

It is not everyday that a school is able to celebrate a good Ofsted outcome and it is fantastic that in just a short space of time, we have achieved this Ofsted grading from inadequate straight to good. We are extremely proud of this wonderful achievement.

There are many things that are special about Montsaye Academy, but mostly it is the inspirational students who are advocates for their school and really embody the values of **Excellence, Resilience and Aspiration**. I say it, time and time again, they are absolutely amazing: polite, courteous and well-rounded individuals who have been recognised in the report: *"Pupils' behaviour has improved markedly and is routinely good. Most pupils are polite, courteous and helpful."* As a staff body, we are tight knit and work together for the common core purpose of improving the life chances of our young people. We have now had that validated and know that we do it every day. *"Pupils benefit from highly personalised support from staff within the school."* *"Staff morale is exceptionally high."*



Leadership is not just about one person, the drive comes from one, but the collective spirit and ambition is embodied by a team. I am privileged to work with a fantastic leadership team who have been relentless in their drive and ambition to want the best for the children and stopping at nothing until they got it. *"Leaders have a clear vision which is shared and understood by all, underpinned by high expectations and a clear set of core values – excellence, aspiration and resilience (ERA)."*

There are many highlights along the way and, although we recognise that the journey has been challenging, the hard work and dedication of staff and students has been a credit to the Montsaye community. The support from parents and carers has also been overwhelming and we recognise fully what it means to have a school that is now providing a good quality of education for its students.

"I can't tell you how good it feels, as a parent, that my child is attending a 'good' school." Parent of a Year 9 student.

"Such a wonderful Ofsted report. What a turnaround! It is amazing to see how far the school has come in such a short period of time and your fantastic leadership has been the driving force." Parent of a Year 8 student.

Here's to a very bright future for Montsaye Academy. Thank you.

Meena Gabbi - Principal

New ERA of teaching and learning



Montsaye Academy has seen a rapid journey of improvement over the last 18 months or so. Much of this improvement has been attributed to the relentless focus on teaching and learning, ensuring that there are opportunities for all students to make good progress. Much of the work has been focused around teachers delivering good lessons every day, every lesson and every minute, which I hope that your child has experienced as the academy improves. This journey of success has already been noted on many visits by Her Majesty's Inspectors and continues to grow from strength to strength.

I have been leading teaching and learning within the school, with a team of individuals known as the teaching and learning team. This team consists of heads of faculty from English, maths, science and humanities, as well as drawing upon expertise from other heads of subjects. The team has been influential in driving our whole school teaching and learning to the next level, ensuring that your child has the opportunity to receive the best quality of education.

You will be aware of the academy's work around the introduction of the ERA values, which if you didn't know already, stand for **Excellence, Resilience and Aspiration**. These values are at the core of the academy and drive our ethos and vision for our students to be successful in school and beyond. It has been interesting watching our students very quickly develop the ERA values and be able to articulate them really well when asked about them. Our students are now experiencing a better learning experience in lessons and understand the whole school values of **Excellence, Resilience and Aspiration**. So what next, you may ask?

Please welcome the ERA learner. The ERA learner was something that grew out of conversations with teachers and leaders at the academy. The idea behind the ERA learner is to develop good learning habits within a student which encompass the values of **Excellence, Resilience and Aspiration**. For a child to be successful in school and in future life, they must form learning habits which make them resilient, aspirational and strive for excellence. The ERA learner was launched on our return after the Christmas break and I hope that your children have talked to you about some of the events that they have taken part in during tutor time, in and out of lessons.



We have had the only Digiwall in the UK for students to experience and demonstrate resilience in a fun and interactive way. Students have had the opportunity to talk about where they see themselves in ten years and to enter two competitions to create a display and definition of an ERA learner. We hope to continue to develop the ERA learner further over the coming months and encourage you to talk to your child about having good learning habits, so that they have the best opportunity to be successful in wherever life takes them.

Gopal Baria - Senior Vice Principal

Homework Help

At Montsaye Academy, we believe that homework plays an extremely important part in your child's learning, as it helps them:

- to consolidate learning from a specific lesson or topic,
- to prepare for new learning, or
- to independently reflect on their learning from a lesson or topic.

Our high expectations in regards to the setting and completion of homework are consistent across all year groups, however, the amount of homework and the regularity of it varies slightly across each key stage. It is an expectation that homework will be differentiated to support our students, as well as provide them with an opportunity to further challenge their learning.

Key Stage 3: Across Year 7 to Year 9 we expect that homework will be set weekly for maths, English and science and at least once a fortnight for all other subject areas. As a guide, each piece of homework should take approximately 30 minutes to complete.

Key Stage 4: Students in Year 10 and Year 11 will be set homework weekly for maths, English and science and at least once a fortnight for all of their other option subjects. As a guide, each piece of homework should take approximately 60 minutes to complete.

Children can find it very helpful if routines are established at home, whereby homework has a specific time set aside for its completion. In addition, it is beneficial to provide an appropriate place within the home where your child is able to focus on completing the work that has been set. It is particularly useful to discuss homework with your child regularly, as they may raise queries which you are able to help with, or can help them make contact with their teacher.

You are able to check what homework has been set by checking the Show My Homework website. It also allows your child to contact their teachers with any specific questions they may have in regards to the homework they have been set:

www.showmyhomework.co.uk

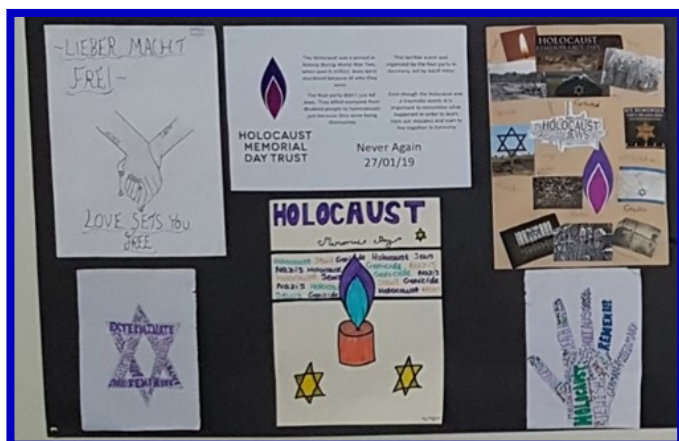


You can access our homework policy and a guide to homework on our website. Should you require any further information in regards to homework at Montsaye, please feel free to contact either your child's form teacher, subject teacher or the relevant head of subject.



Amy Bunker - Head of Humanities

Teaching and Learning in the History Department



In the history department, we want our young historians to have **IDEAS** in their lessons and be able to master the basic skills of a historical investigator. This means we teach our students to **identify** features in history, **describe** events and people from the past, **explain** the consequences or significance of historical events and people and **analyse** the main factors to reach a well-supported conclusion. This is done by learning in an

engaging and challenging way, for example Year 7 historians have been solving a history mystery about the murder of Thomas Becket and Year 8 historians are investigating the good, the bad and the ugly of Industrial Britain. We teach our young historians to research, record and report their learning in extended writing pieces and to use oracy skills to analytically debate a controversial talking point, improving their communication skills which has been proven to improve a learner's writing skills.

In Year 9, historians have been creative with their learning and have produced this year's Holocaust Memorial which is on display in the Learning Resource Centre. A piece of homework produced by a Year 9 student inspired the main part of the memorial, where hands with significant words form the purple flame which is the Holocaust Memorial symbol. Year 9 historians have learnt the significance of the Holocaust in terms of its impact and have learnt empathy which has hopefully had a lasting impact.

James Wiggins - Head of History

Year 10 look to their future...

On Monday 14th January, our Year 10 students took part in a mini-ERA morning entitled 'Building my Future'. The aim of the morning was, among other things, to look at post-16 options and how our students can work towards accomplishing their goals. We were lucky enough to welcome the ex-England footballer, Andy Sinton, who came in to talk to students about resilience and aspiration. His message was that marginal gains every day, making small improvements by working hard is the way to find success. The students enjoyed hearing his experience of humble beginnings, which eventually led to him fulfilling his dream and playing in the top flight of English football. Students also built up their online U:Explore careers profile and looked at potential careers.



We were joined by a local speaker, Joe Perry, from JCB Skills Training Limited, presenting a workshop on apprenticeships, a representative from Project Ask, and two speakers from the University of Northampton dispelling myths and encouraging questions about post-16 and post-18 options. Packed into the morning were also mindfulness sessions, and an activity to raise awareness of the dangers of alcohol.

We are grateful to all of the speakers who spent time with our Year 10 students and look forward to the full ERA day which is due to take place in April.

Emma Lopes - SMSC Co-ordinator

Emily symbolises what it means to be an ERA learner...

We are really proud of Emily's swimming achievements and wanted to share them with you.

At her swimming club annual awards night in December, Emily received the award for highest junior achiever at the club as a result of her achievements in 2018. She won nine county medals during 2018, and reached the regional championships, one of only three 11 year-olds in the county to do so.

She has already gained qualifying times for four events at this year's regionals and is currently ranked **14th in Britain** in her age group for 100m breaststroke. Emily also received trophies for being the top 11 year-old girl at the club championships and for reaching the junior (13 and under) 100m freestyle final, and was named girls junior club captain for 2019, voted for by her team mates. Emily had a very successful 2018 and hopes to carry this on into 2019.



Tim Wing - Joint Head of PE



A lovely send off at the end of last term...

On the last day of term, students and staff joined together to raise money for the Save the Children Christmas Jumper Day fund.

Many wore Christmas jumpers, paying £1.00 for the privilege of doing so, whilst others paid their £1.00 and wore mufti. We are pleased to announce that we raised a grand total of £617.32 for this worthwhile cause.

As students finished school at 12.05pm to start their Christmas holiday, staff gathered at the front of the building to sing Christmas songs and send everyone on their way.



Emma Lopes - SMSC Coordinator

Year 11 students are amazing role-models

Some of our wonderful Year 11 students have been volunteering to give up their time to mentor a group of Year 7 students in maths.

The atmosphere in the room during the sessions is amazing - this is truly Montsaye ERA values in action.

A massive thank you to those Year 11 students, you know who you are, you are making such a difference and should feel incredibly proud.

Tracy Vials - Maths Teacher



Dan Freedman visits Montsaye Academy

Former sports journalist and prolific children's author, Dan Freedman visited Montsaye Academy on Tuesday 11th December 2018.

Dan spoke to all of our Year 7 students about the process of writing. He spoke of developing humorous, realistic, pacy scenes and described the process of televising his Jamie Johnson books.

He drew on his experience as a sports journalist, telling us of interviewing many famous people including Wayne Rooney, David Beckham, Ronaldo, Alex Ferguson, Lionel Messi, and Steven Gerrard. Dan has also worked with the England football squad during two World Cup campaigns.



The session was great fun, interactive and lots of the students won prizes for the best questions. To top it all, each student received a free book, signed by Dan.

Mandy Lantz - Librarian

Katie is a knockout



Well done to Katie H in Year 8. Katie has recently won a second place trophy in the under 16s karate sparring section of the EWF Apocalypse Regional Competition. We are very proud of Katie; a wonderful example of resilience.



Rosanne Hodges - Joint Head of PE

Performing Arts Spectacular

During the last week of term, we held our first performing arts Christmas spectacular.

Over 120 students sang, acted and danced their way through the night to entertain and amaze over 200 parents and visitors who had joined us for the evening. We even had some ex-students return to perform for us which was wonderful.

We raised over £400.00 which will go towards improving equipment for forthcoming shows. We have already started planning a series of events for 2019; watch out for news of these in the near future.



Tim Shea - Head of Drama

Dodgeball



Our KS3 boys and girls dodgeball team recently competed in the Corby and Kettering school's tournament. A huge thank you to Fab and Charlie who played a fantastic role in officiating at the tournament.

A wonderful example of excellence in one of our extra-curricular clubs which takes place every Thursday after school.

Tim Wing - Joint Head of PE

An astounding 95 of our Year 11 students have signed up to take part in the National Citizen Service scheme this summer.



This will see them do a week's outdoor education residential, a week at Surrey University on personal development and a week at Tresham College doing a project within the community.

NCS are astounded by this level of engagement and it clearly reflects how motivated the year group can be.

We are very proud of our Year 11 students and know they are going to have a terrific impact through their work with NCS.



**Jane Cooper
Year 11 Progress Leader**

Tunnocks Teacake challenge



Year 10 and Year 11 food preparation and nutrition students were set a challenge, to present a Tunnocks Teacake on a plate.

The students had a few weeks to prepare and trial their ideas before the presentation lesson.

Students arrived with a wide range of ingredients, plates, rocks, equipment and sweets and then spent the lesson concentrating on constructing their teacake presentation, before photographing and then eating their creation. Every plate was different.

Staff at Montsaye voted for their favourites and the winners from each group were: Freya B., Megan O., Holly B. and Emily H. The overall winner was Freya B whose teacake you can see below:



Gillian Brotherston - Teacher of Design



On the 11th December we took 40 Year 7 students to see the worst Witch at The Royal and Derngate theatre in Northampton. It was an excellent show which included live magic and music, together with some amazing acting by the cast.

One of our students, Brooke, has written the following resume of the play:

On Tuesday 11th December I, along with thirty-nine other students and two teachers, left school early to see a production of The Worst Witch by Jill Murphy. I recently finished the first of four books in the series, so I was excited to see how accurate the adaptation was going to be.

We reached Northampton after a short coach ride. I immediately noticed how large the inside of the theatre was compared to the outside. This was because, to fit all of the stages into the building, they had built down into the ground. This means to get to where the play is being shown, we had to go down multiple large staircases, which gave us a good view of the whole place.

The actual theatre looked very classy: they had red carpets with red walls and wood carvings which adorned the edge of the stage. The second level of seats were gold.

With regards to the actual play, I think that one of the best parts had to be the band. They were incredibly skilled and completely on time. The actors were all outstanding, but (although I didn't learn the names of the actors), I personally think that the best characters were Miss Cackle/Agatha and Ethel Hallow. Miss Cackle was an especially hard part to play, since she had an evil twin sister (Agatha) and Ethel's part was just incredibly convincing. However, Mildred's part (the main character) felt slightly forced, but it was still good.

In conclusion, I think that the whole show was written planned and executed amazingly, which is truly an honour to such a great series.

This is going to be the first of many trips to the theatre which we have planned for the future, including The Bank Robbery that Goes Wrong, Blood Brothers and Thirsty.

ROYAL
DERNGATE &
NORTHAMPTON

MDC perform at the 1STEP Platform

Image copyright: Neil Hannam - NRHphoto



Image copyright: Neil Hannam - NRHphoto

The Montsaye Dance Company successfully applied to perform in the 1STEP Dance platform at the University of Bedfordshire Theatre for the third year running.

Both junior and senior teams have worked extremely hard this academic year, creating performances for different events around the school. It was brilliant to showcase this hard work at a regional platform.

We are incredibly proud of the amount of hard work which students have put in leading up to the dance platform. An outstanding level of commitment, professionalism and talent from everyone.

A fantastic demonstration of excellence, resilience and aspiration; well done Montsaye Dance Company.

Fran Malins - Teacher of Dance

Year 11 food practical mock examination

The Year 11 GCSE food preparation and nutrition students have been busy preparing for their practical exam and working on producing their coursework. Students have been researching a theme and planning recipes that are suitable. We show here work by Natalie S. and Jess R.



Students have been able to practice, develop and modify their recipes and were then able to cook and present their three chosen dishes in a three hour time-slot. They have recently completed their mock exam, and have produced some amazing results using a wide range of skills and techniques. Many of the students have challenged themselves and demonstrated a high level of expertise, including filleting fish and butchering a chicken.

Gillian Brotherston - Teacher of Design

Year 7 and Year 8 students get involved in a new Archery Club

Our brand new archery club has had a fantastic start. Students have enjoyed learning how to handle and use the equipment safely. If your child is in Year 7 or Year 8 and is interested in taking part in the free six week introductory archery club, please ask them to speak with Mr Wing to sign up to the sessions which are starting after February half term.

The club takes place every Friday after school, 3.30pm to 4.30pm; students must sign up as spaces are limited (there are 15 spaces available for every six week block). Once your child has completed the six week introductory course, they will have an opportunity to engage with a local community club.

Tim Wing - Joint Head of PE



UK's Only Digiwall Visits Montsaye



As part of the ongoing launch of our new school values **Excellence, Resilience and Aspiration**, we were thrilled to see a Digiwall arrive on the morning of Monday 21st January. This interactive climbing wall is the only one of its kind in the UK and all students had the chance to experience it, developing their resilience and aspiration.

The wall had a range of activities and modes, allowing access for all students, whatever their age or ability. It generated lots of competition between classes and across year groups, and even between staff members! In addition to developing resilience and aspiration, the wall had a huge impact on wellbeing, bringing smiles and laughter to a damp cold January week. Anyone who tried it ended up surprising themselves with a boost in mood and in many cases being pleased at how well they did.

This extra-curricular activity was totally unique, universally enjoyable and thoroughly deserved by our students.

Emma Lopes - SMSC Coordinator

Teaching and Learning in the History Department

Year 12 history students have been learning about the Soviet control of art and culture between the years 1917-1985.

To reflect on what the students had learnt, they were tasked to create a 1960s Soviet 'sculpture' out of Lego. They then then discussed the meaning behind their sculpture and whether it would have conformed to Khrushchev's art and culture. We had some amusing yet effective debates on whether some of the sculptures would have conformed to Soviet ideals.



James Wiggins - Head of History

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