

## Truancy Call

Last week I explained that we had written to all parents about a communication package that we are trialling this month called Truancy Call. This system automatically sends a text message or email to parents if their child is absent from school. It is used by many schools across the country and we are considering whether or not to subscribe to the service. The system can also be used to send other messages and we used it to remind Year 8 parents of the parents evening that was held on Tuesday last. Many of those that attended said that they were only there because of the text message – previous newsletters and Updates seemed to have not reached home. For this reason we will be using it again next week to remind parents of **Year 7 Parents Evening** which is on **Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June**.

## Uniform Changes

I mentioned in a recent newsletter that we were negotiating with suppliers to produce a new blazer badge. These are now ordered and will be available for all new students from September and also any of the existing students that would like to change to the new badge. At the same time we have ordered new PE kit which will also be available from next term.

I have taken this opportunity to ask the IEB to approve some changes to the uniform list to make it simpler. These have been approved so I would like parents to note that **from September jumpers, trousers and skirts may only be black** and no longer grey. Cardigans have not been part of our uniform list but many students have been wearing them: from September we will be insisting on black jumpers only so please do not buy anything different when shopping for uniform for next term.

## Headteachers' Conference

This coming week the Catholic headteachers in our diocese are meeting for their annual conference. This is a wonderful opportunity for us to get together and spend some time recharging our spiritual batteries.

## Students News

Our very best wishes to Michael Wiles (see right). If any other students would like to write about their ambitions I will willingly include them in future newsletters.

*Sean Hayes*

## Article in Cross Keys

An article about one of our Year 11 students, Michael Wiles, appears in the current edition of Cross Keys, the magazine for Peterborough Church of England Diocese. Michael is happy for it to also appear in our school newsletter:

### Youthful PCC member attends vocations conference

Sixteen year old Parochial Church Council member from Peterborough St Mary's, Michael Wiles, is exploring whether God may be calling him to ordained ministry. As part of this exploration he attended a special conference in Cambridge for young people interested in ordination. Here he explains:

"I thoroughly enjoyed the conference and would fully recommend it for any young person. I found out about it from my Vicar, Sharon Walker. My family and friends urged me to go in order to gain experience and to find out more about becoming a vicar.

I think the starting point for me was the religious experience I had last August whilst on holiday with my parents at Buckfast Abbey in Devon. Afterwards I became more aware of God and his plan for me.

At the conference, with my friends who attended from various parts of England, I listened to lectures from curates, vicars and deacons. We experienced lots of worship in the different college chapels around the city of Cambridge. Also, the food was great.

The thing I loved the most is that all the other young people who attended the conference felt the same as me, that God is calling them to become vicars.

My hope for the future is to spread the good news of Jesus Christ to as many people as I can by becoming a servant of God."

## Parent Champion

In his role as Parent Champion, Father David will be available to see parents on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> June at 3.30pm.

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## Key Stage I Multi Skills Festival

On Thursday 4th June over 120 year 1 and 2 children attended a Multi-Skills festival at St John Fisher organised by Mr. Baron. The event took place on the school's playing fields and involved the children completing 8 different activities designed to improve their fundamental skills of balance, coordination, agility and balance. The event was a huge success and exceptionally well supported by 10 very keen and competent year 10 sports leaders. Mr. Baron would like to thank all of the staff and students from all 3 schools involved in the festival.



## UK Youth Parliament

The UK Youth Parliament has officially chosen its 3 main campaigns on a national level. These are to:

- Incorporate political education in the curriculum
- Abolish tuition fees for university
- Create a national card for free transport for all under 18s

Please sign the online petition to support these campaigns on [www.ukyouthparliament.org](http://www.ukyouthparliament.org)

Zain Awan Deputy Youth MP

## Homework Survey

As part of the school's self evaluation process we will be undertaking a homework review for all students in Years 7-10 over the next few weeks. This will help us to review and improve our current homework system and help inform a new whole school homework policy. I would be very grateful if parents/carers could take the time to complete the attached questionnaire and return it to me via Student Services by Friday 19th June 2009.

Thank you for your assistance with this very important review.

Mrs P Helcoop

## Library News

### Alan Gibbon's Campaign for the Book

Children's author Alan Gibbons, and Children's Laureate Michael Rosen, are spearheading a new initiative through the 'Campaign for the Book', to make school library provision statutory, as it is in Scotland.

Alan says, "Sadly, some of our schools still lack adequate library provision. Only half of all secondary schools have a full time librarian at all and only 28% have a qualified librarian. Many primary schools would benefit from improvements to their libraries and in some areas suffer because School Library Services are underfunded. It would not be expensive to rectify this situation, even in these difficult times. The social costs of poor literacy are significant. Already, in Scotland, school libraries are statutory with their own 'Standards for school library services in Scotland.' As a result, 98% of their staff are qualified librarians."

We are fortunate at St John Fisher School to have an attractive, well-stocked library for the use of our students and staff, but we cannot afford to be complacent about the poor level of library provision in other secondary schools and in our primary schools. Please consider getting involved with the 'Campaign for the Book' and email Alan Gibbons to support his school libraries letter to government, which is to be sent in July.

J Stack (LRC Manager)

## Year 7 Reading Buddies

A group of year 7 students have been meeting with their sixth form Buddies twice a week during registration, in order to help improve their reading – the following students all achieved their target of increasing their reading age by at least six months. Most students increased their reading age by more than a year. Congratulations to these students on their efforts and thank you to the sixth form buddies, who have shown a great commitment during the last year.

Rebecca Burgess  
Rhianna Chalmers  
Tadal Chiutsi  
Shannon Devenney  
Saskia Anderson  
Usha Gharti  
Kain Jackson  
Zehra Latif  
Abdullah Mahmood  
Laura Reeve  
Abigail Sibanda  
Fasail Tanvir

Jordan Caseley Clarke  
Rufaro Chibanda  
David Crunkhorn  
Zulaikha Haider  
Cameron Hutchings  
Tania Ilahi  
Ben Johnson  
Raja Sahil Malak  
Dainius Pliuskius  
Georgia Rossell  
Ali Ustuner  
Haroldas Uzdavinyas