatlantic 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.

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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 conducting fieldwork on our school site to collect data as part of their investigation. Students will then use their knowledge and understanding, as well as their budgeting skills, to create a “Dragon’s Den” style sales pitch on how they would protect Romsey from flooding in the future.

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!

This term students are studying a philosophy unit, we will be inquiring into questions such as: What is real? How do we gain knowledge? And how do we know then what is true? The students will be using the work of Plato, Aristotle and Descartes to help them make sense of these big questions.

All homework and resources will be available on Google Classroom.

PE (Physical Education)

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 [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.

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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 8 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.

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.

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 or Spanish speaking cities/countries. Students watch authentic videos and read authentic texts about the lifestyle of people in different countries around the world thus developing their curiosity about different cultures.

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

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Computer Science

In Year 8, students once again have two half-terms of Computer Science as part of their Technology rotation. This year students will learn to program using the Python language and will also learn about how computers store and display data.

Students who are interested in programming at home can download Python IDLE from <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. 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.

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

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- balance life and work
- and see the big picture.

Students will continue to 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 the Thorpe Park Challenge, which was designed to improve students' key employability skills such as communication, teamwork, leadership, creativity and problem-solving.

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 Advisor 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 Career Leader, 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.

Finance

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

Please contact 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 organiser 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.

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If you have any IT issues or require any assistance, please contact IT services at itservices@mountbatten.school

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