Horsforth School

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Our ref: PCB/KLM/AMO
26 March 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Thank you for your interest in the Mandarin Excellence Programme (MEP) run by University College London (UCL). This is an exciting opportunity for students with the interest to study Mandarin Chinese and we are proud to be chosen to deliver this highly prestigious programme.

There are many benefits to learning Mandarin Chinese. It is the most widely spoken language in the world and an official language of the United Nations. Furthermore, the importance of Mandarin as a business language has increased massively in recent years, with China's economy now the second largest in the world (and growing). We believe that students with a good knowledge of Mandarin will be able to set themselves apart from their peers and will have significantly improved employment and earning prospects across a range of careers. We also believe it will give students a truly global view that will broaden their horizons, give them an insight into a rich culture and open up a world of opportunities.

All students on the Mandarin Excellence Programme will receive four hours of teachertaught lessons each week instead of their French and Spanish lessons as well as additional self-study and extra-curricular support. We also aim to provide a small group tutorial (5 students maximum) for 20 minutes a week to support their progress and understanding. The programme will be delivered by our fully qualified teacher of Mandarin and all other aspects of your Son/Daughters curriculum will remain the same.

This may sound daunting but some of this support will come in the form of an after school club, led by Mrs Zhang and the learning will not take just the form of classroom learning but also through investigating Chinese culture and history to helping the school celebrate Chinese New Year to calligraphy and possibly even Chinese cuisine.

At the end of Year 8 students will go on a study trip to China for two weeks in June and take part in language immersion, cultural events and visit the Great Wall of China and the Forbidden City. All accommodation, meals and transfers are paid for and flights will be subsidised but if finance is a problem our hardship fund will be able to support students to attend.

We would expect most students to continue their study of Mandarin Chinese through to GCSE level in Year 11 and reports from other schools who have taken part in the programme are that progress, due to the support provided, is better than in the more common languages.

[Here's a short video explaining the Mandarin Excellence Programme](#).

We are now asking parents for an expression of interest for their son/daughter to be placed on the programme. We have set aside approximately 55 places on the MEP. We expect this programme to be popular with parents and students but request that you consider the implications of such a commitment very carefully. It provides a wonderful opportunity but requires a high level of interest and motivation from Year 7 through to Year 11.

[We would appreciate if you could indicate your interest using this link by the 3rd of April](#). This does not guarantee a place or that we would insist you take up the place if offered currently.

I hope you agree with me that this is an extremely exciting opportunity. I firmly believe that it is our duty to equip all students with the confidence, competence, knowledge and skills to fit easily into a rapidly changing society. Languages are important preparation for the global market place, none more so than Chinese and I am proud to be offering the Mandarin Excellence Programme to our incoming Year 7 students.

Yours faithfully

Dr P C Bell

Further information:
[About the Mandarin Excellence Programme](#)

About the Year 8 Study Trip to China:
[Intensive learning in China: 2 weeks in tweets](#)
[Intensive Learning in China: Frequently Asked Questions](#)