



Maltings
Academy
To make our best better

YEAR 7 HANDBOOK
A GUIDE FOR NEW PARENTS

AUTUMN TERM 2009

Thank you for choosing Maltings Academy for this vital stage of your child's education.

This is an exciting time of great change for the Academy. We have just received the plans for the new building. Work on this starts early next year.

We are consolidating and implemented a number of changes, some of which will have most impact on the incoming Year 7 students. We have improved our curriculum with a view to providing more challenge for the most able and more support for those children who find the transition to secondary school most difficult. These are exciting new ventures and we welcome your opinion on them.

We are conscious that we are providing a service to you and your children, and we will strive to make that service of the highest possible quality. If you have concerns or wish to share your views with us on any relevant issue, please do not hesitate to contact us. Details of the staff you may wish to speak to on general matters are included later in this booklet.

I hope this will be the beginning of a long and fruitful partnership between us, and look forward to meeting you on many occasions, both formal and informal.



Mike O'Sullivan
Principal

Introduction

Your child has almost completed the transfer successfully to secondary education at Maltings Academy.

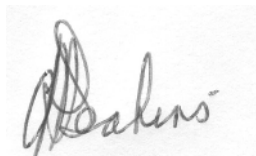
The potential worries of transferring from junior to secondary education are nearly over and your child is ready to face the opportunities and challenges of year 7.

It is essential that all children make the most of these opportunities. This means aiming high and putting in the maximum effort to achieve these aims.

It also means drawing on the available expertise, both at school and at home, to help them to succeed.

We hope that this handbook will provide you with practical advice and information which will prove valuable to you in your efforts to support your child.

If you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact your child's head of year, or to raise issues on the many formal and informal occasions this year that are designed to help us to continue to work in partnership to provide the very best for your child.



Mrs J Seakins
Assistant Principal

SECTION 1

THE MOVE TO SECONDARY SCHOOL

Introduction

Much work has already gone into preparing children for this change in their lives. All students have had an opportunity to visit Maltings Academy on numerous occasions, on our Open Days, on the day visits arranged through their Junior School and for their individual interviews.

Students have thus become more familiar with staff and surroundings at Maltings Academy and have been able to air their concerns and have their worries alleviated.

Our induction programme continues in September through the personal and social education programme which addresses common points of concern such as making new friends and the organization of work.

You will be invited to meet your child's tutor early in the Autumn Term to discuss how he/she is settling in and to raise any queries.

THE BIG DAY – Wednesday 2nd SEPTEMBER 2009

For 2009's Year 7 students, Wednesday 2nd September will be the day on which their secondary education begins. We have outlined below exactly what will happen on your child's first day at Maltings Academy.

8.20 – 8.30	Students arrive at Maltings Academy. Escorted to main hall by Year 11 prefects.
8.30	Mr O'Sullivan and Mr Camy will address the assembly. Students go to tutor bases with their tutor and peer mentors.
8.30 - 10.40	Students are taken on a "mini-tour" of the school and shown the location of their afternoon lessons.
10.40 – 11.00	Break.
11.00 – 12.00	Students receive their timetable, and further information about the school. Some time is spent getting to know one another.
12.00 – 13.00	Normal lessons begin.
13.00 – 13.30	Lunch
13.30 – 14.30	Lesson 5
14.30 – 15.30	Last lesson and then end of school

Only students in Year 7 will arrive at 8.20 a.m. The older children will arrive later.

WHO'S WHO AT MALTINGS ACADEMY

There are over 100 teaching and associate staff at Maltings Academy, many of whom you will come into contact with in the course of your child's education. Two of the most important people in your child's life in Year 7 will be the tutor and Head of Year.

The tutor is the person responsible for ensuring that students are making the best of their opportunities at school. Tutors will know about progress in academic work, involvement in extra-curricular and outside school activities and should also be aware of anything that may affect the well-being of the student in school. The tutor is the first point of contact for any queries you might have concerning your child in school.

The Head of Year 7, Miss Spencer, co-ordinates the work of the tutors and has the overall responsibility for students within the year group.

You may need to contact the Head of Year if your child's tutor is unavailable.

Other useful contacts during your child's first year are Mr Seakins (Assistant Principal) who has overall responsibility for the transition from junior school and for all students during their first three years at Maltings Academy. Also, Mrs M Rees, Assistant Head of Key Stage 3.

THE EDUCATION WELFARE OFFICER

The Education Welfare Officer visits Maltings Academy as well as the primary schools in the area on a regular basis.

Their role is to assist the school with attendance matters and also to visit parents who would like help or advice on matters relating to their child's education or welfare. You may contact the Education Welfare Office at The Area Education Office, telephone 01376 555601, or through the Education Help Line number which is 0845 6071920, or through Maltings Academy.

ACHIEVING SUCCESS

Our aim at Maltings Academy is to enable your child to fulfil her/his potential - to achieve success in as many areas as possible.

The day to day organization of the school is directed towards encouraging every student to reach this goal.

THE ORGANIZATION OF CLASSES

On entry to Maltings Academy your child will be placed in one of six mixed ability tutor groups. Students will be grouped by ability from the outset in all subjects. In accordance with the national curriculum students in years 7, 8 and 9 follow courses in the following subjects:-

CORE SUBJECTS: English, mathematics and science

FOUNDATION SUBJECTS: Technology, information technology, geography, history, art, music, physical education and a modern foreign language.

All students joining us in year 7 in September 2009 will study one modern foreign language, **either** French **or** Spanish.

Religious education is provided for all students. Students also follow a personal and social education course, designed to further the general education of students in areas not specifically covered elsewhere in the curriculum. All students will also study drama.

LEARNING SUPPORT

The learning support team aims to support the learning of students of all abilities, but especially those who have been identified as having special needs. Many students have special needs at some point in their schooling, and the support staff seek to work with staff in identifying and providing appropriate support for these students.

In year 7 the learning support staff assess all students and support children with special needs by working alongside maths and English teachers in their classes. In some cases, after notification to parents, children may be withdrawn for some specific work on reading, writing and spelling. This would normally take place in a small group and would be for one hour per week. Where possible the team also tries to support students in other curriculum subjects.

If the tutors and learning support staff feel that a student will need special support and monitoring then parents will be informed that the student will be put on the Essex Stages of Assessment. Booklets explaining the Essex Stages of Assessment are available from Mrs Hazel Jordan, the special needs co-ordinator.

The learning support team is keen to work with parents to meet the particular needs of individual students and we would encourage parents to contact us for advice or help at any time.

Students who find the transition to Secondary school particularly challenging, or who need the highest level of support, will be placed in the ILG (Integrated Learning Group) and will follow a curriculum programme more suited to their needs.

SPELLING POLICY

The basics of the spelling policy are that all teachers highlight spelling errors and provide key words from their subject areas. Students are then expected to transfer the correct spellings of words spelt incorrectly to a spelling grid and learn them using a variety of strategies taught to them by English and learning support teachers. The main way students should learn spellings is the LOOK - COVER - WRITE - CHECK methods often taught in primary schools. Parents can help by checking that the words their children are learning are correctly written down and by doing regular testing of the weekly lists at home. Those students making few mistakes are to be encouraged to broaden their vocabulary and spelling by learning words taken from reading books and more specialised words from the different subject areas.

Students should not be made to feel anxious over spelling but equally it is an important issue and one for which marks can be lost in exams. We are confident that our policy enables all students to improve their spelling and increase their confidence in written communication. Key words for each subject area are also included in your child's Student Planner.

THE MOST ABLE

The most able children are identified through our on-going programme of assessment and monitoring. Their particular needs are met through the provision of differentiated schemes of work within subject areas; access to a wide range of extra curricular activities and by the opportunities given to participate in structured tasks designed to enhance and enrich their education.

Encouragement to read widely and to experience a range of opportunities outside of school is also important for these children. We welcome the support of parents in this.

The "Fast-track Group" will complete Key Stage 3 of the National Curriculum in two years rather than three, at the end of year 8.

EXTENDED ENTERPRISE LEARNING

From September 2008 the National Curriculum has been updated and changes will be introduced over a three year period for students in Key Stage Three. The main changes that are being introduced allow schools to design and run learning programmes that best meet the needs of their students for 20% of school time. In our case we operate our Extended Enterprise Learning programme, which will operate each Friday for year 7 and 8 students.

What this programme offers is a range of learning options that will provide students with a choice of subjects. These will be selected each term and these subjects may be studied for one term or more in some cases. The result of this is that students with particular interests or strengths may be able to study subjects for the whole year. On the other hand there is the option of studying a number of subjects for a term to get a feel for what they have to offer.

HOMEWORK

WHY IS HOMEWORK SET?

Homework is an essential part of the learning process for all students. Homework is used at Maltings Academy to reinforce points covered and skills learnt during lessons. Students may also be asked to prepare material in advance for future lessons. The careful completion of homework tasks is therefore essential if your child is to progress.

Homework may be in the form of learning key words or phrases, researching or creating and producing work or projects. The intention is to develop independent thinkers and learners.

Each Year 7 student is issued with a Student Planner on their first day at Maltings Academy. This acts as a useful guide to new students, supplementing information about the school which they have already received on their visit days. It also contains space to record homework set, deadline dates for giving work in and the time spent on each piece of work. Parents are asked to check and sign the organizer each week.

THE INCENTIVES AND REWARDS SCHEME

It is our experience that students respond more readily to reward than to punishment. We therefore place great emphasis on rewarding achievement and effort, both informally, by teacher praise and comment, and formally, by an Incentives and Rewards scheme. Within this scheme, students are rewarded for work of an exceptional standard, both in terms of effort and achievement, by the awarding of a Maltings Academy Merit Stamp. These are fixed into the child's Student Planner and a certificate is awarded, when the child has gained ten stamps. Students are also rewarded for making a positive contribution to both the school and the wider community.

DISCIPLINE WITH DIGNITY

A school cannot function unless everyone conforms to certain expectations of behaviour. Students are encouraged to conduct themselves with dignity and respect in all aspects of their lives at Maltings Academy and to work to the best of their ability at all times. Occasionally students overstep the mark and need to be reprimanded. More often than not, no more is needed than a reminder from the teacher, year head, or senior member of staff. Self discipline is seen to be more important than rigidly conforming to a set of rules, although such a list is given to Year 7 students, together with Maltings Academy Code of Conduct.

Detention, with 24 hours written notice to parents, is given for more serious offences. Persistent offenders may be excluded from lessons. In such cases parents are invited to discuss their child's future conduct. In extreme cases it may prove necessary to exclude a student, either for a fixed period or permanently. This is considered to be a last resort and we regard such action as an admission of failure on our part.

PROGRESS REPORTS AND TARGET SETTING DAYS

A progress report is sent home each term. This provides information on your child's progress in each subject against their target levels.

There are two organized occasions in Year 7 when you are invited to attend Target Setting Day's where you will meet with the tutor to discuss your child's progress.

Target Setting Days

To be confirmed.

These are opportunities for teachers, parents and child to discuss how best to achieve further progress. We therefore ask that you make every effort to attend these meetings. If your absence is unavoidable, please let us know and we will arrange an alternative meeting for you with your child's head of year to discuss progress.

Parents should feel free to contact individual teachers if they have concerns or queries regarding their child's education. Contact can be made in writing, by telephoning the academy or by email.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

At Maltings Academy we encourage all students to extend their expertise in interests they already have and also to explore new interests and skills. Each week throughout the term clubs and activities are run at lunch times and after school, and during the year study visits are organised, not only locally, but nationally and abroad.

The types of study visits, activities and clubs that your daughter or son could join are very varied and tailored each year to the needs and interests of our students. They include a wide variety of sporting activities, both competitive and non-competitive, many creative activities including orchestra, dance and drama clubs, and cater for almost every other interest from chess to computing.

We have a large number of contacts with local business and industry, whereby we are able to run events and competitions to introduce students to the many opportunities offered by local employers and by organisations such as the Witham Rotary Club.

Students often take the lead in organising charity events, through which we have built up very important and worthwhile links with the local community.

We would hope that, by the time our students are ready to move on to higher education or further training, they will have maximised the opportunities available to them during their seven years here at Maltings Academy, so that they can continue to enrich the lives of those around them.

If your child has a special interest which is not catered for by a club already in existence, now is their opportunity to start one up themselves!

THE JOURNEY TO AND FROM SCHOOL

BUSES

For those students who are entitled to free transport contract buses run from Hatfield Peverel, Nounsley and Terling picking up at specified points. For further details please contact the Essex County Council, passenger transport department, 01245 437734.

The school has negotiated a preferential rate with the Eastern National bus company for other students living in Hatfield Peverel and Silver End. For further details please contact the school.

It is similarly a good idea to familiarise your child with public transport routes home, to cater for this eventuality. Mrs Holroyd is the member of staff responsible for transport and can be contacted at Maltings Academy if you have specific queries.

Good behaviour on the buses is essential, both from the point of view of good manners and that of safety. Please reinforce this point with your child.

CYCLING

Students may bring a bicycle to school and store it in the cycle racks provided (limited spaces available). The following points however, should be borne in mind.

1. Spinks Lane is a busy and dangerous road. Students who need to cycle to school should do so in a thoughtful manner.
2. The bicycle must be safe and roadworthy and it is the parent's responsibility to ensure this is the case. There are a limited number of spaces in the bike sheds.
3. Any dangerous or stupid behaviour by students involving bicycles - riding in the playground, riding on the pavement, riding with two people on the bicycle etc. - will result in that student being banned from bringing the bicycle to school.
4. Students should be proficient in using the bicycle on the road. Responsibility for this rests entirely on the student and parents and not on the school.
5. The bicycle should be securely padlocked, and tempting items - pumps, removable lamps etc. - taken off before leaving it. The bicycle rack is relatively isolated, and bicycles are left totally at the owner's risk.
6. The bicycle rack is completely out of bounds other than for students bringing and taking their own bicycles at the beginning and end of the day. No students should be near the bicycle rack at break.
7. More and more cyclists, children and adults, are to be seen wearing cycle helmets. We advise the wearing of such helmets on cycle journeys to and from school.

Frequently Asked Questions

"WHAT HAPPENS IF...?"

"...MY CHILD LOSES SOMETHING IN SCHOOL?"

If your child loses something they should report their loss both to their tutor and also the student services office.

Anything found should similarly be handed to the student services office.

It is helpful if all personal property and uniform is named. It is inappropriate for students to bring expensive, non-essential items into school.

"...I CAN'T AFFORD TO PAY FOR SOMETHING REQUIRED FOR SCHOOL?"

No fees or charges are made for the basic education provided by the school, and no charge will be made for any activity, whether inside or outside school, which is an essential requirement of the National or School Curriculum.

There are certain circumstances where charges may be levied, - please request to see the full statement of school policy on finance, charging and remission or charges, agreed by the Governing Body, from the school office. The Policy is in line with the 1988 Education Act, and with the Governing Body's Statement on Finance and Charging.

PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS

Entry for prescribed and recommended examinations is normally free, but there are specific circumstances where a charge may be made.

THE SCHOOL DAY

Monday to Friday

	Reg	Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Break	Lesson 3	Lesson 4	Lunch	Lesson 5	Extended School
Mon	8.30 – 8.40	8.40 – 9.40	9.40 – 10.40	10.40 – 11.00	11.00 – 12.00	12.00 – 13.00	13.00 – 13.30	13.30 – 14.30	14.30 – 15.45
Tues	8.30 – 9.00	9.00 – 10.00	10.00 – 11.00	11.00 – 11.20	11.20 – 12.20	12.20 – 13.20	13.20 – 13.50	13.50 – 14.50	■
Weds	8.30 – 8.40	8.40 – 9.40	9.40 – 10.40	10.40 – 11.00	11.00 – 12.00	12.00 – 13.00	13.00 – 13.30	13.30 – 14.30	14.30 – 15.30
Thurs	8.30 – 9.00	9.00 – 10.00	10.00 – 11.00	11.00 – 11.20	11.20 – 12.20	12.20 – 13.20	13.20 – 13.50	13.50 – 14.50	■
Fri	8.30 – 8.40	8.40 – 9.40	9.40 – 10.40	10.40 – 11.00	11.00 – 12.00	12.00 – 13.00	13.00 – 13.30	13.30 – 14.30	■

SECTION 2

HELPING YOUR CHILD TO SUCCEED

Parents often feel that their capacity to help their child in school reduces when secondary education begins.

This is actually far from true. You may no longer have the subject expertise to assist your children with the intricacies of maths or science homework, but you are still very capable of helping children with the aspects of their learning which they often find the most difficult, namely, providing organisational skills and the encouragement we all need to succeed.

We hope that the following section will be useful in providing you with the information you need to become a partner with us in helping your child to successfully complete the transfer from junior to secondary education.

GETTING PREPARED

In order to make the most productive use of their time with us, children need to leave home fully prepared for the day ahead.

Please make sure that your child starts school with the correct equipment and P.E. kit.

In September you will receive a copy of your child's timetable, together with details of the courses they will be following in Year 7.

Please help your child to get into a routine of checking their timetable and notes in their personal organizer and packing their bag with P.E. kit, pens, rulers, etc. An equipment list is given below to help you in this task!

Essential Items:

2 blue or black writing pens	} These items
A sharp pencil	} are available for
A ruler with centimetre and millimetre markings	} purchase from
A rubber	} student services
At least 3 coloured pencils	}
Personal Planners (issued by the school)	
A general work/draft book (supplied by the school)	
A reading book (from a library or home)	

Additional Recommended Items:

A dictionary
A protractor
A calculator
Science goggles - students will be advised on type by Science staff.

Your child will need a scientific calculator for work in mathematics up to GCSE. If your child already has any type of calculator, this will be sufficient for the first year's use. Both scientific and basic calculators may be purchased from Student Services.

SCHOOL UNIFORM FOR SEPTEMBER 2009 YEAR 7

BOYS Plain white school shirt
School tie
Black blazer with school badge (*only available from Student Services*)
Black School Trousers
Sensible, safe plain black shoes (*no trainers, trainer shoes or casual shoes*)
Black socks
A school coat (*only available from Students Services*)

GIRLS Plain white school shirt (reversed collar)
Black blazer with school badge (*only available from Student Services*)
Black trousers/A line or pleated knee length black school skirt
Sensible, safe plain black shoes (*no trainers, trainer shoes or casual shoes*)
Black opaque tights / Black socks
A school coat (*only available from Student Services*)

Please name all uniform.

NO hooded tops, hats, caps or denim

NO jewellery on grounds of safety and security (except for watches and one small plain sleeper or stud for pierced ears, no more than one per ear). Nose studs, tongue studs and other facial piercings, including the tragus are not allowed.

Hair should be neat and tidy. Extreme or "attention seeking" styles are not suitable. Coloured hair braids are not acceptable.

P.E. UNIFORM

BOYS White, non-marking trainers (below ankle length)
Football boots
Plain black football socks (long)
Black shorts
Black and red reversible rugby shirt (*only available from Student Services*)
White polo shirt
School swimming trunks or shorts (black)

Optional: Swimming goggles

GIRLS White, non-marking trainers (below ankle length)
Black socks
Black games shorts (as supplied by our official supplier)
Plain white polo shirt
Black swimming costume
Black and red reversible rugby shirt (*only available from Student Services*)

Optional: Swimming goggles

All items should be clearly named so that if misplaced they can easily be returned to the owner. The P.E. team can accept no responsibility for unmarked items and these will be handed in to the student services office.

ATTENDANCE

Good attendance is essential for progress and we would ask for your help in this matter. Please give your child every encouragement to attend regularly. Sometimes absence is unavoidable and on such occasions we would ask you to telephone the school to let us know that your child will be away and send a note when your child returns to school. This is to help us ensure that children do not absent themselves from school without good reason. In appropriate cases we will arrange for work to be sent home. All children should be able to achieve 95% attendance or better.

Some absences are "unauthorised" - in other words, there is no good reason for your child to miss school. Please do not allow this to happen. An absence can only be authorised by the school, and we will not do so unless we believe the absence is justified. Unauthorised absences will be followed up by the Education Welfare Officer, who may visit you at home if there is a continuing problem. Children may avoid attending school for a number of reasons. They may have problems with friends, they may wish to avoid a certain subject in which they feel they are failing, or there may be causes unrelated to school. If you suspect or have evidence that your child is not attending school please contact us and speak to your child's form tutor or head of year. We can then work together towards a solution to the problem.

Please avoid taking holidays during school time. Although schools may give permission for a limited number of days this will only be considered if the student has a record of excellent attendance. The Education Welfare Service may impose a fixed penalty fine if holidays are taken without prior agreement.

Occasionally students become ill during the day or have some form of accident. On the rare occasions when students feel that they cannot continue in the classroom they should tell their teacher, when appropriate action will be taken. Minor accidents will be dealt with in the medical room and more serious ones as appropriate.

If your child needs to go home, you will be contacted. It is vital that we have an extra, emergency contact, in the event of us not being able to contact you direct. Please ensure that you have given us an emergency contact telephone number on the student data form which will be given to your child on the first day of term. Please also ensure that you inform us if your own telephone number, at home or at work, is altered.

THE YEAR 7 CURRICULUM

In the following pages we have provided you with up to date information on the content and teaching methods used in the subjects your child will study in this academic year.

We have also given an indication of ways in which parents may be able to help their child in each subject.

All students follow the National Curriculum which is organised as stated below.

The National Curriculum core subjects:-

- English
- Maths
- Science

The National Curriculum foundation subjects:-

- Technology
- Information Technology
- Modern Foreign Language
- Geography
- History
- Art
- Music
- Physical Education

Additional Subjects Undertaken:-

- Drama
- Personal & Social Education
- Religious Education

Extended Enterprise Learning:-

- A Second Language
- Creative Writing & Debate
- School Newspaper/Magazine
- Investigative Science
- The World We Live In
- Investigative Mathematics
- Computer Games and Website Design
- Music Composition/Performance
- Extended Art & Design
- West End Stage Dance
- Social Well-Being and Skills
- Cooking Skills
- Stage Skills
- Go-Kart Construction
- Designing & Making
- Gardening/Horticulture/Animal Care
- ASDAN Bronze Award

Recreational Learning:-

Life Saving/Advanced Swimming
Popular Dance
Ball Skills
Trampolining
Art Attack
Music: Group Performance
Chess
Snooker
Stage Skills: set design/make-up/lighting
Boxing
Play the Drums
Media Skills
Gymnastics
Kinetica/Keep-Fit
Orienteering and Map Skills

We hope this information will prove helpful to you in supporting your child's progress in school.

ENGLISH

English involves speaking, listening, reading and writing. Work in these areas is designed to develop fluency and confidence when using language for a range of audiences, purposes and contexts.

Students are encouraged to read widely for pleasure.

Students will participate in a wide range of activities including whole group discussions, small group dramatisations, project work and individual presentations.

We would welcome parents' active involvement in:

- a) the support and encouragement of reading at home.
- b) the learning of spellings.
- c) extending vocabulary.

MATHS

All students will cover number, algebra, shape, space and data handling through structured modules which involve teacher-led lessons and individualised work at the appropriate level. This will also include I.T. and project work.

At the end of each module students will take an end of module test to assess their progress to date. Work during modules will be assessed through homework tasks and completed coursework.

We welcome and encourage parents to discuss the student's work at home, to help them understand the skills and concepts covered in each module. We also would encourage an active involvement with the homework.

SCIENCE

Using a set of short courses including 'Sight and sound', 'Materials', and 'Variety of life', we build on students' primary experience.

We encourage interest and motivation through the use of a wide range of approaches to teaching including practical investigations, individual project work, presentations, demonstrations and the use of information technology.

We welcome the reading of science books at home, whether fiction or non-fiction, together with any visits to places of scientific interest. A course text is provided to support classwork and homework. Help with learning and using scientific words would also be very valuable.

DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

Design & technology is a new subject taught through the areas previously known as home economics and craft design & technology. Students will design and make simple products using various materials and ingredients, paying particular attention to quality of manufacture and health and safety.

Children's interest and enthusiasm will be developed through designing and creating products within the freedom which a workshop environment gives them.

We would welcome the students being able to practise some recipes at home. The visiting of museums and viewing of technological programmes on television is also useful.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY & BUSINESS

Information technology includes students investigating and solving problems using information systems; generating, developing and communicating ideas in written, numerical, visual or aural terms and to retrieve, analyse and amend information; monitor, measure and control external events.

Business studies seeks to develop a knowledge and an understanding of the environment within which business takes place.

Children's interest and enthusiasm will be developed through hands on experience in their I.T. lessons and through practical projects in business studies lessons.

We would welcome parents discussing the issues we investigate in our economic and industrial awareness sessions and to encourage their children to take an active interest in current affairs through reading newspapers and watching news programmes.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

All students have already selected their language of choice, either French or Spanish. In their first year all students will learn to hold simple conversations with a native speaker and also be encouraged to use the chosen language as the medium for communication in the classroom wherever possible.

Parents can encourage children in their regular learning of vocabulary. Students will find it helpful to have access to a bilingual dictionary at home for the completion of homework. Any exposure to the "new" language is helpful, as is practising with a willing partner!

GEOGRAPHY

Students are introduced to a wide range of geographical ideas and skills through a series of topics. These include local area, map skills and settlement geography.

Students will have the opportunity to take part in discussion work and to collect information through fieldwork.

Students are encouraged to use information from a wide range of sources. Parents can be involved in this by encouraging their children to make good use of local libraries. Family visits to places of geographical interest are also very useful.

HISTORY

Through the study of a variety of sources of evidence we investigate the history of the Roman Empire, the Romans in Britain, the Norman Conquest and events in the Middle Ages.

Children's interest and enthusiasm is developed through the use of role play, investigation, presentations and project work.

We would welcome the reading at home of any books relating to these areas, together with any family visits to museums or historical sites.

ART

In year 7 children explore and practice basic techniques in drawing, painting and construction. They complete simple observation studies from first hand, produce imaginative work and look at the work of other artists and cultures.

Experimentation and investigation in a variety of media including 3D work is an important aspect of this year's work, as is developing images and ideas with the use of critical studies, particularly of ancient civilisations - Egyptian (pharaoh and gods), Greek (sculpture) and Roman (architecture).

As parents you can help by encouraging the use of your child's personal sketchbook for homework. Copying should be discouraged but encourage working directly from observation or imagination. Talking constructively to your child about their art work, together with any family visits to galleries, art centres etc., proves invaluable.

MUSIC

Students are introduced to the basics of pitch and rhythm work in both practical and listening lessons. The topics of Instruments of the Orchestra and Scottish Music are also covered.

Children's interest and enthusiasm is developed through opportunities to use classroom instruments, including the keyboard laboratory system.

We would greatly appreciate parental encouragement of children to develop individual musical skills, and to listen to a range of music of proven quality.

DRAMA

In year 7 students are introduced to a basic skill of acting programme. They are taught to both invent and develop convincing roles in specific situations.

Students work alone, in pairs and in larger groups to produce many different types of drama.

Parents can help their child to progress in drama by encouraging them to be self-confident. Family visits to the theatre, together with discussion of the play seen, are very useful.

P.E.

Through active participation students develop their movement vocabulary in dance and construct individual gymnastic sequences, improve their swimming strokes and learn water survival techniques. They also explore games concepts and develop their athletic skills.

Students will plan their own work and measure and evaluate their own performances and the performances of others.

Involvement in clubs and classes outside school will help to build confidence. Weaker swimmers should practise their swimming strokes as often as possible.

PERSONAL & SOCIAL EDUCATION

Personal and social education is used to further the general education of students. The themes covered are: library and study skills, organisational skills, citizenship and health and safety education and careers education.

Children participate through the use of group work, discussion, role play, presentation and project work.

R.E.

Christianity, Buddhism, Islam and Sikhism and other faiths are all studied in the context of 'Learning About Religion'. Students 'Learn from Religion' by considering their own experiences and other opinions.

Children's interest and enthusiasm is developed through the use of role play, research, visits, student presentations and audio visual presentations.

We would welcome the reading of any books or materials relating to these areas. Encouraging an interest in current affairs through newspapers and the media would be most advantageous.

INSTRUMENTAL/VOCAL TUITION

Is your child currently learning to play a musical instrument?
Would your child like to learn to play a musical instrument?

Lessons are 30 minutes in length and take place after school as part of the Witham Area Music School. The school offers a tuition scheme of ten 30 Minute lessons per term at the current rate of £110.

There is currently a voucher scheme in operation to help with the cost of lessons for families on Income Support or Job Seekers Allowance, and instruments are available for hire or purchase from local suppliers.

All lessons are booked in advance and we would therefore ask you to contact Mrs S Fleuty as soon as possible.

We very much hope that your child will take up the worthwhile pursuit of instrumental study.

HOMEWORK - HOW CAN PARENTS HELP?

Your help and guidance is invaluable, in ensuring that work completed at home is beneficial to your child.

A homework timetable will be sent home for your information in September.

1. Please encourage your child to get into a routine as to when homework is to be done. There can be no hard and fast rules here as each child is an individual, but deciding on a set time each evening which suits family routine is a good idea. As a general guideline, homework should be done before "relaxation" activities take place and should not be left until late in the evening.

It is recommended that homework is completed on the day that it is set while it is still fresh in the mind. This will usually give time before the deadline for your child to seek help from their teacher should there be a problem.

2. There are no hard and fast rules about where homework should be done, but our advice is that, at least in year 7, children should not be shut away in their bedrooms, but should be wherever they can get support and assistance - the kitchen table is probably the ideal workplace.
3. Try to check your child's homework record every day. If you are pleased or concerned, please write us a note in the space for Parent's Comments.

We will then do all we can to discover and remedy any problem.

4. Please make sure that you show an interest in the content and presentation of your child's homework.

Your contribution, both praise and advice, will make all the difference.

SUCCESSFUL STUDY-TIPS FOR PARENTS

Your help is vital in ensuring that your child progresses. Not only will your support allow your child to see the importance you attach to his achieving his best, but your practical help and encouragement can make all the difference to the degree of success experienced by your child.

The picture of the positive and negative parent given below should not be used for self-criticism - if we are honest we can **all** recognise ourselves in some of the statements in the right hand column! We hope that instead you will view it as a helpful indication of the many ways in which you can influence your child's progress.

The positive parent.....	The negative parent.....
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> regularly discusses their child's work with him/her 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> rarely looks at their child's work.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> praises any kind of progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> points out all of the mistakes.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> check and signs their child's personal organizer every week, making positive comments where appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses the organizer only as a vehicle for negative comments, or not at all.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensures that their child sets off to school each day with the correct equipment for that day. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> is unaware of their child's timetable and therefore cannot help.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> encourages their child to participate in all aspects of the curriculum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> writes "excuse" notes for P.E. because their child "doesn't like doing it"
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> checks homework regularly, discussing it or any apparent lack of it with their child. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> accepts the reply "I haven't got any homework" or "I did it in school."
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sets their child realistic targets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> is sometimes negative about their own experiences of school.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> is positive about the school, its staff, and the benefits of a good education in later life. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demands unrealistic progress from their child, therefore discouraging him/her.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> contacts the school with any concerns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> allows concerns to build up before eventually contacting the school.

FINAL POINTERS

1. Please make sure that your child has a healthy life-style - early to bed and early to rise etc.
2. Hard work, both in school and at home, is essential. Please encourage your child to work hard at **all** subjects, **particularly** at things which they do not like or which they find difficult.
3. Encourage your child to read - it will pay dividends in all subject areas. A child whose reading is poor will fall behind in school work.

Try to make reading a shared family activity.

It is useful to have some appropriate reference books at home, in particular, a good dictionary. For further advice on useful books, please refer to the appropriate subject teacher.

4. Encourage your child to take part in extra-curricular activities and to take an active part in all areas of school life. All children should also develop interests outside school.
5. Please try to attend parents' evenings - your presence is a further indication to your child of the importance you attach to education. We particularly value feedback from you to help us to improve the provision which we make for your child's learning.

6. Please do not keep worries, either your own or your child's, to yourself.

Contact us at any time and we will do our best to help you.

The first person to contact is your child's tutor or the Head of Year 7.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

THE SCHOOL YEAR

Autumn Term 2009:

Term:	Wednesday 2 September	- Friday 23 October
Half Term:	Monday 26 October	- Friday 30 October
Term:	Monday 2 November	- Friday 18 December

Spring Term 2010:

Term:	Monday 4 January	- Friday 12 February
Half Term:	Monday 15 February	- Friday 19 February
Term:	Monday 22 February	- Thursday 1 April

Summer Term 2009:

Term:	Monday 19 April	- Friday 28 May
Half Term:	Monday 1 June	- Friday 4 June
Term:	Monday 7 June	- Thursday 22 July

Staff training day's: Tuesday 1st September 2009 + 2 others TBC

Other Important days

Year 7 Meet the Teacher evening To be confirmed.

Target Setting Days To be confirmed.

On the first Tuesday of each Month from 3.30 p.m. to 5.00 p.m. in the school library you will be able to come along to see the Head of Year, Mrs Seakins and Mrs M Rees to discuss any problems or suggestions that you may have.

MALTINGS ACADEMY PARENT COUNCIL

Maltings Academy Parent Council is made up of present parents, one Senior Manager and a Parent Governor. The aim of the parent council is to represent the views of the parent body as a whole.

ALL PARENTS are welcome as members of Maltings Academy Parent Council and there is no subscription fee, parents may also approach the Parent Council to represent their views.

We appreciate all the support parents give to the school and would ask you to indicate on the attached sheet any areas in which you feel you can help.