St John Fisher News

1 March 2013 No. 172

Year 5 children visit St John Fisher

Last week we hosted visits by students in two of our feeder schools as they came to experience secondary school lessons. On Thursday Year 5 students from Sacred Heart primary school joined one of our regular sports mornings where children from St Thomas More and Abbotsmede schools were competing in a series of competitive games. The Sacred Heart students stayed through lunch and spent the afternoon in science using equipment to conduct experiments. The following day the St Thomas More students returned to do a similar set of science experiments.

The feedback from the young students was very positive and they said that they are keen to come again. My thanks to the staff who organised the day and ran the activities.

This Friday students in Year 6 will learn which secondary school they will be attending next September and so it is timely that we are already working with the children in the following year.

English GCSE judgement

We were extremely disappointed that the court judgement on the handling of GCSE English exams last summer did not find in the students' favour. The court accepted that the marks were changed after the exams had been taken – something that was not really in doubt – but the judges said that it was quite acceptable for the exams regulator to do this. They accepted the regulator's statement that this was done to ensure standards were maintained.

This does not help the many students at our school who did not sit the exam again in June as they had already achieved the required mark in January. Had they known this would happen they could have taken the exam again. All of those that resat the exam in November were successful but students who had already left school and who had missed out on their chosen course for this academic year have been left with the lower grade.

This year the exam boards have announced that they will not issue results for the January English exam until August so we will not have any idea of whether or not this is going to happen again. I sincerely hope that it does not as it is very unsettling for the students and leaves teachers unable to predict results with any degree of accuracy.

Year 11 students sat the first of their Maths GCSE papers yesterday and have the second one on Monday. They will receive results for these in April and this will be a useful guide for them in preparing for the summer exams. We wish them the best of luck.

Congratulations

- To **Siobhan Kelly**, Year 13, on being offered a place at RADA, The Royal Academy of Dramatic Art
- To **Dr Matthew Karangi**, RE teacher, on the publication of his doctorate

Two very different but equally substantial pieces of good news, both the result of much hard work and effort. Very many congratulations to you both.

Parents Evening – 19 March

The online booking system for appointments for this evening for students in Years 10-13 is now working. Individual letters have been sent home with details of how to request appointments. Students have this week been given a form which can be used if parents are unable to access the online system. We hope that this means that every family has a way of making appointments.

Appointments are required for this new-style event and are made on a first come, first served basis so please do not leave it too late to make an appointment. The 'evening' will again run from 2.30 to 6.30 with all students being dismissed at 2.00 pm.

Sean Hayes

Our Lenten Prayer

Lord, we pray for the cardinals that will gather in Rome to elect a successor to Pope Benedict. May they be guided in their choice and be mindful of the needs of our modern world.

We pray for Pope Benedict as he comes to the end of his period of office and acknowledge the work that he has done for the church.

We pray also for ourselves that a new bishop for East Anglia will be named soon so that we will again have a spiritual leader for our diocese.

Finally, we pray for ourselves this Lent, that we may appreciate what we have and understand more the difficulties that others face. May we help them to overcome these as best we can.

The Student Support Centre

The Student Support Centre offers a range of programmes providing a comprehensive course of study for students, based on their strengths and weaknesses in Maths, English and reading.

On Monday 4 March students will be issued with a letter from me about this service which the school is happy to support. Parents often ask where and how they can obtain support for their children and this is one way. It is not being run by the school but we will pass on any requests for further information. Please return the reply slip to school by registration on Thursday 7 March.

Further details can be found on their website: www.student-support.co.uk.

Celebrating Wales

Everyone recognises the daffodil as the symbol of Wales, but did you know that Welsh is the oldest language in Europe, and that the Welsh are the original inhabitants of Britain? The dragon on the Welsh flag is taken from the flags that the Romans used to carry into battle, and was used to show opposition to the new Saxon inhabitants of England, who pushed the people who became 'Welsh' into the west of the British Isles (Wales). Even in the last century, Welsh children were punished for speaking Welsh in school, by having a card with a 'D' on it hung around their necks! Now, to get a job for local government in Wales, you have to speak Welsh as well as English.

St David's Day – Friday 1 March

THE BIG READ

On Thursday 7 March, in aid of World Book Day, we will be having the big read in the library at lunchtime

Read a website

Read a newspaper or magazine

Read a book

TeachMeet Peterborough

Last Friday evening saw the first get together of some of the best teachers from Peterborough schools, at Ken Stimpson School. The idea was to share great ideas from the classroom from school to school. Mr Burgess, Head of Expressive Arts, did a short presentation on how to use drama in the classroom, no matter what subject you are in. Well done Mr Burgess! *Mr Sargeant*

Music Taster Sessions

Is your son or daughter interested in learning to play the piano or keyboard?

Mr Hansel will be running taster sessions on Friday lunchtimes from 1.30 to 2.00 pm in the Music practice room. Sessions will run on 15 and 22 March.

There is no need to book, just turn up and have a go.

Miss Bird, Subject Leader, Music.

Sports Update

The Year 9 boys' football team completed a fantastic victory, winning a 7-a-side tournament held at Nene Park Academy. The team beat 8 teams from across Peterborough and Cambridge and were unbeaten throughout, conceding only one goal in the process. Sarunas Snitkas played like Peter Schmeichel in goal, Nigel Fonseca, Ciaran Kelly and Alex Kalmuczak were rocks at the back. The midfield had the energy and skill of Stephen Coombe Boxall, Sercan Ustunr, Kieran Walker, Fred Cook and Corey Mazurek and up front the goals from Faheel Banday. The only downside was the poor singing on the bus back from Mr Plane and the boys. Congratulations to all. *Mr Plane*

House Update	Points	Attendance
Beverley	10275	92.9%
Cambridge	6725	94.1%
Rochester	10350	92.7%
Westminster	12175	93.8%