

Year 10 Curriculum Newsletter Autumn Term 1

Maths



What are we doing this half term? We'll start the term with percentages, including compound interest, growth and decay. We will then move onto volume and surface area including pyramids, spheres and cones.

Assessments: Students will complete a unit assessment after each topic.

How can parents help? Ensure your child has the correct equipment such as a pencil, ruler and their own scientific calculator. Encourage your child to engage fully with SPARX (the maths homework platform) spending at least 1 hour per week doing their home learning - they should be completing 100% of the tasks each week.

Geography



What are we doing this half term? At the start of Y10 GCSE Geography students will investigate the global pattern of urban change. We will focus on Lagos in Nigeria. Students will look at factors affecting the rate of urbanisation – migration (push–pull theory), natural increase, and the emergence of megacities. Students will look at how urban growth has created opportunities and challenges through social, economic and environmental issues.

Assessments: An end of topic written assessment, short and long answer questions, based on past GCSE exam questions. They will cover all of the assessment objectives. These skills will be continually practiced over the course of the GCSE. AO1: Demonstrate knowledge of locations AO2: Demonstrate geographical understanding of: concepts and the interrelationships between places. AO3: Interpret, analyse and evaluate geographical information and issues. AO4: Use a variety of skills to investigate questions and communicate findings.

How can parents help? Ensure your child has the correct equipment including glue, scissors and a green pen for peer and self-assessment. Make sure they have two A4 ring binders; one for class notes and another for revision notes. The revision folder will need at least 12 dividers for the topics to be studied over the next two years. Students will be given a revision help sheet for each topic, and should be encouraged to complete Cornell revision notes at the end of each week's lessons, so they are producing them in manageable detailed chunks. Please assist students in keeping their physical and human revision folders organised and with detailed notes and diagrams. Use GCSE Pod to consolidate knowledge. Students will also need to purchase a practice exam book and revision guide, this will be done through the class teacher.

English



What are we doing this half term?

GCSE English Language Paper 1 & 2 Skills:

This half term, students will develop the reading and writing skills required for GCSE English Language Papers 1 and 2. They will practise a range of reading techniques, including retrieving information, making inferences, analysing language and structure, evaluating writers' viewpoints, and comparing perspectives across texts. A particular focus will be on Question 5, where students will develop their creative writing skills by crafting engaging descriptions and narratives. Students will explore how to use ambitious vocabulary, varied sentence structures, effective punctuation and literary devices to create imaginative and engaging pieces of writing.

Assessments: Students will complete three checkpoint assessments during the term: a reading skills check, a guided formative assessment with detailed feedback, and a final summative assessment.

How can parents help? Please encourage your child to read regularly, as this is one of the best ways to develop literacy skills. Supporting them with regular writing practice, encouraging them to broaden their vocabulary, and ensuring they complete their home learning will help build confidence and prepare them for their GCSE examinations. Students will be provided with a home learning pack to help them develop their creative writing for Question 5, which is worth half of the marks on Paper 1. The activities will also strengthen the writing skills needed across both GCSE English Language papers.

Science



What are we doing this half term? The topics you will be studying are: Biology - Organisation, Chemistry - Bonding, Structures and Properties of matter. Physics - Electricity. The topic areas are the same for students doing Triple and Trilogy science. Triple Scientists you will go into more depth in your studies.

Assessment will be Autumn 1 tests - these will be on the topics studied in class with some questions on topics from y9 - lists of topics on the tests will be given to students by their class teachers.

How can parents help? Ensure your child completes their Sparx homework each week. It is set on Thursday and due in the following Thursday. Sparx should take 1 hour - so students will be set extra homework at certain times during the year, such as when students are preparing for assessments.

History



What are we doing this half term? Welcome to GCSE History. The excellent history teachers of Thamesmead are happy to welcome you to their classes. Autumn term is dedicated to the breadth of study of the Development of the USA 1929-2000 including topics such as the Great Depression, Civil Rights, the emergence of the teenager and the Cold War. Class notes and how to answer guidance will be supplied to you so make sure you keep them safe.

Assessment: There are three practice GCSE style tests for this topic that will be done over the course of study approx. every 3-4 weeks.

How can parents help - encourage and schedule time for your child to read over their class notes regularly and memorise the key points and factual detail, memorise the how to answer sheet which contains the components for successful answering of questions to ensure excellent results in final GCSE results. Review class notes regularly to ensure organisation and that home learning is being done to a high standard.

Religion, Philosophy and Ethics (RPE)



Year 10 students begin the year by examining some of the biggest ethical issues facing society today. We will explore questions such as How did the universe begin?, When does life start? and What responsibilities do humans have towards the environment and animals? Students will compare Christian, Jewish and non-religious perspectives on issues including creation, evolution, abortion, euthanasia and environmental stewardship. Through discussion and debate, students will develop the skills needed to evaluate different viewpoints and justify their own conclusions. Students will need to engage respectfully with differing opinions and come to lessons ready to think critically about Complex moral issues.

Music



What are we doing this half term? GCSE Music starts with an overview of the Eduqas course and by looking at each of the elements of music. Students will begin a composition task using either Garageband or Logic software on the Macs, developing their ICT and composing skills.

Assessments: Formative teacher feedback of compositions, listening tasks in lessons, and an informal solo performance to the rest of the class.

How can parents help? Please encourage your child to complete regular instrumental/singing practise and to listen to lots of music! Support learning musical vocabulary.

Art



What are we doing this half term? Our GCSE Art & Design students begin their coursework with a project based on 'Organic Structures'. Coursework is worth 60% of a student's final GCSE grade. Students are assessed against the following objectives: AO1 Developing Ideas, AO2 Experiment & Refine, AO3 Recording Ideas, AO4 Present. These assessment objectives are equally weighted and students are graded holistically based on all the work they complete.

How can parents help? Please ensure that your child stays up-to-date with their coursework, our students are expected to be spending 3 -4 hours a week working on their art coursework at home outside our timetabled lessons. A space for students to work on their art coursework during evenings and weekends is an excellent way to support their progression. Students purchase a pack of materials at the beginning of the course but if parents are able to also purchase acrylic paints for students to also use at home, this would be a really supportive measure to ensure that coursework can be completed both at home and at school. If parents are also able to support students in visiting different museums and galleries and engaging in conversations about artworks, this is a great way to prepare them for and support them throughout the GCSE course.

Computer Science



What are we doing this half term? Students will begin the GCSE by learning about the different stages of computational thinking. Students will also have a re-cap on the programming techniques they have learnt since year 7 before moving on to more advanced programming techniques. They will have an introduction to what they will be studying on the GCSE and what is involved in the 2 GCSE exams they will sit in year 11. Students will also learn how to write algorithms in program code and flowcharts.

Assessments: Regular short answer questions will be used to assess student progress. The students will do an end of topic 1 written assessment to assess progress so far.

How can parents help? We ask parents to purchase a copy of the Pearson Edexcel GCSE Computer Science (2020) text book (ISBN 10 no: 1292359994). This can be purchased on Amazon. We also ask students to practice the Python programming techniques that they have learnt since year 8. Students can use the CS Newbs website to practice the Python programming language (<https://www.csnewbs.com/python>).

French



What are we doing this half term? GCSE French begins with some bridging the gap activities to reawaken the French learned in KS3 and build confidence. Students then focus on family, friends and relationships and the advantage and disadvantages of their town, expressing themselves with more advanced language and learning more about the culture of French speaking countries.

Assessments: There is a reading, listening and translation GCSE style assessment just before half term and a chance to show off their more advanced language in a 90 word written essay immediately after the half term break.

How can parents help? Ensure your child does not use online translators such as Google translate and instead uses class notes as reference. They have a Pearson ActiveLearn account which they should use to practise listening and reading regularly. Encourage them to create revision posters/flashcards on each topic and to review these weekly in Year 10.

Spanish



What are we doing this half term? GCSE Spanish begins with some bridging the gap activities to reawaken the Spanish learned in KS3 and build confidence. Students then focus on family, friends and relationships and the advantage and disadvantages of their town, expressing themselves with more advanced language and learning more about the culture of Spanish speaking countries.

Assessments: There is a reading, listening and translation GCSE style assessment just before half term and a chance to show off their more advanced language in a 90 word written essay immediately after the half term break.

How can parents help? Ensure your child does not use online translators such as Google translate and instead uses class notes as reference. They have a Pearson ActiveLearn account which they should use to practise listening and reading regularly. Encourage them to create revision posters/flashcards on each topic and to review these weekly in Year 10.

Drama



What are we doing this half term? To introduce the Drama GCSE we will start by getting to know our new working groups and building trust and confidence. Students will learn about the key elements of devising theatre and will revisit Stanislavski's System of Acting.

Assessment: Students will be assessed on their performance of a scene using Stanislavski's System and the GCSE assessment criteria for performance from a text. They will also produce a written evaluation of their performance practising written skills required for a key piece of coursework at GCSE.

How can parents help? If it is possible, see live or digital theatre. Please support your child learning their lines and reading their set play text, Malorie Blackman's 'Noughts and Crosses' adapted by Sabrina Mahfouz.

PE -GCSE



What are we doing this half term? Welcome to GCSE PE - In the Autumn term students will cover the components of fitness, fitness testing, training and one sport. They will improve their understanding of this activity and gain appreciation of the tactics and strategies that can be applied in game situations.

Assessment: Students will complete a unit assessment after each theory topic. How can parents help - encourage and schedule time for your child to read over class notes and review their class folder regularly to ensure organisation. Use GCSE Pod and The Ever Learner online resource. Ensure students complete home learning tasks on time and that they are organised with their full kit on practical PE days.

PE (Core)



What are we doing this half term? All students follow a curriculum which covers team and individual sports. However, the focus is to provide opportunities to develop lifelong participation in sport and exercise. All students have one lesson per week and options are changed each half term.

Assessment: Students are not formally assessed in core PE.

How can parents help? Please ensure students are organised with their full kit on PE days.

Food and Nutrition



What are we doing this half term? An introduction to GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition and the key concepts and content of the course. Students will begin to develop an array of culinary techniques, as well as a robust knowledge of nutrition, including kitchen hygiene and safety, gaining the confidence to cook with a range of ingredients and a focus on developing high level practical cookery skills. They will expand their knowledge of nutrition and will plan and produce their own nutritious meals. Students will gain a good understanding of Food Spoilage and Contamination, Micro-organisms and Enzymes involved in Food production.

Practical lessons will include a range of skilled dishes

Assessment will include a Time plan and making of their own meal as well as end of unit module test.

What parents can do to help: Experiment with dishes and food at home adapting and improving on recipes. Promote healthy food choices. Instil a love of food and nutrition by involving your child in the preparation of family meals perhaps insisting they prepare a meal once a week to practise their culinary skills. Encourage and schedule time for your child to read over their class notes regularly and memorise the key points and factual details.

Business & Enterprise



What are we doing this half term?

This half-term, students will begin learning the key content for Component 1 of the Pearson BTEC Tech Award in Enterprise. Component 1 is an internally assessed component worth 30% of their overall BTEC qualification. Throughout the half-term, students will develop their knowledge and understanding of the course content while also becoming familiar with the skills and expectations required to be successful across all three components of the qualification. A particular focus will be placed on preparing students for their Component 1 assessment, which will commence in January 2027. Lessons will therefore provide students with opportunities to develop their knowledge, practise applying what they have learned and become confident with the type and standard of work expected of them.

How can parents help?

Regular attendance: Please ensure that your child attends lessons regularly. Coursework and formal assessment work must be completed under the required supervised conditions and not at home, in accordance with Pearson BTEC assessment requirements.

Weekly homework: Please encourage your child to complete all homework by the required deadlines. Homework will help reinforce the knowledge and skills covered during lessons.

Engagement with the course: Encourage your child to review what they have learned, ask questions when they are unsure and actively participate in lessons.

Catch-up sessions: Your child may occasionally be invited to attend a catch-up or additional support session. Please encourage them to attend when invited. These sessions are extremely valuable, particularly if lessons or work have been missed, and provide opportunities for more individualised support to help students get back on track.



What are we doing this half term? AQA Examining Board: **Half term1 (Sept-Oct)** Introduction to the course, Drawing skills: Oblique, Isometric and 1 & 2 point perspective, Orthographic projection. Unit 6.1: Investigation, Primary and Secondary research, The work of Others Designers/Companies, Unit test 6. Project based on Inclusion design structured as a mini NEA.

Assessments: End of unit tests, Practice exam papers and Revision sessions. End of Year Exam.

How can parents help? Take your child to the Design Museum and to the Victoria & Albert Museum. Discuss the objects in your home. Design is all around us!
Take an interest in the theory work they are doing, as well as getting them to show you their sketching work. Practice makes perfect, so encourage doodling! <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/examspecs/zby2bdm>

BTEC Sport



What are we doing this half term? Welcome to Btec Sport - This autumn term, Year 10 students starting the BTEC Tech Award in Sport (Level 1 & 2) will get an introduction to the course. They will learn key concepts in sports science, fitness, and training principles. Component 1 focuses on how the body responds to physical activity, covering the musculoskeletal and cardiorespiratory systems. Through practical activities and theory lessons, students will build knowledge to prepare for their coursework. We look forward to helping them develop their skills and understanding in sport.