

Year 7 Curriculum Newsletter Autumn Term 1

English



Students will begin their English journey with some 'getting-to-know you' activities and baseline testing, before moving on to their first, very exciting unit of study: Amazing People. Students will develop their spoken language skills, explore how writers use language to achieve effects and also develop their writing skills. We will explore how our amazing people (which include Marie Curie, Nikki Lilly, Charles Darwin, Maya Angelou) demonstrate our Thamesmead Values.

Assessments: Baseline tests on spelling, comprehension and writing; an end of unit assessment in week 5 which tests reading and writing skills.

How can parents help? Please ensure your child's spellings homework and reading log are completed, that they complete their Lexia, and always bring a reading book to school. If you can listen to your children read too, that is even better!

Maths



What are we doing this half term? (1) Number sense including factors, multiples and primes; using negative numbers; multiplying/dividing; powers & roots and order of operations. (2) Expressions & Equations; looking at algebraic notation, simplifying expressions and substitution.

Assessments: Year 7's will do a baseline assessment within the first week of term. They will also be a unit assessment after topic 1 and 2, as described above.

How can parents help? Ensure your child has the correct equipment for every lesson such as a pencil, ruler, protractor, compass and their own scientific calculator. Encourage your child to engage fully with SPARX (the maths homework platform) spending at least 40 minutes per week doing their home learning - they should be completing 100% of the tasks each week.

History



Students will begin their journey through history by first establishing, understanding and being able to explain key historical skills, these being the foundations of history throughout their time in school. We then jump into the time machine and begin our study into medieval Britain and the major changes that took place in the 11th Century. Avoiding battle axes, flaming arrows and cavalry charges we look at the events and results of the Battle of Hastings before building a castle and planning how to attack our enemies using trebuchets, siege towers or just sit and wait for them to run low on supplies.

Assessment - End of unit test - Battle of Hastings events and impacts.

How can parents help? - Historical books, documentaries (including Horrible Histories!) and weekend trips (while the weather is nice!) to history in real life Battle Abbey in Sussex does a Battle of Hastings re-enactment in October half term.

Science



What are we doing this half term? (1) Cells in Biology lessons, (2) Particle model in Chemistry lessons (3) Sound in Physics lessons We are following the Oxford University Press (OUP) Activate 1 textbook throughout year 7.

Assessments: Low stake quizzes at the end of each topic.

How can parents help? Ensure your child has the correct equipment such as a pencil, ruler and their own scientific calculator. The BBC KS3 bitesize is a useful resource - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/subjects/zng4d2p>. It would be useful to have a KS3 Science revision guide for revision purposes. - <https://www.amazon.co.uk/KS3-SCIENCE-REVISION-LEVELS-GUIDES/dp/B008MWXGFO>

Art



Our Year 7 Art & Design students first project is exploring 'The Formal Elements of Art'. Over the course of each lesson students will examine each formal element, looking at how artists such as Michael Craig Martin and Yayoi Kusama use it in their artwork. Students will create a booklet that documents their exploration over the first half term. This project also includes learning about colour theory, colour mixing and painting techniques.

How can parents help? Please ensure that your child completes all their Art & Design homework activities for this project. Drawing equipment and good quality colouring pencils will support students in completing their work in lesson and at home.

Religion, Philosophy and Ethics (RPE)

Welcome to RPE at Thamesmead School.

Year 7 will begin with a blog writing competition on the topic of 'Why an education in Religion, Philosophy and Ethics matters'. The best entries will be chosen for the Headteachers Award. This will be followed by a unit exploring who Jesus could have been.

We will explore this from a Christian, Muslim and Jewish perspective. Students will need to learn key vocabulary carefully and spend time practicing their skills in explaining and evaluating. You can encourage your son/daughter at home by discussing their RPE lessons and playing devil's advocate!

PE



PE lessons at Thamesmead are based on key areas; Head, Heart and Hands. Students will take part in a range of activities on a half term rotation. During each activity block, the students are introduced to skills, tactics and strategies to develop their knowledge and understanding of the activity area. Students will engage in a wide range of sports and physical activities such as Netball, Football, and Badminton.

Assessments: Students will be assessed throughout each practical blocks of work.

How can parents help?: Please ensure students complete home learning tasks on time and that they are organised with their full kit on PE days.

Spanish



What are we doing this half term? This is an exciting time for our year 7 students who may be starting Spanish for the very first time! We begin our journey to Spain with classroom vocabulary and personal information. The emphasis is on independence; using the target language with confidence in the classroom!

Assessments: Reading and translation assessments at half term.

How can parents help? Try to learn some Spanish along with your child and help them realise the importance of learning another language for our multicultural world. Do not allow your child to use online translators and remind them we expect them to use class notes as reference and perhaps a few words from an online dictionary such as www.wordreference.com. Testing your child on key vocabulary regularly will help them memorise key vocabulary.

French



What are we doing this half term? This is an exciting time for our year 7 students who may be starting to learn French for the very first time! We begin our journey to France with classroom vocabulary and personal information. The emphasis is on independence; using the target language with confidence in the classroom!

Assessments: Reading and translation assessments at half term.

How can parents help? Try to learn some French along with your child and help them realise the importance of learning another language for our multicultural world. Do not allow your child to use online translators and remind them we expect them to use class notes as reference and perhaps a few words from an online dictionary such as www.wordreference.com. Testing your child on key vocabulary regularly will help them memorise key vocabulary.

Music



What are we doing this half term? Students will begin Year 7 Music with rhythm games and singing, developing skills such as confidence, co-ordination and teamwork. The first project is called 'Feel the Rhythm' where students will learn to read and write rhythm notation, and use the African drums to perform different rhythms as a class and compose a rhythmic composition in groups.

Assessments: Baseline assessment at the beginning of the half term and a performance of their group's composition at the end of the project.

How can parents help? Please ensure your child has a pen, a pencil and their Music book each lesson and provide help with learning the key musical words.

Computer Science



What are we doing this half term? As students get older they will be going online more often. In computer science students will be learning about the dangers of being online and what they can do to protect themselves. They will learn all aspects of e-safety and will produce a PowerPoint presentation on different aspects of e-safety. Topics they will learn about include: online grooming, cyberbullying, radicalisation, digital footprints and online wellbeing.

Assessments: Students will use quizzes each lesson to assess understanding.

The students will complete an end of unit assessment which will give students feedback on their progress.

How can parents help? Parents can start researching and talking to their child about the dangers online. Parents can help students become familiar with using PowerPoint and Office 365.

Drama



Students will start their Drama voyage by exploring and developing their interactive and team skills, through a range of introductory and physical based exercises. They will cover the core elements of performance skills, including the power of still image, the impact of dialogue, the conventions of specific dramatic forms and the importance of accuracy and refinement. Students will develop and refine their imaginative responses and grow their confidence to express themselves in a variety of ways effectively and appropriately.

How can parents help? Please encourage your child to talk about their Drama lessons and give examples of their lesson adventures. Taking them to see live Drama productions wherever possible. Encourage them to read and share reviews of productions. Encourage pupils to involve themselves in Drama outside of lesson time: performance, technical elements and design elements are just some of the areas you can explore.

DT Textiles –(Rotation)

What are we doing this half term? Students will be using recycled fabrics or items of old clothing to design and produce a bookmark. The project aims to introduce and develop an understanding of basic Textiles, and to ensure the creative process of the design and make project is acknowledged. Students will also develop an appreciation and awareness of different stitching techniques, and learn how they can reflect on the relevant research through the medium of colour and fabric.

Assessments: The research work that is completed will be assessed for accuracy and how well inspiration has been drawn from it. The final constructed product will also be assessed using quality and complexity as the benchmarks.

How can parents help? Discuss the project, look at existing textile products, turn them inside out and understand how they were constructed. Help them to experiment or practice sewing skills at home.

Geography



What are we doing this half term? Y7 students will begin their geographical adventure with the Weather and Climate topic. We will cover climatic zones, microclimates and tropical storms. Throughout this topic students will develop their data collection, presentation and analysing skills.

Assessments: An end of topic written assessment, short and long answer questions.

How can parents help? Ensure your child has the correct equipment including glue, scissors and a green pen for peer and self-assessment. Watch the weather reports on the news, so pupils can familiarise themselves with key terms. Make sure the literacy sheet is complete and test students to confirm that they know the keywords and definitions. Make sure the revision notes for the assessment follow the guidance on the revision help sheet, to include definitions, diagrams, explanations and colours to aid in learning the information.

DT Graphics (rotation)

What are we doing this half term? Students will be given a design context which they will use to design and manufacture a tea light holder that has a pattern inspired by a historical design movement. The project aims to develop students' awareness of design movements whilst encouraging them to reflect upon the needs of different clients. The students will also be given the opportunity to experiment with CAD in order to produce innovative designs. For Graphics, students' will be researching and designing a chocolate/sweet wrapper with a certain target market in mind.

Assessments: Students will be assessed in the areas of Investigation (analysing patterns and their appropriateness for a tea light holder), Designing (designing patterns that would be appropriate for the tea light holder) and Evaluating (evaluating the final product).

How can parents help? Students will be designing a product for a real world situation, so discussing what customers might want from the products they buy would be useful. It would also be helpful to talk through what design movements are to help support with students' understanding.

Design Technology (Rotation)



What are we doing this half term? We will be looking into the key terms that we use to describe material properties and wood based materials. We will start practicing cutting wood joints to build confidence and resilience then move onto creating a phone stand made from bent plywood. We will be trained on the sanding machine and understand general health and safety and how to perform a risk assessment.

Assessments: Students will be assessed on the finger joint practical work which they have the opportunity to repeat and improve. They will also create a phone stand out of a laminated plywood curve. Practicals will be marked on accuracy and quality of finish.

How can parents help? Take an interest in the project work and skills they are learning and discuss them. Help them look at products made from wood materials and try and work out how they are made and constructed. Make some IKEA furniture!



Students arrive with limited skills and knowledge as many primary schools lack the facilities or expertise to teach Food at KS2, therefore much of what they know is taught at home, usually cakes. Year 7 focuses on laying the foundation of basic practical skills and Healthy Eating knowledge to allow students to build upon this in later years. Learning how to use equipment safely is a key focus of this year, with fruits and vegetables being the focused commodity.

Practical lessons include: Eat the Rainbow Wrap, Boiled egg and soldiers, Quesadilla, Flatbread and tzatziki, Cheese and Spinach Muffins, Sausage Koftas.

How will they be assessed?

Students will be given regular verbal feedback within their practical lessons 'in the moment'. This allows students to act upon this feedback immediately for the maximum impact on progress. Students will be assessed via written and practical assessments.

Home Learning

Students are set practical evaluations to reflect upon their practical outcome and own personal performance in practicals. In addition, where students provide ingredients for practicals they will continue to develop their weighing and measuring skills at home when preparing their ingredients for lessons.

Students are encouraged to practice their practical skills out of lessons by helping to prepare and cook meals at home.

To be successful in this subject, students will need to be good at and enjoy:

- ◆ Learning how to cook independently
- ◆ Developing organisational and time management skills
- ◆ Developing problem solving skills and the ability to overcome challenges
- ◆ Teamwork when carrying out practical investigations
- ◆ Learning through practical activities