



Extra-Curricular Activities

One of the ways in which students can personalise their time in school is to join in activities outside of normal lessons. In most schools these tend to involve Music, Drama and Sport as they demand more time and are activities that children enjoy when they can experiment more with their own strengths and ideas. It is therefore not surprising that two of the other items in this week's newsletter concern students joining in extra events and when I look back through previous newsletters this is often the sort of thing that gets reported. We often report sports results, especially when there has been a competition with other schools, but each lunchtime a comprehensive range of activities is provided for students by the PE staff and it is encouraging to see how many are involved. We aim for all students to have two hours of PE a week and the opportunities at lunchtime are one way of making this possible.

I have written before about the students making a positive contribution and listed ways in which they can do this. In assemblies this week I reminded them of this, linking the issue to the fact that we have just begun the season of Lent. Traditionally people talked of giving something up for Lent, such as chocolate, but in recent times it has become more acceptable to do something positive instead: so to do something extra instead of giving something up. This might involve an activity that raises money for charity or it might be one that benefits someone. I have asked the students to report back on what they do during Lent this year. This will again help to correct the misconception that young people tend to be badly behaved and only think of themselves. My experience, as I have mentioned before, is that this is not the case.

The Dracula Spectacula

Next week we have our annual school production, *The Dracula Spectacula*, in the main hall. Please do support this event and encourage the children who are taking part. A lot of effort has gone into the several months of rehearsal and we are hoping for a full house each evening. Performances are on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday evenings at 7.30pm. Tickets are available from Student Services.



**World Book Day
Thursday 4 March
Visit the library to
collect your book token
(valid from 1-28 March)**

Shelter Concert

In the last newsletter I mentioned the concert that was being held to raise money for the charity Shelter. It was one of those occasions where I had to write the newsletter before the concert and what I wrote turned out to significantly underplay the event. The first thing to point out was the excellent attendance, demonstrated by the delay to the start while more chairs were put out. Then there was the packed programme of performances which were so varied and enjoyable. It would be difficult to choose a best performance but the involvement of St Thomas More School's choir was an asset and showed how well young children can sing and it would be remiss of me not to mention the 'Staff Choir' that closed the concert. They were certainly something not to be missed although a winning slot on Britain's Got Talent is probably some rehearsals away!

And to cap it all this wonderful evening raised £423.88 for Shelter. A very big thank you to all those who organised, performed, or in some way contributed to the event and to Ms Vivash and Mr Dalton for directing the music.

Staff Training

On Monday of this week the students had an extra day at home as we had our final staff training day of the year. This was on how to know and recognise excellent teaching and we were delighted to welcome Dr Barry Hymer to lead the day for us. Dr Hymer is a national figure in this topic and we were very fortunate to be able to book him for ourselves for a day. I did extend an invitation to some of the other local schools to send a representative to this event. These days are quite demanding on the teachers but this one was certainly a successful one.

While the staff were doing their training some of our Gifted and Talented students were working with another trainer. This was also an excellent day and very rewarding for those involved. It is something that we hope to repeat in the future. My thanks to Miss Wilson for organising the day and to the students who took part.

The week after next, all the teachers in Peterborough secondary schools will be spending a couple of hours after school training together in their various subjects. This is the first time that such an event has occurred and we are hoping that it will be valuable. Our school is hosting the RE and Drama teachers and Mrs Pereira and Mrs Gwenin have produced a stimulating session for each group.

Sean Hayes

Celebrating Success in Geography

The students listed below have consistently demonstrated progress and been rewarded with high levels of achievement in Geography and related subjects since the beginning of this academic year.

Effort and Progress

Yr 7 Geography	Hassan Nawaz
Yr 8 Geography	Ellen James
Yr 9 Geography	Tristan Goodfellow
Yr 10 GCSE Geography	Catherine Brooks Sheetal Patel
Yr 11 GCSE Geography	Eloisa Carmona Sandra Widomska
Yr 11 GCSE Leisure & Tourism	David Guest
Yr 12 AS Geography	Sean Titchmarsh Fenella Cook
Yr 12 AS General Studies	Tu Qian
Yr 13 A2 Geography	Leanne Barry

Achievement

Yr 7 Geography	Shagufta Waseem
Yr 8 Geography	Karen Jones
Yr 9 Geography	Nicole Atkinson
Yr 10 GCSE Geography	Sean Barry
Yr 11 GCSE Geography	Callum McAllinden
Yr 11 GCSE Leisure & Tourism	Lourdes De Souza Stacey Noronha
Yr 12 AS Geography	Charlotte Whitwood
Yr 12 AS General Studies	Connor O'Sullivan
Yr 13 A2 Geography	Hannah Bolton Mariana Mancellos

Enriching Geography through Fieldwork

There is often a concern that opportunities for outdoor learning in England have decreased substantially in recent years. This is not the case in the Geography Department at John Fisher which offers enriching fieldwork opportunities to all students. The fieldwork programme for this year has already included 3 visits for students in Year 12, studying rural and urban inequality in North Norfolk and Peterborough and flood management strategies used along the River Nene. Students in Year 8 have recently visited Peterborough Material Recycling Facility as part of their studies of environmental issues.

Students in Years 7, 8 and 9 have an opportunity to participate in off-site geographical fieldwork later this year. Year 7 students have the opportunity to visit **Ferry Meadows** Local Nature Reserve in June to study Microclimates. Year 8 students will visit **Hunstanton** in July to study coastal protection strategies and the impacts of tourism. The **Peak District National Park** will be the destination for Year 9 students in June. Attendance on the Year 9 visit is strongly recommended if students are intending to go on to study for a GCSE in Geography or a BTEC in Travel and Tourism.
Dr Bottrill

Gifted and Talented Thinking Skills Day

Nine Year 11 students came into school last Monday to take part in a Thinking Skills workshop. The students worked in groups on a variety of activities, examining theories such as Occam's razor and Kekule's Snakes, and also looking at different aspects of a 'thinking tool kit'. They engaged in practical work on drawing conclusions, problem solving, mind-mapping, quality questioning and arguing. They also conducted a SWOT analysis and identified their own particular forms of 'intelligence'. There was an element of reflection, in which students were encouraged to consider how they could apply their new skills in everyday life, particularly in their academic work.

The students involved had an enjoyable day and learnt many new things. Their engagement and behaviour were exemplary and they were a credit to our school – well done to all those involved.

Congratulations from the Music Dept

Well done to everybody who helped with the Shelter Charity Concert before half term. It was a fantastic evening, enjoyed by a large and appreciative audience and we managed to raise £423.88 for the charity!

The evening featured a range of students from all years, as well as staff from our school and the choir from St Thomas More. The Sixth Form team introduced the evening and kept the audience entertained between acts. Highlights from the evening included the premiering of *Roquiem* by Paul Barker, performed by the St John Fisher and St Thomas More Choirs accompanied by Mr Hansel on piano and Joe Hostead on drums, the Sixth Form solo performances which have been prepared for their examination recitals, and the first performance from the staff choir, who sang Elbow's *One Day Like This*.

Well done to everyone who took part and a particular thank you to our team of peripatetic teachers.

M Vivash



Have you got your ticket???
