



Tuesday 24th May 2016

Dear Parent / Guardian

I am just writing to update you on few matters prior to the half term break.

Communications and Personal Details

From September 2016, all Home-School Communication will be transferring over to electronic e-mail.

This will be far more efficient and will save a great deal of time and money. We will continue to 'phone home and use text reminders, but all letters and reports will be sent electronically. It is therefore absolutely essential that we have correct and up to date contact details. Enclosed in the pack is the information that we currently hold on our Data Collection Sheet. Would you please check the data held, update and amend any errors, ensure there is an e-mail address, and then sign and return the Data Collection Sheet in the envelope provided.

End of Year Examinations

We are approximately half way through the formal examination season for Year 11, but there will still be revision sessions taking place over the half term break, so please make sure that your son makes the most of every opportunity that is given to him.

As the Year 11 Examination Season draws to a close, there will be formal end of year internal examinations for all students in Years 7 – 10 in all of their subjects. Not only does this allow teachers to assess student learning, but it starts the preparation processes for being ready to sit the new extended GCSE examination papers that will be required in the future.

Year 9 Options for KS4.

Having completed the Options process prior to Easter, we are now going to have to make amendments due to external factors.

As you will be aware from the media, and the parent consultation sessions that were run by Mr Newton, the content, format and grading system of all GCSE examinations is now being changed by the Government. The changes started with English and maths in September 2015. During this summer term, brand new syllabi are being published for the majority of other subjects. Having seen the first few specifications that have been published over the past two weeks, it is very clear that there has been a large increase in the content that needs to be covered at GCSE level. To try to anticipate and mitigate against the impact of these increases, we have decided to reduce our Option system from 4 Options, down to 3 Options. This will enable us to give each Option Subject additional learning time. Mr Goodman will be contacting all Year 9 Parents and Students to inform them of the changes in more detail, and to ensure that students have the opportunity to re-select their 3 new choices.

Sponsored Walk Day – Friday 27th May

The Annual Neil Metcalfe Memorial Walk will be taking place this Friday 27th May. A letter and sponsor forms have already been issued to the students. Would you please keep an eye on the weather forecast and make sure that your son is dressed and kitted out appropriately. All students will need a packed lunch, water to drink and very sensible and comfortable shoes. Students in receipt of free school meals have already ordered their pack up from the canteen. Would you also please encourage your son to get as many sponsors as possible, and then to collect the sponsor money in over that May half term.

We ask that all students bring their sponsor forms with them on Friday, as these are used as part on the checking in and checking out procedures for the day.

Sunday Church Parade – Sunday 26th June

Our final Sunday Church Parade of the year is the Lord Mayor's Sunday Service that takes place on the 26th June 2016. There is the expectation that all students attend the Sunday Service as part of their commitment to the heritage, ethos and values of the academy.

Continued ...

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Sports Day – Thursday 30th June

Our Annual Sports Day will be taking place on Thursday 30th June at Costello Stadium. This year will be the first year that it has run with our new House System, so it should be particularly competitive. Family and friends are very welcome to attend, but will be restricted to the stadium seating for Safeguarding reasons.

Prize Day – Friday 1st July

This year our Annual Prize Day will be taking place at City Hall. As you will be aware, the expansion of our academy means that we can no longer fit all of the students into the Guildhall, so last year we used the New Theatre. Unfortunately the New Theatre will not be available for us to use this year, so we have moved our venue to the City Hall. Staff are currently making their nominations for this year's prizes. All students nominated will receive a 'Letter of Nomination' even if they are not ultimately selected as the single winner for that prize. If you, or your business, would be interested in sponsoring any of the prizes, would you please contact Anne McWilliam at the academy.

Ofsted – Parent Voice

Can I take this opportunity to thank all of the parents who have completed the on-line Ofsted Parent Survey, or have completed the paper version that we issued earlier in the year. As you will be aware, we still have not yet had our Ofsted visit, but it is important that parents have every possible opportunity to contribute to the process. When the actual inspection takes place, parents only have one night to submit comments onto the on-line survey, therefore we actively encourage you to complete the Ofsted survey at your own convenience. To try and support you with this, we have now added a link on our academy website to take you to the Ofsted Parent Survey.

Year 11 Leavers

Can I take this opportunity to wish all of our Year 11 students the very best for their future. I am sure that we will all see many of the boys at our Prom Night on Friday 24th June, and then again on examination results day, Thursday 25th August. Can I remind Year 11 of their need to settle their canteen bills, return their locker keys, return their swipe cards, return any text books or items of school equipment or uniform that have been borrowed, and ensure that we have correct contact details for their examination results if they are not coming in to collect them.

Yours sincerely

Karen Keaney
Principal



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