Parent Information Booklet – S3 Curriculum Autumn Term 2 2026

English – Mrs Thompson

S3 pupils will be working on activities around the theme of 'Power and Conflict' this term. We will be reading and analysing the novel 'Of Mice and Men' a novel by John Steinbeck, exploring characterisation, themes, setting, the writer's techniques and language. They will be developing their critical essay skills, building on their knowledge, and will write a National 5 past paper critical essay.

RUAE - Reading for Understanding and Evaluation – skills will be explicitly taught and also embedded in the study of literature. They will learn how to analyse a range of literary devices used by a writer to create a particular effect and will write about their impact on the reader. They will be taught how to evaluate how successful the writer is in employing these techniques. This work will help pupils prepare for the RUAE exam paper at National 5.

Parents can help their child at home by asking them about the novel they are reading in class, the RUAE skills they have learnt and by encouraging them to read a variety of fiction and non-fiction.

Homework will be shared via TEAMS and is written on the classroom whiteboard. Pupils will be given handouts, where appropriate. Please encourage your child to check TEAMS/ASSIGNMENTS and to let me know if they are having any problems accessing TEAMS.

English – Mr Jones

Students will begin the term by completing their workshop on essay writing and respond, under timed conditions, to past National 5 critical essay prompts based on the text studied last term, 'Of Mice and Men'.

Once this has been completed, the class will explore the dramatic text, 'Blood Brothers'. We will continue to develop our appreciation and understanding of dramatic terminology, literary devices and analytical skills. Pupils will also have the opportunity to respond in personal, reflective and creative ways to the text.

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Parents can help their child at home by asking them about the development of their essay writing skills, the play they are reading in class, as well as the RUAE skills they are learning. As always, encouraging them to read a variety of fiction and non-fiction would be of benefit. Promoting increasingly challenging texts and engaging with current events would be useful.

Maths

Mr Archibald's Maths Class

We will continue to work towards preparing pupils for completing National 5 Maths and Applications of Maths in S4 next session. Pupils will complete Pythagoras, Time-Distance-Speed and proportion topics. In addition to this we will continue to work on numeracy skills required for next year, all of which will be assessed at the end of term. Homework will continue to be handed out weekly. The websites below will allow you to support your child at home.

Parents can help their students by asking them to talk about the maths that they are covering each week. Students can also use the following apps and websites for help:

https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize

N4 Apllications (mathsrevision.com)

Free National 3 Maths - National 5 Maths

Mrs Chatterton's Maths Class

We will continue to work towards preparing pupils for completing National 5 Applications of Maths in S4 next session. Pupils will complete topics such as perimeter, area, volume, scale drawings, Pythagoras' Theorem, tolerance and gradient. In addition to this we will continue to work on our non-calculator work and exam technique as well as banking some of the unit assessments at National 4 level allowing pupils to have a maths qualification at this level in back up prior to S4. Experience of these unit assessments supports pupils to gain experience of the wording and strategies needed to complete SQA level questions. Homework will continue to be handed out on a Thursday and due to be returned Wednesday the following week. The following websites will allow you to support your child at home.

N4 Apllications (mathsrevision.com)

https://www.national5maths.co.uk/free-national-4-maths/

Scottish Qualifications Authority - SQA

Home - BBC Bitesize

Ms Wilson's Maths Class

Students have now completed their unit on Shape, Space and Data. We have now begun to work on our new unit: Time.

In the Time unit pupils will be looking at ordering days of the week and months of the year, using analogue and digital clocks, understanding am/pm, converting between 12-hr to 24-hr clocks, travel timetables and working out time intervals.

Parents can help their students by asking them to talk about the maths that they are covering each week. Students can also use the following apps and websites for help:

http://www.scruffs.shetland.co.uk/nat2apps.html

https://www.topmarks.co.uk/time/teaching-clock

https://cfemathshub.com/national-2-lifeskills-mathematics#units

RME

This term S3 will be analysing and evaluating moral decisions and the consequences of choices of characters from the film 2012 film version of 'Les Miserables'. They will complete this topic by presenting a learning poster linking actions and beliefs of characters with philosophical approaches to decision making. To support your young person, you can ask them to explain the different ethical stances and help them to apply them in situations they face on a day-to-day basis.

RMPS

This term the S3 elective class will complete our unit on Christianity as a world religion in particular the teachings and miracles of Jesus and how they relate to the lives of Christians today. After this, pupils have the freedom to select a unit on a moral issue of their choice. Please discuss your young person's learning with them and support them to investigate further through books, films and news articles.

Modern Studies

This term we will be finishing off our Brazil unit where we have looked at inequalities faced by people in Brazil and the problem of crime in the country. Pupils will then complete a short unit assessment covering the key areas from this unit. All lessons covered will be put on Teams for pupils to access and revise before the assessment. We will be developing key skills needed for National Modern Studies such as PEE paragraphs and skills questions.

You can support your child by encouraging them to keep up-to-date with current events, watching the news, documentaries or reading quality newspaper articles. Please also encourage them to revise for their unit assessment.

History

This term we will focus on our Scottish History unit and begin learning to evaluate the reasons why women won the vote, with a Scottish focus. We will be using a range of primary and secondary sources to help us judge this. Pupils will be encouraged to think critically and to organise their thoughts based on the evidence before them. To support your child at home you can encourage them to watch history documentaries on any topic, especially those on BBC iPlayer as these expose students to a wider historical timeframe.

Geography

We're starting this term with 'Rivers'. Firstly, we'll recap the water cycle and find out why we need to manage our global freshwater resource. The class will then be studying the formation of river features and will undertake some OS map work. We'll also be investigating the Carlisle floods, looking and causes, impacts and management of the event.

At home your child can work on their general geographic knowledge by looking at google Earth, or an atlas, complete Geography quizzes on sites such as JetPunk or Sporcle.

Art

S3 pupils will complete their papier-mâché vessels, developing construction, modelling and painting skills alongside creativity, problem-solving and perseverance. They will then be introduced to landscape art, exploring composition, perspective, colour and tone to create a sense of depth and atmosphere.

As a way of providing extra incentive to practice at home, why not challenge your young person to create some drawings of landscapes that can be seen in their local environment.

Physical Education

S3 pupils will be undertaking blocks in the following activities:

Tchoukball and Netball where pupils will develop skills and play full court games and conditioned games.

Social Dance, where pupils will learn and practice a variety of traditional Scottish Country dances accompanied by both Ceilidh music and pop music.

Please encourage your child to be as active a possible outside of school. This will help develop fitness levels that can be applied to many sporting activities. Also, encouraging you child to engage with local sports clubs helps develop skills, confidence and determination all of which will help them succeed in Physical Education

Our S3 Elective PE Pupils will also engage in blocks of Trampolining, Basketball and Pickleball as well as taking part in theory-based lessons to continue to develop their knowledge and understanding of Physical Education

Personal Support Programme

S3 - Employability – Pupils in Mrs Ginns' class will finish Units 1 & 2 of the SQA Level 4 Employability Award. Pupils will also receive a talk from Ailsa Paton on managing money. The S3 pupils in Ms Jamieson's class are preparing for their Christmas Coffee morning that will be held towards the end of the term.

Home Economics

This term, pupils will complete their **Food Hygiene unit** and sit an assessment. Please encourage your child to **revise thoroughly**.

We'll then begin a unit on the **Functional Properties of Ingredients**, learning how fat, flour, sugar, raising agents, and eggs contribute to food production — especially during **Christmas cookery**.

How You Can Support

- Discuss ingredient roles when cooking together
- Help your child prepare for their hygiene assessment

- Explore **Christmas cake decorating ideas** — we'll use fondant icing and techniques like **modelling, piping, stencilling**, and **cutters**

🎄 **Finished cakes will be displayed at our Christmas Coffee Morning on Wednesday 10th December — everyone is warmly invited to come along and see their work!**

Practical Craft Skills

Pupils attend Practical Craft Skills for three periods per week and this term we will complete the manufacturing of our first model; a mirror frame. Whilst pupils will be learning about manufacturing in wood, we will also be working through the knowledge and understanding work that accompanies this unit.

This term the knowledge and understanding unit will concentrate on:

- Hand tools
- Machines

Once we have completed the manufacture of the mirror from pupils will be manufacturing a money box, which is made from wood, metal and acrylic.

To support your young person please encourage them to use Teams at home to catch up on any work missed and to recap on the learning in class.

Engineering Science

We have completed the contexts and challenges unit and most of the electronics and control unit. Currently, our focus is on mechanisms and structures. This unit requires a good degree of numeracy skills and can be challenging. We will be studying:

- Drive systems – using gear trains, belts and chains to gain mechanical advantage and torque
- Pneumatics – designing and testing compressed air systems
- Structures – performing basic beam calculations to calculate unknown forces acting on a member
- Materials – learning how to select appropriate materials for use in structures in relation to stress and strain

Biology

This term we will work through the "Respiration and Genetics" topic which includes the following key areas

- Respiration
- Microbes in Industry
- Genetic Engineering
- Reproduction
- Genetics

Pupils should look out for assessment date and revision resource notices on TEAMS when they get onto the last key area. You can support your child by ensuring that they undertake revision prior to

the end of unit assessment. All resources including learning outcomes, PowerPoints, worksheets, videos and revision materials are all available through Microsoft Teams.

You and your child could read newspaper articles about Genetic Engineering.
https://www.yourgenome.org/facts/what-is-genetic-engineering.

Chemistry

It will be a busy term in S3 chemistry with pupils getting stuck into two topics Chemical bonding and acids and bases.

We have been finding out why atoms join together and how this affects the properties of everyday substances. Pupils have been learning how atoms share or transfer electrons and investigating why some substances conduct electricity while others don't.

We will also explore the world of acids and alkalis. Pupils will use indicators to test different solution, investigating the pH scale and discovering what happens when acids react with other substances. Along the way, we will be learning how to make and name different salts

Practical work will form an important part of our lessons, giving pupils the chance to develop their lab skills, work with others and put their knowledge into practice.

All of this is helping pupils build a strong foundation for National 5 chemistry

Parents/guardians can support their child by asking a few simple questions

- Ask for what they have been learning – e.g can they explain the difference between covalent and ionic bonding
- Spot the chemistry around the house – ask your child whether everyday substances such as vinegar, lemon juice and soap are acidic or alkaline
- Encourage them to explain. Ask why adding water to an acid changes it pH , or why some substances conduct electricity

Physics

This term we will cover the Space topic, looking at the different objects which astronomers observe in Space and how we define them. We will look in some detail at satellites, investigating the link between their height and the time they take to orbit the Earth and then exploring the physics involved in communications satellites such as the action of parabolic reflectors. We will also learn about other uses for satellites. We will then start examining the risks and challenges associated with space exploration and finally examine gravitational force in more detail.

To complete the topic we will build a water rocket to demonstrate how Newton's Laws affect its launch.

At the end of the topic there will be a formal homework and assessment.

Towards the end of the term we will revisit Electricity, building on the circuit work carried out in S2 and introducing new concepts such as electrical resistance.

Parents can help by encouraging pupils to explain what they have learned during lessons and to direct them to videos and clips on sites such as YouTube which show information about space travel.

For extra revision BBC Bitesize is a good place to start:

https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zqm4fcw/revision/1

Business Management

Pupils will be working towards National 4 Business, a Qualifications Scotland course designed to develop an understanding of how businesses operate and respond to their customers and the wider business environment. The course includes topics such as Business in Action, covering how businesses operate, customer needs and the main functional areas of a business, as well as Influences on Business, which looks at internal and external factors affecting business activity

To support your child please urge them to watch the news daily as well as reading reputable newspapers.

Mr Clement's class will be completing the basics of accounting unit and will begin the Qualification Scotland Web Apps Spreadsheet unit. This Unit is designed to provide learners with basic knowledge, understanding and practical problem-solving skills in using spreadsheet applications, through a range of practical and knowledge tasks.

You can support your child by allowing them to use Microsoft Excel to create simple tables, enter data, use basic formulas and functions, and present information clearly. Everyday activities, such as planning a shopping budget or tracking household expenses, provide excellent opportunities to build confidence, accuracy and practical problem-solving skills.

Music

Performance Pupils will continue to build their playing skills across their 2 chosen instruments. Pupils will have a submission of one piece recorded on each instrument by 12th of December. This will help inform levels for those taking music in S4. Pupils will also be learning about what a good performance sounds like to support their self-evaluation.

Understanding We will continue to work on music literacy to help us when reading music. Pupils will be completing their popular music assessment and then learning about Scottish music. Pupils should use “mymusiconline” as well as the work and presentations on their Microsoft TEAM to revise the concepts covered in class.

Creating We will be learning about the basics of using the digital software “Sibelius” and composing our own piece in a Scottish style.

For all aspects of learning, pupils will receive feedback through their Learning Records as well as have Learning Conversations with the class teacher, to ensure they know how to improve their skills in all areas.

To support your young person, please try and instil the concept of improving through practise-getting it wrong is a major part of getting it right in music! If they have access to a musical instrument at home, I encourage them to practise regularly to improve their playing. The music department is also open to all pupils for practise at lunch times. Please encourage your young person to listen to different genres of music and try to pick out instruments they can hear, as well as consolidating their learning by using “mymusiconline”.

Computer Science

S3 pupils receive three 45-minute Computing Science lessons each week and one piece of homework per term.

This term, pupils will develop their data analysis skills using Python and pandas. Lessons will include short explanations, demonstrations, guided tasks and independent challenges, with each activity building on previous learning. Pupils should regularly revisit class activities, practise their skills and use the course resources to support their learning. Pupils will learn to load datasets into pandas Data Frames, explore their contents and select relevant information. They will use Python to sort and filter data, perform calculations and produce summaries. As they progress, pupils will create charts, identify patterns and trends, and use evidence to answer questions and draw conclusions. Problem solving and checking accuracy will be central to this work. Pupils will identify and correct errors in their code, handle missing or inconsistent data, and check whether their results are sensible. Independent challenges will encourage them to select appropriate techniques and explain their findings clearly.

By the end of the term, pupils will have gained experience in using Python and pandas to organise, analyse and present data, while developing their confidence in programming to solve problems and make informed decisions.

British Sign Language

Pupils will continue their learning of British Sign Language. This term we will be looking at **family**, **descriptions**, **relationships** and using sentences to describe people. Also, **hobbies/interests**, **likes and dislikes** and **Christmas** signs & songs. Pupils will construct sentences using the correct BSL sentence structure and engage in short conversations.

Homework will be online via the sign language course pupils are enrolled in www.british-sign.co.uk. This can be accessed through any device with internet. Pupils will be encouraged to revise material learnt in their lessons or catch up on any work missed. Log in details have been emailed to each pupil's school glow account.

You can support your child at home by encouraging them to log-in to their BSL account and practice what they have been covering in class.