

Dear Parents,

A warm welcome to any new parents to EMS from September and 'hello again' to those of you familiar to the Friday Bulletin. The theme this week is updating you on improvements made for this coming year.

The pupils at EMS are an able group; we know that from working with them and their performance information backs this up. Therefore, our priority is to ensure that all our pupils make as much progress as possible across the year. As such, the way we group in English and Maths reflects this and our Continuous Professional Development (CPD) this year is focused on differentiated teaching. Below is an outline of grouping across all year groups.

Generally, when groupings have a special focus, the pupils have been selected based on their prior attainment and the speed at which they take on new concepts. Almost all English is taught in mixed ability classes because it has been proven time and again that this works best for all learners. At Emmanuel we teach mostly using key texts and differentiate in lessons to ensure that more able pupils access the higher learning (greater depth) concepts. In Maths we do use different forms of setting in order to respond to the profile of abilities in the year group and curriculum demands. We would stress that the vast majority of our pupils are very capable learners and whilst we plan for supporting any pupils not accessing the curriculum, we also have to ensure lessons are set at a challenging level for all pupils. We would also like to stress that movement between groups is fluid dependent on work ethic and performance in assessments and class.

Year 5: Each class remains with their class teacher for both subjects. The rationale for this is that their tutor is best placed to settle the children into their new school, learn the strengths and areas for development of each child and to incorporate that into the planning. Each tutor sees the children for at least 18 hours a week whereas a Maths or English teacher might only have had 5 hours with a class. In order to prepare for this we have recruited outstanding practitioners who we knew to be highly competent at teaching Maths and English.

Year 6: We have introduced some grouping to allow us to cater for different abilities. English is mostly taught in three parallel groups all working with curriculum at age related expectations and many working at greater depth within that. The team consists of Mr Brenton, Mrs Anderson and Miss Howe. Mrs Whiteman teaches a smaller support group with the aim of supporting pupils towards the expected standard.

Maths is comprised of two pairs of parallel groups. The first two groups focusing at greater depth curricular and the other groups securing the expected standard. The teaching team consists of Mrs Anderson and Mr Brenton working predominately at greater depth in classes and Miss Howe and Mrs Whiteman supporting others within the expected standard, although they will cover greater depth with individuals and groups when pupils' assessment and work rate support that.

Year 7 and 8 English: The structure is repeated in both year groups. Three parallel groups taught by Mr Cotton, Mrs Richardson and Mrs Robertson. Mrs McGraw teaches the smaller support group in year 7. The year 8 consists of Mr Brenton, Mrs Anderson and Mrs Robertson teaching three parallel groups and Mrs McGraw repeating her work with a support group. We use GL assessment on entry and exit to gauge progress and attainment made by our pupils. The expectation is that all pupils will maximise their progress scores.

Year 7 and 8 Maths: The profile is slightly different in Maths to English with a greater spread of ability. This is reflected in the groupings. The structure is a single top group taught by Mr Rangdale across both year groups. Two parallel middle groups taught by Mr Foord and Mr Timmins in year 7 and Mr Brennan and Mr Foord in year 8. The support set is taught by Mrs Whiteman in year 7 and myself in year 8.

Support for our SEN and high ability pupils rightly focuses on high quality teaching differentiated for individual pupils. This is known as a 'graduated response'. Where appropriate, personalised adaptations can be made to resources and in class activities to support pupils who are finding learning difficult to access or provide stretch for the more-able. We regularly review the quality of teaching for all pupils, with particular emphasis on those at risk of underachievement. If a pupil has been identified as having special educational needs, interventions or a support plan will need to be put into place through liaison between the class teacher and the SENDCo. Our Teaching Assistant Team support the learning of all pupils in the classroom in coordination with the class teacher. They are also able to provide intervention groups or additional support to individuals where appropriate. When required, specialist equipment may be given to the pupil, such as writing slopes, pen / pencil grips or visual prompt cards. If you have any concerns about your child's individual needs relating to SEN please contact Mrs Ponchaud, Assistant Head and SENCO.

As part of a proactive and outward looking Trust we constantly challenge each other around best practice in the classroom and in turn this shapes our whole school improvement agenda. Within EMS we have also focused on creating a stimulating and challenging culture in school. If you haven't already seen our Candle Credit reward system, please ask your child to explain it to you.

Within school we have focused our on-going professional development on 'Responsive Teaching' techniques. During our training days we focused on differentiated teaching methods, target questioning and setting the classroom environment. We have a further six sessions planned across the year developing our classroom practice.

I hope you enjoy the photos below. The garden in the courtyard is yielding some fabulous tomatoes and corn. I know Mrs Stewart is looking forward to using these as ingredients for her homemade soups. The year 5 pupils are embracing the larger dining space and mixing with pupils from other year groups.

We have had a great start to the term and will enjoy sharing the pupils hard work and exploits over the coming weeks. Have a great weekend.

Best Wishes,

Rob Christopher

A WEEK IN PICTURES

Some of our Year 5s have been enjoying their new hot school lunches at Emmanuel.

Although our food provider Chartwells is the same as some of the First Schools, our school lunches are freshly prepared on-site by our two Kitchen Assistants Mrs Brunning and Mrs Tomkins.

Main meals include roast, fish fingers and pizzas; vegetarian meals include macaroni cheese, tomato pasta and Quorn hot dogs. Alternatively there are jacket potatoes with a variety of fillings including cheese, tuna or baked beans.

It can be very useful to give your child a hot school meal at lunchtime especially if they are due to have a busy evening.

Details of how to order together with the latest menu can be found on our website under Parents / Hot School Meals.



Our year 6 pupils have been picking tomatoes from our garden and the enjoying the soup prepared from them.

