



Robert Clack School of Science A Specialist College Newsletter

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Maths &
Computing



October 2009

Science News



Science

Scientists of the week

This month's scientists of the week are:

Year 7 – Omotola Olaleye, Ashleigh Spong, Ibukunolu Kuforiji, Daisy Wood

Year 8 – Hannah Sindrey, Georgia Inns, Pelumi Olayemi-Hassan

Year 9 (Green Lane) – Connie Priestley, Elizabeth Agar

Year 9 (Gosfield) – Eddie Morris, Jamie Beardsall

Year 10 – Salome Apeawin

Year 11 – Amanda Ngonyama, Sam Eddy

These students have demonstrated outstanding ability, attitude towards their work or great improvement in their effort in science. It is a prestigious award and students should feel rightly proud that they have been selected by their teachers.

Sixth Form Scientists Complete Pharmacy Workshop

A group of year ambitious year 13 scientists including myself recently met with Kim Blythe, a pharmacist who works for a large company. Attending this career session has definitely become something memorable to me, because I had the opportunity to understand the life of a pharmacist including the demands of the career and what her motivation was to go into pharmacy. Also, I learned some basic knowledge of the course, such as the course structure, requirements and the wide variety of career prospects a degree in pharmacy at university would offer me. This experience has motivated me to pursue a career in the field of pharmacy in the future.

I hope the school continues to open careers sessions like this to sixth form students and those lower down in the school because this will guide them to choose the appropriate courses for the future.

Once again, I want to take this opportunity to thank the school for giving me the chance meet with Kim. I hope that other students can get similar chances to get motivated to pursue a career that will suit them most and help them become future leaders in whatever profession they may enter.

Nana Appiah (Y13)

The Language Department

It's been a very busy term for pupils in their language lessons and the language department has seen a lot of 'firsts':

The first French A-Level students started their Key Stage 5 studies in September and have got off to a flying start.

The first Spanish GCSE group carrying on their studies into year 11 and setting a high standard for the year 10 class who are equally doing extremely well.

The first Spanish group at Key Stage 3. Last year pupils were asked if they would like to start studying Spanish with a view to continuing their studies at GCSE next year. A class of 30 pupils expressed a keen interest and have shown overwhelming enthusiasm since the course began in September.

The first speaking classes with the Language Assistant. Each week a selection of pupils have the opportunity to work in small groups of 3 to 5 pupils conversing in French with our new assistant who is a native French speaker.

Pupils have also been taking advantage of some of our new resources such as the website Linguascope (which can be accessed from home, username: rclack, password: robertc) and French and Spanish language magazines.

TRIP TO NORMANDY

In September a group of year 9 pupils had the opportunity to go on a five day trip to Normandy in the north of France. The trip is jam-packed with lots of fun activities, most of which are conducted in French by a French-only speaking instructor!

One day was spent in a château learning how to rock climb, to do archery and various other amusing activities with a yummy lunch in the grounds of the manor house.

The group also visited the beaches where allied troops landed during the Second World War. The museum we visited in the morning was extremely informative and a particular favourite was the 360° cinema that shows a very moving film illustrating the experiences of people who lived through this period in History.

Finally pupils visited the Mont St Michael, a monastery on a peninsula that gets cut off by the tide each day. Pupils enjoyed a tour of the monastery and then an opportunity to stroll round and shop in the beautiful village at the foot of the peninsula.

The trip was enjoyed immensely by both pupils and staff, and pupils' behaviour was a credit to both the school and their families.

Maths and Computing Specialism

Computer Literacy & Numeracy Courses

Last year saw the launch of Robert Clack Computer Literacy class for parents. This was an exciting venture as much progress was made and a handful of parents attended.

Because of this success, in addition to a Computer Literacy course a Level 1 Adult numeracy class will also be run. This is a recognised qualification that can be used to develop and evidence every day numeracy skills and can be done as a precursor to a Maths GCSE. It is a very flexible tutor lead course which will be completed in sessions. Classes will take place once a week at Robert Clack after school. The course will take approximately 60 hours to complete.

Essex University Trip

In December Year 12 BTEC ICT pupils be going on a school trip to University of Essex in Colchester. This is an excellent opportunity for pupils to get a taste of ICT in Higher Education.

Last year 23 of the BTEC ICT Year 12 pupils went. This was much fun for everyone involved. The day began with a lecture about Energy in the Future; pupils were then given the opportunity to generate electricity for lamps and power tools by using exercise bikes. Next we were shown around the university campus and given a brief explanation about the PhD laser projects being developed. The day was finished off with an exciting programming lab where everyone (including teachers) was set the challenge of controlling various cartoon characters. An exciting time was had by all!



THE JAGUAR CARS
MATHS IN MOTION
CHALLENGE FOR SCHOOLS

Jaguar Cars in Motion Maths Challenge

Last year pupils have met once a week after school in the build their own computer generated Formula One cars. Each car is individually built and designed for a specific Formula One circuit.

Pupils started off by designing cars for the Silverstone Circuit. This was a very exciting process as an array of factors needs to be taken in to consideration. The angles and lengths of the track need to be measured in order to calculate the required amount of petrol, the number of pit stops required and the gear ratios. This was just a fraction of the variables that the group had to calculate before they raced their cars against each other.

This club will be starting again soon and pupils will be entered in to a borough wide competition where they will race against other schools.

Gardening Club

Gardening Club was initially started because I wanted students to know you could actually grow and eat your own vegetables.



The recession has hit us all in some way so I thought it would be a good idea to show students that growing your own food is educational, fun and it can save money.



In my role as a Teaching Assistant I work closely with students that have social issues, I run social skills groups to help them with their individual problems. During these sessions we sit as a group and eat lunch to show you can have a good time sitting around a table talking to each other whilst eating a good healthy meal. Whilst talking to these students I was amazed that most of them didn't realise you could grow your own vegetables.



I decided to speak to my Line Manager about possibly introducing some gardening activities into my social skills groups, and that is where the original idea of Gardening Club came from.

The Gardening Club officially started in March/April time this year. We have grown a variety of vegetables including runner beans, peppers, leeks, potatoes and beetroot all from seed. We have also grown tomatoes, cucumber and chillies.

We have bought a large greenhouse, a metal lock-up and all the necessary gardening equipment, along with waterproof jackets, trousers and wellies to keep the students nice and warm through the long winter months ahead.



During the summer we took the Gardening Group to Bluewater to have a look at the Recycling techniques they use and the new vegetable plot they were starting. We walked around acres of land to see all the ways they use natural resources. We were made to feel very welcome and had a great day!

Exciting New Project

At the moment it's our first winter in the garden and the ground is very dry so it's been a tough few weeks digging out all the new plots ready for our new crops. We are very excited about our new project which is growing fruit as well as continuing with the vegetables. We have just taken delivery of a selection of Apple Trees and a Pear Tree and are now awaiting the arrival of our Strawberry Plants. We will also be growing Raspberries, Grapes and Rhubarb during the winter months.





We also have a new staff member, who joined our team in September, Mrs Webster, watch out for her wellie boots!!

It's been a very enjoyable few months and a lot of hard work but I am very proud of what we have achieved so far, all of this year's crops have gone to a very good use, we have made beetroot chutney and used the vegetables to make various soups and Mrs Hopkins has used some of our produce in her food lessons.

I would just like to thank Mr Platt our Site Manager, Mr Fox and Mr Pickard for all their help and support. Also, we would like to thank Bluewater for donating some railway sleepers to edge our new plots.

I look forward to another successful year with my gardening gang!

Gardening Club

Days and Times:

Tuesday..... lunchtime..... 12:30 – 13:00

Wednesday..... After School..... 15:15 – 16:15 (depending on daylight)

Thursday..... lunchtime..... 12:30 – 13:00

If Mrs Wilkins is working in the garden she always welcomes help but parents/carers must be aware of this first.

Thanks for reading about our club!

Mrs Wilkins (chief gardener).....!

English homework

In GCSE English and English Literature, homework is set in accordance with whole school policy. A specific day is allocated to each year group. Individual days for each subject are allocated by the Head of Year. We anticipate that the majority of homework will take approximately 45 minutes to complete. However, when pupils are preparing for their external examination, timed essays will be need to be done in the time allocated by the examination board. For some questions this will be one hour. We would normally expect the children to complete the homework within two days of it being set. However, we do understand that, with coursework deadlines in other subjects at key times in the year, pupils may sometimes need a little longer. If this is the case and the deadline does need to be extended, it is important that your child informs the English teacher in advance.

The type of homework varies depending upon the nature of the work being studied in class. English homework may include: written work (e.g. a timed examination question), reading, research work, preparation for an oral presentation in class or the gathering of materials.

High standards of work are expected and pupils are expected to meet deadlines. Pupils not completing homework adequately may be asked to repeat it.

Mathematics Homework

The mathematics department believes that homework is an essential part of the learning process and that it has a vital role to play in the educational development of the student.

Mathematics homework will be of 1 hour duration, given once a week. The students will be allowed at least 2 days to complete it. This will allow time for the students to see the teacher if there are any problem which they might need help with.

The purpose of the homework is:

- For the student to consolidate work already taught
- For the student to practice their mathematical skills
- For the student to increase their mathematical knowledge base
- To promote consistency and accuracy in assessments
- To aid the student in their revision
- To show the teacher areas of strength and weakness of individual students
- To give students an indication of their progress
- To provide evidence to support the levels of attainment reached by a the student
- Provide a basis for discussion between teacher and student on previous targets

Homeworks could be

- Formal, routine tasks
- Investigative
- Media research
- Project work

Homework from the science department

Years 7 & 8

The change in curriculum has had a significant impact on the way in which the science department are using homework. We will now be setting larger pieces of work on a less frequent basis. The homework itself may be a full scientific investigation or detailed research project.

Each piece of homework is tailored to allow pupils to spend at least an hour but is open ended which will allow those pupils who wish to stretch themselves to do so over several hours of work. The increase in time required for completion is reflected by the reduction in homework being set.

Homework is more likely to be set every two to three weeks and a longer time for completion will be given. You may see homework being written into the

pupil's planner every week but this will sometimes be gentle reminders to pupils that the work has been set and its due date is approaching.

An important note is that the teacher may feel the class will benefit from a piece of work unlike that described above. This may also be set from time to time but is in addition to the above rather than instead.

Year 9

Pupils are now entering their GCSEs and as such the homework requirements increase as well. The year 9 pupils will be receiving a mixture of styles including that described above for year 7 & 8. The time spent on the homework will also increase, however, it will be set as and when the teacher feels it is most beneficial to the pupil's progress. Homework will not be set for the sake of ensuring the pupil has work to complete. As a result some weeks the pupils may find they have a small piece but others they have a large investigation to complete. The time allocated to complete this will complement the amount of work required.

Languages homework

The French department gives homework once a week and each pupil will need to spend around 30 minutes weekly on their homework. Outstanding homework will be awarded merits given by the classroom teacher. There are also sanctions if homework is not completed and this will be clearly explained to the pupils by their classroom teacher.

History Homework Policy

The History Department aims to set homework at least every two weeks for Key Stage 3 students although there may be periods when it is set in consecutive weeks because of the type of task. This is because activities range from researching an individual or event, creating a timeline or poster about a specific period of time and writing an extending piece of work on the topic being studied. Normally homework tasks last for half an hour but this can vary especially if it is a written piece of work. In the event a student fails to complete their homework a subject detention will be set. With examination groups homework tasks are given to compliment the course and as such there are periods when homework will be more frequent and could require more time.

Religious Education homework

This year the Year 7s have been given the opportunity to choose which homework they complete. They are required to complete a homework project based on units that they are studying during that term. They have around 12 weeks to complete their project, the expectation is they complete an hours worth of work every third week. At the end of their project each student will present the work that they have completed.

Years 8 and 9 will usually be set a piece of homework every third week and they will be required to spend around an hour on this piece of work. There is a

view of launching the homework project scheme across the whole of Key Stage Three later this year.

Geography Homework Policy

The Geography Department will aim to set homework once a week for most groups but this will depend on the task set and the group of pupils involved.

Typical homework tasks may include:

- A piece of written work
- Gathering information
- Preparing material for a lesson
- Drawing a map or a diagram
- Watching a specified programme
- Revising work for a test

Art department homework policy

Key Stage 3

Art home work is set every 2 weeks

In years 7, 8 and 9 students get the chance to work in a variety of Media techniques.

Students are asked to research Artist and Art Movement.

Pupils are expected to produce work of a good quality and home work must always be completed on the due date set by the teacher.

Anyone failing to complete home work will be given a 15 minute detention and home work must be handed in the following morning.

In year 7 pupils are expected to spend at least 30 minutes on Art home work.

In year 8 pupils are expected to spend at least 45 minutes on Art home work.

In year 9 pupils are expected to spend at least 1 hour on Art home work.

All home work must be completed in sketch books unless the teacher requests otherwise.

Key Stage 4

At Key Stage 4 homework will relate to the GCSE specifications.

In Key Stage 4, this should be a minimum of 1 hour in Y10 and 2 hours in Year 11, and will include learning, a preparation piece or a complete written piece of research or image.

Homework may take various forms, for example:

- learning spellings
- drawing sketches
- producing images in ways other than drawing.
- drawing from observation
- reading a specific text
- completing refinements of previously marked work
- redrafting corrected work
- research

If a student fails to produce homework- he/she will be allowed to bring it the following day. The student should note the reminder in his/her planner. If the student fails to bring it in, he/she will have an automatic detention on the next occasion staff see them (next lesson). This will be recorded in the department's detention book.

KS3 ICT homework

This is set when the unit of study allows the teacher to get pupils to either, prepare for the next lesson or when work needs to be finished by the next lesson. There is no set timetable.

As most homework involves working on a computer the pupils should be encouraged to purchase a USB memory stick so that the work can be taken home or to any other PC, and returned to school in a suitable format.

This is especially true for the year 9s as they now are covering one and a half units of the BTEC course in KS4 and any lost work will result in it being done again; the memory stick allows them to have a back up copy of work stored on their hard disks either in school or at home.

Music homework

Homework is set once a half term and is due in the following lesson. It will involve either written research tasks or require them to practice a part they are learning on an instrument. Actually having the instrument isn't required, students can still practice fingerings, and memorising lines without them.

Homework will require no more than 30 minutes and students who fail to do their homework will be set a half hour music detention to be completed after school on a day specified by their teacher.

Homework for Food Technology Year 7/8/9

Students will be given homework during their weekly Food lesson. Homework is generally every two weeks and can be any of the following

- Bringing ingredients, equipment, money.
- Written work. Research.
- Producing posters /labels etc

A list of ingredients/equipment is given to students a week before their practical cooking lesson. Anyone who does not bring their ingredients will be given a 30 min detention unless a valid written explanation is provided. Detentions will also be set if written homework is not completed.

Design & Technology homework

In Design Technology we would expect pupils to receive homework once a fortnight. The homework should take around 20 minutes to complete. In the event of a pupil failing to hand in a piece of homework a 15 minute detention will be issued and the homework would still be required.

Psychology

Homework is set once per week for GCSE students. This should take approximately thirty minutes.

Homework is set every lesson for A level students, each homework should take approximately one hour.

All homework tasks support previous learning on a current topic.

Detention will be set for ALL pupils who do not complete homework.

Drama Homework

In Year 10 Drama homework will often be a development or extension of work done in the lesson. Students can expect to be asked to research subjects such as current news event, important theatre practitioners or dramatic genres, as well as writing in role, evaluating practical work and learning lines.

Each homework task will vary in the length of time required for completion, depending on the topic being studied. However, students should expect to be spending at least fifteen minutes a week on Drama homework.

In Year 11 Drama homework will relate directly to coursework tasks and therefore the frequency of setting, and the length of time needed to complete the work, will increase.

PE homework

Pupils taking GCSE PE will receive one piece of home work per week. The form the home work takes will vary depending on topic being covered. Any pupil who does not return homework on time will receive a departmental detention to catch up.

Photography Club

The Robert Clack Photography Club has started again this year. It is open to all students and runs on Thursdays between 3.00pm to 4.00 pm in rooms 25 and 24.



We hope to hold more competitions and even exhibitions this year so if you are interested bring your digital camera and come along and join in!

The Club would like to hold a “Historical Fashion Show” soon so if you have any old clothes or would like to make some see me for information.

Mr. Morgan

School's Counselling Service

A counsellor from the health service will be in school twice a week, holding timetabled sessions in the morning and a drop-in session one lunchtime. All sessions are confidential.

This service is available to all pupils on the Green Lane site, however, if you do not wish your son/daughter to have access to this facility please contact the School office on 020 8270 4222 before Wednesday 4th November, otherwise we will assume your child can use this facility.

Should you require any further information or wish to discuss the matter please contact Mrs Kay on 020 8270 4222.

School Uniform

The School aims to develop in its pupils a corporate identity. All pupils in Years 7 to 11 are expected to be appropriately dressed in school uniform at all times. All students in Year 12 and 13 are expected to follow the Sixth Form dress code.

For Girls	For Boys
Black Blazer with school badge	Black Blazer with school badge
Black tailored trousers (6-8" hem width) or	Black trousers
Black knee length skirt box pleated from the waist	White cotton shirt with collar
White cotton shirt with collar	School tie worn to waist length
School tie worn to waist length	V necked black jumper (optional)
Plain black or flesh coloured tights or black ankle length turnover socks	Conventional black leather shoes. *
Conventional flat leather black shoes with fitting heel and toe (no 'fashion shoes' e.g. stiletto heels, platforms or ankle straps). *	
V necked black jumper (optional)	
Narrow hair bands, which are in keeping with school uniform colours (Red, black or white)	

*Kicker shoes can be worn in school only if all the stitching and soles are black and any Kicker tags are removed. **KICKER BOOTS ARE NOT ALLOWED.** Boots, “Timberland”, Lacoste, trainers, baseball caps and cardigans/tank tops are not allowed. Jewellery, including earrings, is not permitted. It may be confiscated and kept in a safe place until collected by parents. Also, extremes in appearance cosmetically such as make-up, false nails and unnatural hair extension or dye are not allowed. The Governors reserve the right to send pupils home who are inappropriately dressed

The following items are also not allowed onto the school premises: chewing gum, cigarettes, lighters, matches, correction fluids, aerosols, mobile phones, pagers, laser pens and portable music devices including MP3/4 players and iPods. (The Governing Body allows all students in emergency circumstances to use the phone to contact home free of charge).

Bicycles

A reminder to pupils that bicycles should not be brought to school. Also we have been informed by local residents living in the vicinity of the back entrance of the Green Lane site that they have been advised to lock the footpath which runs parallel to the area behind the lower school kitchens. Bicycles should not therefore be stored in this area. Any bikes in this area can be removed.

Medical Appointments

Whilst we understand that sometimes it is necessary for students to attend medical appointments during schools hours, we would ask that you keep such appointments to a minimum as it can be detrimental to your child’s education for them to regularly miss lessons.

In addition please can parents be aware that if students are to be withdrawn from school part way through the day the school needs to have this in writing. It is important for our records that students’ withdrawal is not requested over the phone. We thank you with your support in this matter.

Dates for your diary

Thurs 5 November	Module 5 P1 & Linear Maths P1 – am
Mon 9 November	GCSE English Paper 1 am
Mon 9 November	4.30-7.30pm Year 7 Parents meeting with Form Tutors
Tue 10 November	Module 5 P2 & Linear Maths P2 am
Thurs 12 November	GCSE English P2 am GCSE Leisure & Tourism pm
Fri 13 November	Module 1 Maths pm Module 3 maths am



Holiday Dates

Friday 23 October	Break up for half term
Mon 2 November	Return to school
Thurs 17 December	Break up for Christmas
Tue 5 January	Return to School
Fri 12 February	Break up for half term
Mon 22 February	Return to school
Thurs 1 April	Break up for Easter
Mon 19 April	Return to school
Mon 3 May	Bank holiday
Fri 28 May	Break up for half term
Mon 7 June	Return to school
Tue 20 July	Break up for Summer

