

Dear Parents/Carers

As you know, we continue to work on developing the curriculum in each of our subject areas, and want to ensure you are regularly informed as to the topics and key knowledge and skills that your child is studying. Not only does this give you an overview of what they are working on, it also helps you in supporting your child in their learning at home.

Please find below the summary of what your Year 8 child is working on during Term 2 and the topics and skills that this builds onto in Term 3. This will also include reference to any key events that are taking place within the subjects.

Subject	Content
English	This term students are studying Dickens' A Christmas Carol and analysing the language he uses to present characters and themes. Their contextual knowledge of the Victorian era from Term 1 will help them understand Dickens overall message in the novella. Their understanding of the themes of justice and equality will aid them in their study of Ethical Dilemma's next term where they will cover a range of issues to debate.
Maths	This term students will be starting a unit of work called Representations. Building on knowledge of coordinates from KS2, we will be looking formally at algebraic rules for straight lines, starting with lines parallel to the axes, then moving onto the more general form. We will be exploring the concepts of gradient and intercepts, but the focus at this stage is using the equations to produce lines. This knowledge will provide the basis for exploring the interpretation of m and c from a given equation, which will be covered in Year 9. Students are also introduced formally to bivariate data and the idea of linear correlation. They extend their knowledge of graphs and charts from Key Stage 2 to deal with both discrete and continuous data. In term 3 students will build on their understanding of equivalence from year 7 by exploring expanding and factoring, leading onto forming and solving equations. We will complete this unit of work by exploring linear sequences. These skills will form the basis of exploring quadratic sequences in KS4.
Science	This term, year 8 build on their previous knowledge of the building blocks in science. In biology, they will look at tissues and cells, In chemistry they will explore the periodic table and in physics they will look at how the particle model explains the density of different materials. The key character trait for this term is gratitude. Next term, year 8 will learn about extinction, with a focus on the extinction of the dinosaurs. They will also learn about the galaxies and solar systems that make up our universe. Students will then move on to their third project, where they can choose to present one of extinction, the dinosaurs or the universe. Students are encouraged to make these projects their own! The key character trait for this term is self-belief.
Modern Foreign Languages	In French, Festival and celebrations has been the theme of this term. Pupils will review dates and opinions, talk about French festivals and celebrations, buy food at a market, talk about what they are going to eat on a special day, talk about a future trip. Throughout Term 3, pupils will be extending that knowledge in order to talk about digital technology, arrange to go to the cinema, talk about leisure activities using present and perfect tense together. In Spanish, students have been exploring the theme of "Todo sobre mi vida" ("everything about my life") where pupils review how to express opinion, talk about using mobile phones, talk about music and TV programs preferences. They have used their previous knowledge on the past tense and extend their skills using the present tense. Throughout Term 3, pupils will be extending that knowledge in order to discuss food preferences, describe mealtimes, order a meal, discuss what to buy for a party, give an account of a party.

Design Technology	<p><i>In Year 8, Design Technology and Food Technology are taught in rotation. This means that in Term 2 and Term 3, students will focus on different topics dependent on their class.</i></p> <p>DT1) Smooth 'n' Shiny - Enamelled bugs. Students will design and make a decorative bug reflecting your research. Students will cut and shape copper plate and apply enamelling powder. Students will learn to recognise and describe different 'design movements' and learn about the use of enamelling and copper in industry.</p> <p>DT2) Night light - Edge lit plastics. Students will learn to use basic electronic components to create a light that shines through a plastic plate that they will design. Students will learn to recognise and draw electronic components. Students will learn how to solder safely.</p> <p>FT1&amp;2) Students will learn to produce dishes that are influenced by availability, season, need and cost. Students will learn about and produce dishes that reflect different cultures and religions. Students will design, plan and create your own savoury dishes that consider dietary needs.</p>
History	<p>In Year 8 term two students will study the Renaissance with a continued focus on 'The Tudors'. Once they complete this focus we will in term 3 move onto the 'Stuart' period of history specifically looking at the 'English Civil War', 'Glorious Revolution' and 'Witchcraft'. Through their study of this period they will continue to develop their understanding of key concepts (change &amp; continuity, cause &amp; consequence, chronology) and skills (analysis and interpretation).</p>
Geography	<p>In Term 2, students are continuing learning about Kenya. They are focusing on how clean water affects development, how national parks are managed and their benefits and conservation. Homework presentations this term should be created around a geographical topic in an African country. We had some wonderful presentations last term and look forward to seeing these the week before Christmas. Next term, students will begin their unit on Australia where they will explore the creation and changes of coastlines and how we tackle climate change. They will look at types of waves, how erosion shapes the coastline and the issues of climate change in the Great Barrier Reef.</p>
Art	<p>In Term 2, students complete a Mexican Art project. Students learn about Mexican Day of the Dead and the work of the Linares Family of Mexico City. Students create 'Calvera' (decorated skulls) using clay pinch pot techniques. In Term 3, students move on to look at the Figure. Students learn to draw the figure using measuring and proportional rules. Students will look at Anthony Gormley and Alberto Giacometti before creating monotone acrylic figure paintings. The outcome of this project is a figure sculpture using modelling wire.</p>
Dance	<p>Our year 8 dancers are looking at urban dance and its relationship to urban culture, the students are working in groups to create a group name, using their bodies the students will use transitions to link these letter names using the 5 basic body actions. Alongside this the students will learn some basic street dance moves which they will include in their choreographed performance at the end of term. We will continue our exploration of different dance cultures with a focus on Matthew Bourne's Nutcracker and Martial arts after Christmas. After learning a set phrase based on The Nutcracker the students will develop their own action/ reaction &amp; contact sequence inspired by the new genres of dance they have explored this term.</p>
Drama	<p>Our Year 8 students have been exploring the Charles Dickens story of <i>A Christmas Carol</i> which aligns with the English department. We have been using scripts to develop character work and rehearsal techniques such as hot seating. As the term progresses students will perform key scenes from the play which they have memorised. We look forward to the end of term performances.</p> <p>The year 8 focus text for term 3 will be <i>Lord of the Flies</i> by William Golding. Students will be looking at the narrative as a whole as well as developing their drama techniques as well as character building skills. Students will be developing their knowledge of freeze frames and</p>

	narration to create a whoosh performance of the story. Students will also progress their understanding and execution of more complexed techniques such as chorus.
Music	Year 8 have been developing their knowledge of harmony through working in their bands this term. They have learnt some basic chord progressions and composed some of their own, which they performed and created their own grooves to. This was followed by an exploration of texture through Hip Hop and Grime in the music technology suite, the students have recorded a mini portfolio of some very iconic tracks. This will help support the start of a very creative term after Christmas, when we will be learning some more sophisticated compositional devices through some popular Western Classical Traditions
PE	In Term 2/3, we develop and expand skills in the next set of sports in the learning journey. The main focus sports are basketball, gymnastics, and football. The students use the new holistic assessment system to identify their areas for improvement.
PSHE	Year 8 students are currently learning in Term 2 about substance abuse including drugs and alcohol, including the exploitation of young people by criminal gangs. They will then be exploring career options and equal opportunities. Term 3 offers education on discrimination in all its forms including racism, sexism, religious/disability, homophobia, transphobia and bi phobia.

Should you have any questions, then please do feel free to contact us directly.

M Feeley



Vice Principal