



NEWSLETTER – 12TH JANUARY

MESSAGE FROM MRS RICHARDSON, HEAD

It has been lovely to welcome students back to Mount House this Monday. Staff returned on Thursday last week for a busy two days preparing for the new term as well as training. On Saturday we enjoyed welcoming our prospective year 7 students for entrance assessment day, and my thanks to the year 7 and 8 students who came in on Saturday morning to help the year 6 students feel at home.



In our assembly on Monday we talked about memory. Teaching Year 11 this year has reminded me just how difficult it is for young brains to retain the knowledge required for success in the GCSE examinations. There are, of course, things which can be done to assist this process, and I encourage younger students to start practising this even now.

Being 'active' in class is hugely important, and engaging with the lesson whether that be by asking questions or participating in discussions or taking notes. Explaining information to other people is also really helpful. Regular practice is also crucial – reviewing work, and learning 'little and often'. This is why using Duolingo, or Century Tech, to have regular practice over a period of time can have a really positive impact.

Finding emotionally significant 'hooks' really helps. What information has meaning to you as an individual? In History, we are learning about developments in understanding the causes and treatment of disease, so there are 'hooks' aplenty – words like epidemiology which five years ago meant very little to young people are now very current and therefore more memorable.

We do talk about the importance of sleep a lot, as while we are asleep, our brains process and consolidate memories – so compromising sleep by going to bed late, or being disturbed by a mobile device, also limits the success of learning. Eating a balanced diet, staying hydrated and having regular exercise also enhance cognitive function.

These are all habits for successful learners, and they are habits which can be adopted no matter the age of the student. Parents can help too – by reviewing topics and discussing lessons over dinner, for example. Can your child recall an important point of learning from each of their lessons today? As I write this, I am imagining the 'eye-roll' your teenager will give you when you ask this question, but please do persist – it is good for them!

We are looking forward to a productive term, and wish all our families a happy and successful 2024.



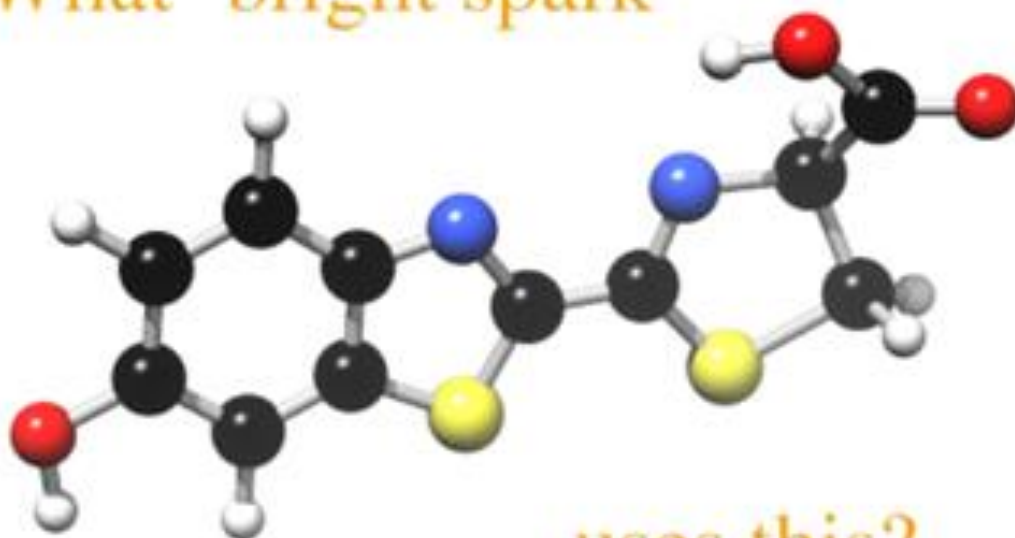
CAMBRIDGE CHEMISTRY CHALLENGE PUZZLES

The creators of the annual Cambridge Chemistry Challenge Paper have created a database of previous puzzles to stretch a student's knowledge of chemistry. Go to the website below to see if you have what it takes to solve the puzzles created by Cambridge Professors.

[Cambridge Chemistry Challenge Puzzles](#)

Here is an example of the first question.

What 'bright spark'



uses this?

Create a student account to log your progress. You can even get a certificate to demonstrate how well you did.

This is a great opportunity to extend yourself beyond the normal content in the school curriculum.

SKI TRIP

On Saturday 16th December, 29 Mount House students, accompanied by Mr Cooper, Miss Buckland, Mr Mather and Charlotte, met at school in the early hours of the morning, and from there travelled to the airport. The flight to Barcelona and the coach journey sped by in excited anticipation, and before they knew it, the group were in La Molina in the Spanish Pyrenees.



Some highlights of the trip:

- The morning wake-up from the year 11 boys, who beautifully serenaded each room with a Christmas carol at 7:00am (although we weren't sure if Miss Buckland and Charlotte were fans!).
- A shout out to some of our brilliant beginners from year 8, who went from never skiing before to tackling a challenging blue run by day four.
- Some big crashes - special mentions to Kimi R, Emir Y, Louca K, Irene D and Mr Mather (again? We're hoping Mr Mather will have learnt to ski by next year!).
- Skills in the bowling alley (high score to Krish P) and on the arcade games where Miss Buckland and Charlotte showed signs of a misspent youth and were undefeated, much to the annoyance of their opponents.
- Mr Cooper's goodbye song, brilliantly organised by the year 11 crooners and an angelic solo from Benji B.





Mr Cooper, Miss Buckland, Mr Mather and Charlotte hope all the students had a fantastic time and are looking forward to more skiing in the future.

TRIP TO SEVILLE: 8TH – 12TH MAY 2024



If any Spanish language students from years 9, 10 and 12 would like to join the exciting trip to Seville in May, please contact Mrs. Mariottini as soon as possible
MariottiniE@mounthouse.org.uk.

Saint Gabriel International, a Spanish international school which specializes in students learning Spanish as a second language, is hosting the trip. There will be language lessons with native-speaking teachers in the mornings and lots of fun activities in the afternoons, including visits to the Giralda and Cathedral, Plaza de España, Real Alcazares de Sevilla, a Flamenco dance experience, and a full-day trip to Cordoba.

For more details of the trip, please see the letters home from before Christmas, which will be re-sent to parents of students in years 9, 10 and 12.

This trip is a fantastic opportunity for students to not only enhance their Spanish language skills, but also immerse themselves in the vibrant culture and history of Seville. Saint Gabriel International is committed to providing an enriching and well-rounded experience that goes beyond the classroom.



PE

As the new term starts, students in years 7 and 8 have opted to take part in new activities during Games afternoons.

This week a group of boys enjoyed their first **trampolining** session, learning to maintain balance on the trampoline whilst performing the basic skills.

On Thursday 18th January, **Zenith Trampolining Club** will be visiting the school to identify young potential to represent their club. Coaches at Zenith are all qualified and have taught participants at national and international level. The club also works closely with the British Gymnastics syllabus, enabling members to work their way through the proficiency awards. Students who regularly attend Trampolining Club are all welcome to join and those who do not but are interested must sign up by 9:00am on Tuesday. The signup sheet will be on the sports board. The session will be between 13:00-14:00 next Thursday.

A group of girls took part in **table tennis** as a one-off lesson, learning how to serve and perform the forehand and backhand push.

All other students were fortunate enough to take part in a fun-filled **hockey** session organised and delivered by Southgate Hockey Club. Some students were identified by the coaches and parents will be contacted to invite students to join the club for trial sessions, but of course all students are welcome to join the club.

(www.southgatehc.org.uk/join)



Students in years 10 - 13 had the opportunity to change sports and try new ones. 13 students opted for **netball**, and we had a great afternoon out on the MUGA. There was a mix of students who'd played netball before and those who were new to it. This encouraged new and existing skills to be developed, as well teamwork and leadership skills.



Golf continues to offer plenty of opportunity for students to show off their skills, with year 11 and year 9 and 10 competing against each other, and year 7 and 8 competing against the freezing weather. Despite icy conditions, all groups have shown great ability and continue to enjoy access to some great facilities.

Athletes of the week:

Year 7: Alex H
 Year 8: Tilly H
 Year 9: Josh G
 Year 10: Rosie B
 Year 11: Deni I

U13 table tennis competition



On Tuesday, Luca G and Oscar R in year 7 attended the U13 ISA table tennis tournament. Both students played exceptionally well against very tough competition, including one player who is ranked fifth in the country. Both Luca and Oscar showcased exceptional skill and sportsmanship. As the group stage unfolded, Oscar's prowess propelled him into the knockout round, while Luca, demonstrating remarkable resilience, engaged in fierce competition in the plate cup. Both students should be very proud of their performance and for representing the school so well.

CO-CURRICULAR

This week students planned their 'Star Bakes' during after-school baking club. The theme is animals and students have been exploring lots of different ideas and on paper have designed some fantastic bakes. They will need to ensure that they have their ingredients for the week commencing 12.02.2024. If possible, part of the bake should be completed at home and part at school. We look forward to showcasing the work of students.

The booklet for Baking Club this half term can be found on the school website. Please follow this link: www.mounthouse.org.uk/co-curricular

During lunchtime baking club students baked chocolate chip cookies - this bake is always a highlight!

WHERE ART AND TECHNOLOGY MEET

Spotted on Miss Colet's BENQ board this week, a fantastic piece of artwork by Hina, Ena and Kyle...





Weekly Menu

Week 2

MENUS NEXT WEEK

Monday

Soup of the day served with freshly baked bread

Honey Glazed Chicken wings with Garlic and Herbs

Vegetarian option
Macaroni cheese

Snack Option
Baked Potato
Or
Fresh Pasta

Served With
Oven Baked Herb Potatoes
Roasted Carrots
peas
Green Salad

Dessert
Cherry and Bramley pie
With
Fresh double Cream

Tuesday

Soup of the day served with freshly baked bread

Turkey Masala with a Rich With Coconut Rice, mini coriander naan bread and mango chutney

Vegetarian option
Roasted sweet Potato and Chickpea Curry

Snack Option
Baked Potato with Various Fillings
Or
Fresh Pasta

Served With
Roasted Broccoli
Buttered sweetcorn

Dessert
Poached Pear Crumble
With Vanilla
Custard

Wednesday

Soup of the day served with freshly baked bread

Dish of the day
Italian Beef Lasagne with Garlic Bread

Vegetarian option
Roasted Vegetable and Puy Lentil Lasagne

Snack Option
Baked Potatoes
Or
Fresh Pasta

Served With
Sauteed Greens and Kale
Roasted Fennel Carrots

Dessert
Lemon Sherbet
Drizzle Cake

Thursday

Soup of the day served with freshly baked bread

PUPILS CHOICE

Themed Day Menu

Students Choice

Friday

Soup of the day served with freshly baked bread

Dish of the day
Breaded cod
Fillet with Tartar Sauce

Or
Salmon and dill fish cakes with tartar sauce and Lemon

Vegetarian option
Vegetable chilli with Rice
Bowl with melted cheese
Vegan Friendly

Snack Option
Jacket Potatoes
Or
Fresh Pasta

Served With
Crispy Spiced hand cut Wedges
Mushy Peas
Minted Garden Peas

Dessert
Blueberry cake

