

## SPH: Together on the Journey

### Our Teaching and Learning Newsletter

**W**elcome to the third issue of our T&L Newsletter.

#### **NEWS**

**This half-term at SPH:**

- Year 11 have taken part in the second Pixl Wave for English and Maths whereby students sat Mock examinations to check performance against other Pixl schools nationally.
- There has been further focus on Departmental Work Scrutiny and quality assurance of Middle Leader judgements with support provided by the Senior Leadership Team.
- Lesson Observation Cycle 2 has taken place where all staff have been observed and given advice and support on personalised targets for development.
- SPH have started their Initial Teacher Training Programme organised by Mrs Jeacock who is working as a Professional Mentor. Trainee teachers have joined the academy in English, History, Languages and Science from MMU and Manchester University.
- Recruitment has been a drive with a new Cover Supervisor appointed from after February half-term and a newly-qualified English teacher appointed for a permanent position from September.
- All Year 7 and 8 students have been assessed for their Spelling and Reading Ages and this has been shared with staff across all curriculum areas to aid understanding of students' Literacy skills.
- CPD has taken place on 'Challenge for All' and developing positive 'Attitudes to Learning' following the first cycle of Lesson Observations. Both sessions provided practical strategies for staff to use in the classroom.

#### **Coming up**

- A half-term revision timetable has been organised and sent to Year 11 students and parents with different subjects being taught on different days of the February half-term holiday.
- Core Subject Intervention for Year 11 students in Maths, English and Science will be taking place after the holiday. (These students will receive a personalised timetable of targeted small group revision sessions). Targeted students and their parents will be notified of their extra sessions starting the week commencing 25<sup>th</sup> February 2019.
- External Senior Examiners and Pixl Associates have been calendared to teach students exam technique in Maths and English; these sessions will take place in the exam hall in preparation for their GCSEs.
- 'Strive for 5' Pixl Conferences have been booked to give 20 target grade 5 students in Maths and 20 students in English the opportunity to visit Harrogate for some targeted support in expert Pixl Workshops.
- 'World Book Day' celebrations and activities will take place on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2019 and this will mark the start of the '200 Million Minutes' of reading challenge.
- The Pixl Unlock App will be launched to all students to aid the development of vocabulary and inference skills across the different curriculum areas. (Please check the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of the newsletter for student logins!)
- The Teaching and Learning Working Party are leading on differentiation across the curriculum, ensuring that each department builds differentiated challenge and scaffolding across Long Term Maps and Short-term planning.

**A Parent Voice Activity where you can give feedback on our Teaching and Learning Newsletter is available on Google Docs. You will receive the survey via email. Please complete through the email or follow the link below:**

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeVeBr3cfPtbyn7UZ\\_Op3gd2wXRQ74OGGn0yllwHa5NYd4eMQ/viewform?vc=0](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeVeBr3cfPtbyn7UZ_Op3gd2wXRQ74OGGn0yllwHa5NYd4eMQ/viewform?vc=0)

You asked for more information about the developments in Science.

SPH presents...

## 'Microscope on Science':



Continual development is taking place in the Science Department through collaboration and driven leadership. Mrs Birkitt and Mrs Knowles have the following updates to share:

The department are working with a Specialist Lead in Education from the Becket School, Nottingham. During learning walks and meetings, we identified areas of strength and areas for improvement. Based upon this, we are implementing learnt strategies we have adopted and accessing further CPD and training where necessary. For example: our visit to the school showed us a different way of working using booklets to organise topics of study which we are now trialling with Year 10.

We are now receiving more support and resources within the MAT and collaborating with other schools locally and part of the Peak 11 Collaborative. We are developing Schemes of Learning and creating more robust assessment materials to ensure course coverage at a considered and sustained rate, providing continued stretch and challenge across all years and ability ranges.

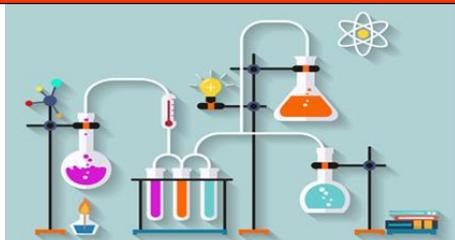
The department took part in a Pilot Project with Oxford University Press for Y7 using Baseline testing to assess students' Science skills from the early transition stages, rather than solely relying on CATs or SATs data. We also completed a Science Week project which was a competition launched to Year 7 and 8 to inspire engagement and enthusiasm for the subject.

Data and assessment spreadsheets are now in place allowing for monitoring of students' performance throughout all topics; this means that we can and address underperformance quickly and add regular and up-to-date interventions. Also, we are improving the assessment of Literacy and Numeracy skills, particularly trialling this with y8. Science are also a Pilot Dept for the national Literacy Initiative: WordPower.

We have built in regular Standardisation and Moderation of Assessments at KS4 and KS3 to ensure that there is greater consistency in our assessment data and more realistic grading/predictions for GCSEs.

We have seriously and strategically considered the way we enter students for exams, regarding Triple Science or Trilogy, as well as Higher or Foundation to ensure students access the most suitable paper for them personally and can achieve the best grade possible. In addition, rather than give Year 11 students in Sets 3 and 4 another mock, we are using this time to implement a guidance programme which focuses on key skills, content and how to develop exam technique.

Moving forward, we are looking forward to hosting 'The Inflatable Planetarium' in school next term and continuing to raise the engagement and profile of our Core Subject at SPH.



Now, in keeping with our Science theme, we give you some key strategies to support your child with at home...

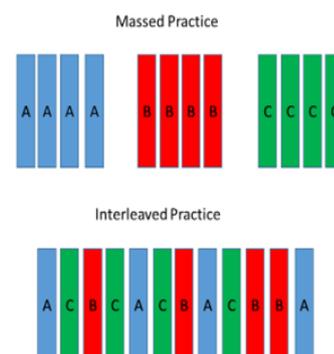
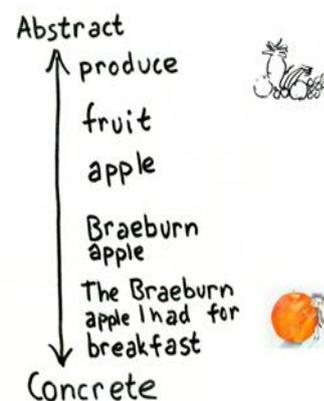


## The Science behind Study:

'At its core, learning is about strengthening the connections between certain neurons. Different patterns of activated neurons represent different ideas and thoughts. When activated together, the links get stronger'. (Chief Learning Officer).

### Six strategies to help improve learning:

1. Think of concrete examples – use specific examples to understand abstract ideas.
2. Dual code – combine words and visuals.
3. Elaborate– explain and describe ideas with many details.
4. Interleave information – alternating between topics/ subjects while studying to keep everything fresh and current.
5. Use retrieval practice – questions/ quizzes to practise bringing information to mind.
6. Organise and pace learning – spaced out studying over time.





# Six Strategies for Effective Learning

LEARNINGSIENTISTS.ORG

All of these strategies have supporting evidence from cognitive psychology. For each strategy, we explain how to do it, some points to consider, and where to find more information.



These principles are explained further in a series of podcasts which cover common misconceptions and questions about strategies for improving learning and revision. Please see the link:

<http://www.learningscientists.org/podcast-episodes>