St John Fisher News

19 July 2013 No. 189

Five years on

As we celebrate St John Fisher day today I note that it is five years this week since I arrived at the school. An awful lot has changed in that time and it has certainly flown by from my point of view. The students that have just sat their GCSE exams started here that summer and so have been a group that I have tracked with interest. The excellent results that we are expecting of them are indicative of the progress we have made as a school. I wrote last week about how the quality of teaching has improved, but we have also seen continuing improvements in other measures such as behaviour and attendance.

But school is not all about things that can be measured. We also celebrate the relationships between students, and between staff and students, which are excellent, and the fact that we have a waiting list for places in every year group and no unfilled staffing vacancies. We also have a strong and supporting governing body and an excellent working relationship with the other schools in the city, especially our partner school, Kings, and our Catholic primary schools.

Therefore there is much to celebrate as we finish this year, and much more to look forward to next year and beyond. My thanks to our staff for their hard work this year, and to the parents for your support. School improvement requires all to be playing their part and this is very clearly now the case.

Excellent work experience

While most students were engaged in Focus Days last week a small number from Year 10 were on Work Experience. Although it is no longer possible for all students to do work experience we still manage to arrange for some to do so. I was very pleased to hear excellent reports on all of them and want to add my congratulations. I trust that they all found the experience valuable and now have a better understanding of the world of work.

Autumn Term 2013-14

Term begins on **Wednesday 4 September** for Years 7 and 12 and on **Thursday 5 September** for all other students. School starts at 8.40 on both days.

A full list of dates for next year will be issued at the start of term.

Examination Results

A and AS level results will be available on 15 August, and GCSE results on 22 August.

Goodbye and Thank You

We have several members of staff leaving us at the end of term. I would like to thank them for their contribution to the work of the school and wish them well in their new positions:

Carl Baron, *Head of PE*
Daniel Berry, *Assistant Headteacher*
Jemma Bird, *Head of Music*
Laetitia Choi, *French teacher*
Carol Goodson, *Cover Supervisor*
Brett Palmer, *English teacher*
Maxine Harrison, *Head of Maths*
Anne Tuley, *Science teacher*

We also say goodbye and thank you to four teachers who have been covering vacancies for us:

Florian Apopi, *Geography*
Karolina Forbes, *Polish*
Manuela Jimenez, *French*
Pam Wynn, *Food Technology*

We have also been fortunate to second staff from other schools this year: Martin Barwise, *Assistant Headteacher,* returns to Jack Hunt School and Tim Price, *SENCO*, would return to Kings School but instead is beginning a well earned retirement.

Very best wishes to three members of staff who are due to be married over the summer: Rachael Bennett, Helen Popplewell and Lee Sergeant. They will return next term as Mrs Elliott, Mrs Quince and Mr Sargeant!

We welcome back four teachers who have been on maternity leave: Aneta Weigelt, Zoe Granville, Kay Anderson and Catherine Wilson.

Polish Saturday School

Last Saturday I was invited to the end of year assembly for the Polish school which operates each week in our buildings. It was a very joyous occasion with a lot of celebration as children collected their diplomas and said goodbye to their teachers. Two separate sessions were needed as the hall cannot accommodate all the students and parents at the same time: this is due to numbers attending rising to over 500! The school's headteacher Aneta Weigelt works at St John Fisher during the week, providing a valuable link between the two schools.

The previous day I had a meeting with Father Cezary, parish priest of Our Lady of Lourdes, where we discussed forging closer links between the parish and our two schools. More on this next term.

I wish everyone a restful and enjoyable summer.

Sean Hayes

Peer Mentoring

These students have passed their Peer Mentoring award. Sehran Faisal, Hirra Hussain, Aisha Shakoor, Elizabeth Life, Aleem Miran, Arooj Khan, Ewelina Strug, Emily Doherty, Dominika Ciach.
This award will give them excellent work related experience for the future. *Mr Jones*

Celebration Assemblies

This week we held our end of year celebration assemblies. Certificates were presented for students with 100% attendance, subject awards, Reading Buddies, Learning Leaders, work experience, and for various different House awards. Rheanne Harris and Nickisha Laughton, both Year 7, gave a presentation on their martial arts progress. With music and recognition of success across each house these were an excellent way to round off the for each house.

Hafsa Javed who left us in June 2012 to study Clinical Science at Bradford University, has received an unconditional offer to study Medicine at Leeds University. Hafsa was always a very focussed and hardworking student and we would like to wish her every success in her future studies. Congratulations!

Beverley House News

A big thank you to all who have contributed to our house this year. We have had success in numerous ways, including our fundraising efforts; something I hope continues into next year. Thank you also to our Student Support Officer, Sue Hostead, for the dedication and hard work she has shown towards Beverley House. It was great to see so many Beverley house t-shirts on show during sports day. These are now back on sale from September, so if you would like to purchase one please see Student Services. Have a safe summer. *Mr J Hayes*

Work Experience

Congratulations to Chloe Copeland, Diara Dixon, Natalia Dorinina, Victoria Kelly-Gobuiwang, Shelby Leedel, Thomas Lynch, Marcio Santos, Rachael Spires and Bradley Taylor for outstanding performance on work experience last week. I enjoyed speaking to students who were so enthusiastic about their 'jobs' and the employers who were very complementary about our students. We have received extremely positive feedback from employers and there are also offers of part time and future work that have come out of the experience for some students.
Well done to all of you. *Mrs Pereira*

Focus Day Reports

In the **Expressive Arts Faculty** Year 9 students worked with local workshop leaders to learn about a new play called 'Melody' which Liverpool based 'Twenty Stories High' theatre company have created and will premier at The Key Theatre in November. Students explored some of the play's central themes such as friendship and family through puppetry, mask making, rapping and beat box workshops. Year 8 had an entertaining and multi cultural day exploring East African music. The day began with a concert from the band and students experienced vocal, percussion and dance workshops with band members. 'Twenty Stories High' will return to the school in the autumn term to deliver more workshops based on the play. We look forward to working with them again.
Mr Burgess

Year 10 Vocations Day

During Focus week Year 10 students had the opportunity to meet members of different religious orders. Hamish McQueen, the Diocesan Youth Officer for East Anglia, arranged for members of the Daughters of Divine Charity from Swaffham, the Community of Our Lady of Walsingham, the Dominicans from Cambridge, the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal from London and Youth 2000 to visit our school. Students explored what a calling or vocation meant for these individuals. Our students asked very searching questions and acted in a mature and sensitive manner as they listened to testimonies. This was a rare opportunity to discover how the brothers and sisters live out their faith.

Maths Focus Day

Year 7 and 9 students were treated to a variety of activities in the maths department. Year 9 explored properties of 2D and 3D shapes while building their own plated polyhedrons from scratch. Students also enjoyed working in teams as detectives, trying to solve a murder in the context of the CSI TV show. Year 7 employed their mathematical skills in a treasure hunt and also delved into applying maths in the real world through recording incomes and expenditures in the Bank Balance game. The students got an insight into the world of cryptography (codes) and how it is used in everyday life.

Languages

On Thursday we had an opportunity to learn about French culture and French monuments. Firstly we constructed an Eiffel Tower out of different materials. To construct the tower we needed to work successfully as a team. We also watched a movie called 'les Chorites' which was a great way to learn about schools in France a long time ago. It was great fun. Thank you to all who helped make this day such a fantastic experience. *N Detka C7, T Peplowska C2*

Year 7 Mission Day

Year 7 students took part in a mission day around the theme 'Be the change you want to see.' The day was organised by Miss O'Connor and finished with a Mass. The day gave students an opportunity to think about themselves as forces for change and to reflect upon where God is in their lives. One of the best moments of the day was seeing the whole of Year 7 singing and performing the actions for the hymn 'Rise and Shine' at Mass in the afternoon! Well done and thank you to all who were involved in Focus Days. *Mrs Pereira*