

20 December 2024



RIDGEWOOD
SCHOOL

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Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope you are well. It has been brilliant in this busy final week of term to see so many of our students excited about the 'Golden Ticket' and 'Attendance Vote and Win' prize draws. Their assemblies this week have celebrated the achievements of each year group, and have included musical performances from some of our talented bands. As usual, I have included updates from this week, as well as our final Curriculum Spotlight of the term, which this week focuses on the History Faculty.

Charity committee

Over the past few weeks, Form Groups have each been collecting donations of food for Doncaster Food Bank. Collectively, they have gathered a huge amount of donations, which have been dropped off today and will be used to support families in need across our community over the Christmas holidays. Thank you for your generosity and support with this.

Uniform expectations for the new year

Please remember that acrylic nails and false eye lashes are not permitted in school. If students are wearing either of these items over the holidays, they must be removed before they return to school. Please ensure these appointments are booked in advance. In one of my earlier letters this term, I also reminded parents/carers that real nails including gel polish must be of a short and safe length to comply with our health and safety regulations for practical lessons.

Class Charts/InTouch

The vast majority of parents/carers have now downloaded and are using the Class Charts app. This is a final reminder that our use on InTouch messages stop today. As of 6 January 2025, all communication home will only be sent via Class Charts. If you do not have the app, you will miss all crucial communication such as rewards points, detention notifications, Creating Futures reports etc. If you do not have your access code, please complete a 'contact us' form and our Data Team will re-issue this.

Curriculum Spotlight

The History Department's main ambition is to engage students and foster a love for the subject. All history teachers strive to create academically successful and intellectually curious historians. The intention is that students' fascination with - and thirst for - the subject will drive many of them to pursue the discipline in their futures. The History Curriculum is deliberately designed to provide extensive and wide-ranging opportunities for students to learn about various topics, events, issues, and people at local, regional, national, international, and global levels. Lessons aim to ensure students have a clear and strong grasp of the core content, supplemented by the use of primary sources and historical interpretations.

In Year 7, students learn about British history, beginning with Caesar's invasion of Britain. They then explore the tumultuous period from 1066 before moving on to a study of Medieval Life. Following this, students examine the changing social, religious, and economic landscapes of Britain across the Tudor, Stuart, and Victorian periods.



'Prepare for the road ahead'

Respect

Responsibility

Resilience

In Year 8, the focus shifts from Britain to Europe, with lessons on the revolutions in Russia, Italy, France, and Spain. A depth study on the impact of World War One is followed by an assessment of Germany before and during Hitler's rise to power. The final element of the Year 8 curriculum is a series of lessons commemorating the Holocaust.

In Year 9, students begin with a study of the Miners' Strike, the local history unit focusing on the impact of the strike in Doncaster. After this, students transition to global history units, delving into the experiences of enslaved peoples, Apartheid in South Africa, and the Khmer Rouge regime led by Pol Pot in Cambodia. Additionally, students learn about contemporary British events such as The Troubles in Northern Ireland, the British Civil Rights Movement, and modern justice.

GCSE History is an extremely popular choice for students at Ridgewood, with around 150 historians in each cohort. As with the KS3 curriculum, the GCSE course offers further opportunities to expand the breadth and depth of students' knowledge and understanding of different eras and events. Over the two years, students study the Civil Rights Movement in the USA, the Vietnam War, the Cold War, the reign of Elizabeth I, Crime and Punishment from c. 1000 to the modern day, and conditions in Whitechapel around the turn of the twentieth century. The GCSE course culminates in three terminal examinations in Year 11.

In the Sixth Form, History remains a popular option. Students undertake two fascinating topics: they learn about Germany from 1871 to 1945, exploring the Weimar Republic and the Third Reich. Additionally, they study the Tudor period, assessing change and continuity across the reigns of Henry VII, Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary I, and Elizabeth I. Finally, students complete a Non-Examined Assessment (coursework unit worth 20% of their overall grade) on a topic of their choice. Students write a 4,500-word project covering a century of history. Previous students have explored multifarious subjects including the causes of terrorism, imperialism in Japan, US foreign policy, and witchcraft. Year 13 students also have the opportunity to attend the department's three-day annual trip to Krakow, which includes a visit to Auschwitz-Birkenau.

If you have any queries about the History curriculum, please do not hesitate to use the 'Contact Us' facility on the school website, for the attention of Mr Carlin, Curriculum Leader History.

Staffing

In January, Mr Peirson will return as Headteacher and I will take on the role of Associate Headteacher, as well as working for Leger Education Trust in the School Improvement Team. Thank you for the support of all parents and carers this term. I hope you have a fantastic Christmas and New Year, and look forward to seeing the students again in January.

Yours faithfully



Andy Bridge
Headteacher