

HEADTEACHER'S NEWSLETTER December 2016

Dear Parents/Carers,

It's that time of the year again, when I state that we're coming to the end of a long term and I am hugely proud of the hard work that students and staff alike have been putting into the teaching and learning process. Well I have to say that it is truer this year than perhaps ever before.

We have pushed our Year 11 students harder than ever to recognise that target grades are not final grades and that they are only ever the result of huge amounts of personal effort and sacrifice. We built up to mock exam week with a programme that included everything from Assemblies and PSE to 'walking-talking' mock exam rehearsals and a countdown clock. I have to say that our students have responded magnificently and have impressed all of their teachers with the conscientious and mature manner in which they have conducted themselves during this period.

Year 11 students will receive their results in sealed envelopes on 13th January within a special assembly, where they will be encouraged to reflect upon their individual performances.

It is also worth noting that as a team we are acutely aware of the additional stress that exam season can place upon students. There are currently stories across the media about young people struggling to cope with the worries of exam pressure. With this in mind, we have again planned units of work within PSE on how to manage stress and have also begun counselling sessions for those that we feel may be most susceptible to anxiety. If you have any worries at all about your child, please do not hesitate in contacting the Head of Year, Mr. Dennett, to share your concerns. Similarly if you are worried about your child, whatever their age, please contact us straight away.

While we strive for exam success, we try our very best to ensure that it is never at the cost of our students emotional well-being. We very much rely upon you as parents and carers to keep us informed if you are ever worried about your child's mental health.

This increased emphasis upon exam practise will again be mirrored across the school in the summer, when all other years will take end of year exams. All students will experience the taking of at least one of their exams in the Exam Hall itself. Again we are aware that in some cases, individual students can be unduly affected by personal stress as a result of exam pressure. If you believe that your child may particularly feel this stress, please do not hesitate in contacting his or her Head of Year.

Last Day Arrangements

During the final week of term, lessons will continue as timetabled and I'd like to reassure parents and carers that Christmas celebrations will only take precedence over learning on the last morning of term. In fact this year, thanks to the generosity of our Parent-Teacher Association known as 'Paget Pals', all students will see a professional pantomime at this time. We are making this final morning a non-uniform day in order to raise some money towards the cost of this event.

The last day of term is Friday 16th December and the school will close at 1.00pm.

Extra-Curricular Activities and Trips

On 25th November we were treated to an evening of entertainment entitled 'Paget's Got Talent'. This was a wonderful showcase for a variety of students who all worked exceptionally hard to make the occasion a success. Congratulations to Phoebe Chilton who won the event, but every participant made me a very proud Headteacher!

Building upon the success of last year, we again sent 50 students to London's finest art galleries in October.

Earlier this week we welcomed back 36 students from the German Christmas Market trip.

32 budding skiers are also getting very excited about their trip to the Andorran mountains in February next year.

With our feet more firmly on the ground, there are a wide range of activities on offer after school for all different ages. These include additional qualifications, further educational trips/visits and sporting activities. We also provide an Open Study session on a Saturday morning for all students. Support is given by Maths, English and Science teachers for GCSE courses throughout the year, but it is also an opportunity for students to complete homework. Over the years this has proved very popular and has helped to prepare students for their examinations. Please encourage your child to take advantage of all these opportunities.

Other Events over the Past Half Term

We held our annual Remembrance Service on November 11th. Over 1000 students and staff observed a two minute silence, following the playing of the Last Post. We were joined by a group of local senior citizens and a flag bearer from the Royal British Legion. Following the service, a team of students laid a wreath at the village war memorial. Thank you to all of you that contacted us to say how much the poppy on our school sign was appreciated.

On a personal note, I must say that the coming together, in such a dignified way, of our diverse school community, to remember the sacrifices made by others, is truly a moving occasion.

Our Senior Citizens' Christmas Party was also a resounding success. Nearly a hundred invited guests ate, drank and celebrated with us, and were entertained and waited on hand and foot by our Sixth Formers!

A six week 'Employability Skills' course for our Year 12 students has just come to an end. They have been learning about project management, teamwork, communication skills, CV writing and interview techniques. This was sponsored by Punch Taverns and delivered by an MBA Tutor from Birmingham University.

Our annual Progression Evening was held earlier this week for students who graduated from Year 11, those currently in Year 12 and for their parents and carers. It is also for those students who completed Year 13 in the summer and their families. It is always a pleasure to celebrate their recent successes and to catch up with how our leavers are settling into university life or the world of work.

Forthcoming Events

In January we begin a term of Parent/Carer Consultation Meetings. We sincerely hope that you can join us on the relevant dates that affect your child or children:

Thursday	12 January 2017	Year 10	1:45 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.	5:15 p.m. – 7:15 p.m.
Thursday	19 January 2017	Year 12/13	1:45 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.	5:15 p.m. – 7:15 p.m.
Tuesday	24 January 2017	Year 8	1:45 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.	5:15 p.m. – 7:15 p.m.
Wednesday	01 February 2017	Year 11	1:45 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.	5:15 p.m. – 7:15 p.m.
Thursday	02 March 2017	Year 9	1:45 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.	5:15 p.m. – 7:15 p.m.
Tuesday	14 March 2017	Year 7	1:45 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.	5:15 p.m. – 7:15 p.m.

Holidays

I have to remind you again that despite recent legal challenges, we are not allowed to give permission for students to take holidays in term time. Any absence has to be recorded as 'unauthorised' and checked by the Educational Welfare Officer. I have listed the remaining school holiday dates and staff training days at the foot of this letter and I hope you will find this helpful.

Parking

We recently sent a text message about some parents/carers of our students blocking and obstructing the entrance to the B&Q depot on Branston Road. The police have made it clear that they will issue fixed penalty notices, which can be in the form of points on your driving licence and/or a fine. Could I ask you to consider this, but particularly the safety of our students, when picking up or dropping off your child.

If your child wishes to cycle to school, we offer secure bike lockers free of charge. Students will need to see Mrs Manek, our Business Manager. Please ensure that they have the appropriate equipment to keep them safe during the winter months.

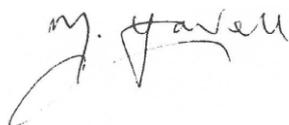
And Finally...

It has been a very busy start to the year and we continue to push every child to give their very best efforts at all times. However, please do not be afraid to contact us if you have any concerns about the welfare of your child. The first point of contact is your child's Form Tutor or Head of Year.

We are acutely aware that all success is the result of hard work by students in partnership with both staff and families.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you a very Merry Christmas and a happy holiday.

Yours faithfully



Marc Howell
Headteacher

ACADEMIC YEAR 2016 – 17

Spring Term 2017

School opens	Tuesday	03 January	School opens to students
	Friday	17 February	Staff Training Day
Half Term	Monday	20 February	until Friday 24 th February
	Monday	27 February	School opens
	Friday	07 April	School closes for Easter Holiday at the normal time of 2.40pm

Summer Term 2017

School opens	Monday	24 April	School opens to students
School closed	Monday	01 May	May Day Bank Holiday
Half Term	Monday	29 May	until Friday 2 nd June
	Monday	05 June	School opens to students
	Friday	21 July	School closes for Summer Holiday at 1.00pm
	Monday	24 July	Staff Training Day
	Tuesday	25 July	Staff Training Day