

What's new at Parkside Middle School for 2022-23?



Staff and Pupils

We welcome our new year 5 cohort to Parkside. They have all had a very successful first two weeks and have settled very quickly into middle school life. We also welcome our new staff Mrs Bennison, Miss Wilkes, Mrs Oakley, Mr Lewis and Mrs Reid. It has also been wedding season at Parkside in the last few months, so we have some name changes – Miss O'Hara is now Mrs Miarowska, Miss J Nuttall is Mrs Dewey and Miss Brown-Williams is now Mrs Williams-Sharpe. Congratulations to all staff!

Motto and Values

The pupils have returned to find the values they chose last year of **KINDNESS, HONESTY, TEAMWORK, RESPECT** and **RESILIENCE**, as well as the school motto of **'Embrace Opportunity. Nurture Success. Inspire Futures.'** have been displayed around the school corridors, to further enhance the learning environment.

Website

The new look website has been launched and we have already received positive feedback from parents/carers – thank you! As requested by you in last year's communication survey, this puts all key information in one place making it easier for parents/carers to find relevant information quickly. If you have any questions or queries, please remember to check here first.

Letters to parents/carers

As requested by many of you, most of the letters home will now be emailed on a Friday. Obviously, there are some occasions where communication is more

urgent; where this is the case, we will have to send it on another day of the week. Please check for any communication from the school every Friday and remember that copies of all letters that are sent home are also available on the school website.

Bromcom

We have now moved to a digital platform for setting homework and achievement points, again following your comments on last year's communication survey. All parents should have received information on how to download the parent app to allow them to see any homework that has been set for their child, as well as how many achievement points their children have received. Please note that some teachers input achievement points in bulk at the end of the week rather than daily. Pupils can also download the student app to their mobile phones, if they have one, for easy access to their homework. The information can also be accessed online through the Parent and Student portal. Pupils will use their usual school network log on. Please bear with us as this new system is launched, as there may be some teething problems!

Pupil Handbook

With planners no longer needed due to homework being set on Bromcom, the planner has been redesigned into a brand-new Pupil Handbook. The Pupil Handbook contains useful information needed by pupils and parents/carers, as well as information to support learning in the classroom and at home in many of our curriculum subjects. Please take a look and encourage your child to use the Pupil Handbook to support with their homework when needed. The handbook should help them to learn and remember vital knowledge like times tables, grammar terms and key French vocabulary. It also contains a brilliant section on 100 books to read by the end of KS2 and KS3 - hopefully this will also inspire your child to try a different book! We want all pupils to value these handbooks and look after them. They will be expected to have them in every lesson as part of their core equipment.

Oracy

Our whole school focus this year is effective Oracy. On the back of the pandemic, many schools (not just Parkside) have noticed that more pupils are reluctant to speak up in front of their peers and step out of their comfort zones. Oracy is not just about speaking with confidence; it is also about listening to others, taking turns and showing appropriate body language. Improved Oracy, helps pupils improve across the curriculum in all subjects, make greater progress and thrive in life beyond school. In school we are initially going to be focusing on the pupils choosing and saying correct subject specific vocabulary, asking pupils to 'Speak like a Specialist' e.g. a historian / mathematician / scientist etc and considering their use of body language when they communicate. We will also be launching Talk Tuesday (KS3) and Talk Thursday (KS2), where the pupils will have chance to play a variety of speaking and listening games to improve their confidence. Oracy will also be linked to our Thrive programme, where we will continue to encourage pupils to think about how they communicate and its impact to them socially and emotionally. Each half term the Oracy focus will alter slightly. As parents, you can support by encouraging your child to take small steps out of their comfort zones and reflect on their communication.

Century Tech

Century Tech is our post-pandemic 'recovery' offer for all pupils, to help fill gaps in learning in the core subjects of English, Maths and Science. Last year, it was used very successfully in school and at home to help our pupils 'catch-up' and consolidate learning from the two lockdowns. Combined with the teaching, hard work of the pupils and support from parents/carers, this has led to the majority of pupils making more than expected progress during the year. As a reminder, the program sets a pathway for your child using diagnostic information and artificial intelligence. Please note that as the program is used for consolidation and to support 'remembering' learning, it may therefore be set on the previous year group's learning – please do not worry about this. For year 6, 7 and 8, usernames and passwords will stay the same as last year and use of Century Tech will start soon, with a greater focus on homework tasks this year. Year 5 will be launched after October half term, giving the pupils time to settle and get used to other digital platforms. Further information will follow for year 5 parents/carers.

New PE Kit

The new PE kit looks brilliant. Thank you to all parents/carers that have purchased it over the Summer, particularly for year 6, 7 and 8 pupils where it is not currently compulsory. The PE department are also really pleased as the pupils coming to school in their PE kit on PE days means more practice and curriculum time for them. Just a reminder, if your child needs a jumper on PE days, it must not be a hoodie. Thank you for your support.