

BEAMINSTER SCHOOL

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Dear Year 7 Parents and Carers

Key Stage 3 Science – Year 7

I am pleased to welcome your child onto their scientific journey of exploration and learning with Beaminster School Science department. This letter is to inform you of the arrangements for teaching Key Stage 3 Science to Year 7 during the next academic year.

Class Arrangements

Students are being taught in one of four teaching classes which are not set by scientific ability, previous learning or existing knowledge. All students will have equal opportunity to access the entire Year 7 curriculum, and by the end of the year will all students have studied the same material.

Course Outline

Students will start the year with a short Introduction to Secondary Science education. During this module they will study topics such as: lab safety, measuring techniques, equipment they will use and the safe handling of potentially harmful substances, including the meaning of various hazard symbols.

Should you wish to reinforce any of this learning with your child, it is always good to practise measuring things like volume, mass, length or temperature with any kitchen or workshop apparatus you may have in the home. You could also show them some of the hazard symbols on cleaning chemicals you may have safely locked away, explaining the meaning of the symbol and how to handle and use those chemicals properly and safely.

If your child particularly enjoys doing some 'kitchen science' in the home, then I would encourage you to look at the '*Do try this at home*' section of the Institute of Physics website as there are some excellent safe and fun things to do, which get students thinking about Science at a good level for a Year 7 student.

At the end of this Introduction to Science module, students will take a short a primary level science assessment. We use this just to see what sort of level students are already working at and to help generate a target to aim for during the rest of Year 7.

Throughout the year students will then study 6 science modules based around the Pearson, Key Stage 3 'Exploring Science', schemes of work and textbooks. These modules are as follows:

7A&B Cells and reproduction
7E&F Mixtures, acids and alkalis
7I&K Energy and forces

7C&D Muscles, bones and ecosystems
7G&H The particle model, elements and compounds
7J&L Electricity and sound.

Each class will study these 6 modules throughout the year, however, they may be in any order so that we can ensure equal access to the scientific equipment we have available in the department.

Each module consists of two topics lasting approximately 6 weeks, and ends with a short in-class assessment. These modular assessments help us to see that students are progressing as expected throughout the year and not falling behind. We try to encourage students to prepare for these, getting them into good habits of reviewing the work done in class. We do, however, try to not put undue pressure or stress on students, especially students who get nervous or anxious around testing. The average result of these 6 assessments over the year will help to put students into a suitable teaching group for Year 8 Science.

As you can see there will be a Year 7 module teaching students about **cells and reproduction** and part of this module will be studying about human reproduction. Prior to teaching this, teachers will issue students with a further letter to take home which will give more detail regarding the content of this module. Please let me or the class teacher know if you have any reasons why you would not want your child to study this material. The topic of reproduction is part of the KS3 National Curriculum in Science which we are required to teach to students, so parents and carers must inform us if they wish to opt their child out of this learning.

Revision Guides/Support books

Although it is not necessary to purchase any books for your child we do advise students to have access to a copy of **CGP KS3 Science Higher Level Revision Guide (ISBN: 9781841462301)** to support their classroom work and aid them with independent learning skills. This revision guide is suitable for the **whole of KS3** so is useful for Years 7, 8 and 9. These revision guides are available at all good book shops and on Amazon, however, you can purchase them via ParentMail at a **discounted cost of £3.15** (RRP £6.50) and you will be notified when the payment item is available for this. Once ordered please be patient for delivery as we place one bulk order with CGP in order to get our discount and then distribute them within school. They are usually distributed around October half term. **If your child or an older sibling already has a copy there is no need to order another revision guide.**

There are also many excellent free websites to help with the learning of Science at Key Stage 3. My particular favourite has always been the **BBC Bitesize** website as it is specifically designed to support the National Curriculum and contains lots of interactive materials, videos and games. As a department we also use www.senecalearning.com as an online learning tool to support classwork and homework. Your child will be set up with an account to access this website in due course.

Should you have any queries about Science at Beaminster please do not hesitate to get in touch. The start of term can be very busy, but I will do my very best to get back to you promptly.

Yours sincerely

Mr J Crossland
Head of Science
Beaminster School