

March 2017

Dear Parent/Carer

Year 8 Maths Progress

I am writing to address some of the initial feedback from my meetings with parents and carers. Having recently started my role as Senior Interim Associate Principal at Landau Forte Academy QEMS, I have enjoyed meeting with many of you already and working with Year 8 students across the school.

From my parental meetings so far, and from my own observations, I understand that improvements are needed in Year 8 mathematics. Like all of you, I want to ensure that each and every student makes strong progress, especially in maths and English, and that they receive the appropriate encouragement and challenge to achieve their very best.

We are working towards having in place, from September, a fully staffed Maths department. Recruitment for further specialist maths teachers is currently underway; we are very pleased with the quality of applicants so far and hope to make appointments in the coming weeks.

In order to ensure that current Year 8 students strengthen their learning further, we have planned a number of maths-themed activity days for the rest of the year as well as tailored booster sessions for students who require extra support in the subject. Our assessment process has identified the profile of learning for <<Forename>> and these will be addressed through a personalised teaching plan.

With your support, I would also like <<Forename>> to use the next two school weeks and the Easter break to focus on some simple maths activities that <<he>> can do at home. We encourage students in all year groups at QEMS to make the most of the holidays to supplement their learning and so for Year 8 students this is an opportunity to consolidate their prior maths learning by practising key skills and topics from the year so far.

A list of the maths topics covered in Year 8 will be available on Reception during Parents'/Carers' Evening. A copy will also be placed on the website. Twenty minutes a day focusing on one of these topics using an online resource such as www.mymaths.co.uk will have a dramatic impact on <<Forename>>'s progress in mathematics. <<He>> should initially focus on topics which are in line with <<his>> target grade and then move onto the next strand.

There are also a number of YouTube clips available online for each topic, providing clear explanations, worked examples and test questions. Some of the most helpful are the YouTube clips provided by maths teacher Colin Hegarty, which provide 'one-off' virtual lessons covering a variety of topics. To access these, students should type the words Colin Hegarty followed by the name of the topic they wish to learn about into the YouTube search box.

Additionally, students would benefit significantly from practising their timestables and number bonding regularly as part of their home learning. We would like <<Forename>> to assess <<himself>> on these skills using 'Hit the Button', an interactive maths game which is also available as an app (<http://www.topmarks.co.uk/maths-games/hit-the-button>). Although the website has been designed for younger children, it is still a useful tool for Key Stages 3 and 4 and our Year 10 students have made good progress this year through regular practice on the site.

If there is any issue accessing the internet, please can you let Mrs Cash, Head of Year, know and we will make alternative arrangements. dcash@lfatq.org.uk

We are very committed to improving communication with parents and carers so we would ask that you send your email address with your child's name as the subject heading to post@lfatq.org.uk so that we have the correct contact details for you.

Most importantly, we are establishing a Parents' Forum and would like to invite you to be part of this to give us your feedback on the strategies we are putting in place.

Our aim is always to ensure the best for our students and we are confident that, with the measures we are putting in place in the maths department, and your support with <<Forename>>'s learning, they will quickly see an improvement in their work and progress.

Thank you again for your cooperation and support in this.

With very best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Wood', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Mrs Meena Wood
Interim Senior Associate Principal