

5 December 2024



RIDGEWOOD
SCHOOL

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Dear Parents/Carers,

Thank you for your support in what has been another busy week. Our Curriculum Spotlight this week is on the MFL Faculty, and I have included a number of reminders of key dates/events as usual.

SEN Coffee morning

Yesterday, we held an SEN Coffee Morning as an informal drop in for a number of families who are supported by the SEN team. This was a fantastic event, and a very welcome opportunity for some families to say goodbye to Miss Kaye, who leaves us at Christmas and to meet our new SENCO, Mr Colton. Due to the small size of the venue, we could not accommodate all families on one morning but plan to repeat this event in the future.

Reminder inset day

As mentioned previously, school is closed tomorrow for all students in Y7-13 due to an inset day. We look forward to welcoming everybody back to school on Monday.

Events next week

Next week, we have our Christmas soirée on Thursday 12 December, 5-7pm. There are a small number of tickets still available. If you would like to reserve these, please complete a 'contact us' form on the school website, and we will add these to parent pay for you. We also have our charity fundraiser Christmas jumper day on Friday 13 December for 'Save the Children' and Christmas dinner will be served on this day.

Podcast

A number of our students have worked hard to write and produce their own podcast. This is a great example of student initiative, creativity and independence. This is available to listen to on our school Facebook page. Well done to all students involved.

Sixth Form application meetings

Next Wednesday, members of the senior leadership team and the sixth form team will be completing individual appointments with all Y11 students who have applied to join us in Y12. If your son/daughter has not yet applied and would like to join the sixth form, I would encourage them to make their application as soon as possible. All Y11 students have been sent their login details to the Applicca system where they complete their application.

MFL Faculty

The MFL department at Ridgewood School aims to encourage students' curiosity about other cultures and develop their understanding of the wider world. To achieve this, we have created a curriculum that focuses on building communication skills and developing confidence in four different skills: listening, reading, writing and speaking. Alongside this, we place a big emphasis on learning about the culture of Spanish speaking countries so that students are able to appreciate and articulate the similarities and differences between different parts of the world.



'Prepare for the road ahead'

Respect

Responsibility

Resilience

In Year 7, we begin with the MFL journey at Ridgewood, by teaching students how to introduce themselves and give details about their family, pets, school and hobbies. Lessons will typically revolve around learning high frequency vocabulary that can be used in a range of different contexts, such as opinions, adjectives, connectives and common words. We then finish the year by studying the film Encanto and taking a detailed look at how Colombian culture is accurately portrayed in it.

In Year 8, we place a focus on the topics that students would be most likely to use when abroad, through studying topics such as holidays, food, conversations at a restaurant and technology. Students also re-visit high frequency vocabulary, we start introducing different tenses so that students are able to write about and discuss different time frames and compare them to the present day. As with Year 7, we end the year by learning about different aspects of Mexican culture and, in particular, the Day of the Dead.

Topics in Year 9 reflect those which students would study at GCSE and we begin by looking at free time activities in the local area before moving on to study a Spanish film in the run up to Christmas. As students start to make their GCSE choices, we discuss and study the range of careers that use languages before moving on to vocabulary linked to holidays and sports, which builds on what students learnt the previous year. We end Key Stage 3 by looking at a range of different countries in South America, as well as recent events such as natural disasters and the collapse of a mine in Chile.

Our exam board for Years 10 and 11 is AQA and students sit 4 different exams at the end of the two-year course; reading, writing, listening and speaking. The topics studied mirror those lower down the school and we cover issues such as school and careers, food and hobbies, celebrities, technology and festivals. There is also an increased focus on grammar, with students learning to talk and write in three different time frames about their own opinions and preferences.

The A Level course in Spanish also uses AQA as its exam board and moves on to look at how history, politics and culture have created, and continue to change, the Spanish speaking world. Topics include celebrities, immigration, the monarchy, dictatorships, pre-Hispanic civilisations, art and architecture. As part of the course, we also study a piece of literature and a Hispanic film; looking at the characters, themes and author or directors' intentions. Students sit three exams at the end of the course: Paper 1 tests reading, listening and translation skills, Paper 2 is a written response on the film and text and Paper 3 is a speaking exam.

Outside of the classroom, the MFL Faculty offer intervention sessions for Year 11 and Year 13 on a weekly basis, and also promote events such as the European Day of Languages and the Anthea Bell translation competition. We also aim to run trips abroad whenever possible and currently offer a trip to Spain in Year 10, as well as a trip to a tapas bar where students have a salsa lesson and are served a traditional lunch for those who study the subject at Key Stage 4.

If you have any queries about the MFL curriculum, please do not hesitate to use the 'contact us' facility on the school website, for the attention of Ms Ward, Curriculum Leader MFL.

I hope all students enjoy their long weekend.

Yours faithfully



Andy Bridge
Headteacher