St John Fisher News

8 February 2013 No. 170

Year 9 Options Evening

There was a really impressive turnout for this event last week. I hope that this is indicative of a general increase in parents taking a role in the students' education: we are certainly pushing on this as much as we can. I hope that the phone calls that tutors are making at key times of the year are also making a difference.

As well as very good attendance it was noticeable last week that many students this year know what they want to do and which subjects they want to choose. Year 9 is a strong group of students and we are hoping for improved results when they reach GCSEs in 2015.

More Thanks

I wrote last week about a letter of thanks that I had received for one of the donations made following our Advent fundraising. This week I have received three more, from UNICEF, Cambridge Nazareth Trust, and Mary's Meals. The latter is a charity that provides 700,000 nutritional school meals each day in 16 countries. All expressed their gratitude for the students' generosity. (There is more fund raising news overleaf)

SIMS Learning Gateway (SLG)

Last term Mr Berry wrote to parents about this new opportunity for parents to log into the school's management information system (SIMS) and see certain data on their child(ren). This is an additional facility that we are having to pay for and as the bill arrived this week it seems a good time to remind parents of this system and to ask for some feedback on its value.

If you have any comments, positive or negative, could you please send them to Mr Berry via any of the methods below.

House Update	Points	Attendance
Beverley	6975	92.8%
Cambridge	5850	94.1%
Rochester	8625	92.5%
Westminster	10325	93.9%

@sjfpeterborough

Arrivederci

Yesterday we said farewell to Sister Virna, who has been asked to increase the amount of work that she does in the prison and so finds herself unable to continue to work in school. Although we will miss her the work she does in prison is more in keeping with the mission of her order and so this decision is quite understandable.

Like her predecessor, Sister Cinzia, Sister Virna has assisted with preparations for our weekly Mass, has helped with other liturgies and services, and has led the morning chapel prayer programme. Each Christmas she has worked with students to send Christmas Cards to prisoners who would not otherwise receive one, thus making the students more aware of the difficulties of being in prison.

We are very grateful for her contribution to the school. Please visit the sisters' website to see more of what they do: http://www.suoreoperaie.it/

Sean Hayes

New Online Appointment Booking System for Parents' Evenings

For the next Parents' Evening, for **Years 10-13** on **19 March,** we are going to trial a new online booking system which will enable parents to make their own appointments to see their child's teachers. After half term we will write to all parents of students in Years 10-13 with further details and log-on information. If you do not have access to the internet, you will still be able to make appointments through the school and details of this will also be in the letter. *Mrs Behan*

Reminder of Dates

School is closed for half-term break next week and on Monday 18 February for our staff training day. **Students return to school on Tuesday 19 February** which is Week 1 of the timetable.

Changes to Stagecoach Timetables

If you use Stagecoach buses to travel to school, please make sure you are aware of the new schedule when we return after half term.

Further details are available from the Stagecoach website www.stagecoachbus.com and a copy of the new timetables is available at school reception.

Mr Berry

Year 7 Breakthrough Group

Changes to the National Curriculum have allowed schools greater flexibility around how we cater for individual students. One of the changes introduced very successfully in schools locally is providing additional specialist support to enhance and develop students' literacy, numeracy and communication skills, therefore allowing them to attain a higher level of achievement across all subject areas.

This year we have developed an intervention programme that will provide intensive support to students over a relatively short period of time, this will establish a strong learning foundation and help students to achieve their potential in the long term. The group will start on Tuesday 19 February and last for 6 weeks. This fantastic opportunity will be open to three small groups of Year 7 students running for approximately a half term for each group.

This is a new venture for St John Fisher, run in conjunction with the SEN team, and we are all very excited about welcoming the first 10 students after half term. The groups will be based in one room and have the majority of their classes with Miss Rossin. If your child is involved in this project you will have already had a letter.

Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact Miss Rossin and Ms Sennett or myself to discuss them further. *Mr Berry*

Charity Fundraising

On Thursday 7 February a group of Year 13 students took part in a 24 hour fast for charity. The money raised will go to key charitable works such as Mind which aims to improve mental health in the UK.

The fasting started at 1.00 pm yesterday and will be broken at 1.00 pm today. For the Year 13s this is just a small act of giving, yet one which will really make a difference. Currently the total money raised is thought to be over £250. We need your support to raise even more money so on Friday break and lunch our sixth formers will be all over the school with buckets, so please bring in any possible donation that you can for this fantastic cause. *Mrs Pereira*

DofE News

Over 40 students attended a recent DofE presentation and we now have recruited 10 Bronze and 4 Silver candidates. As there were so many students who attended this session there may well be some students who think they are too late to register. It is not too late!

The DofE group started Wednesday 6 February after school and have already covered basic map reading. Both groups will be soon be deciding which activities they will choose and expeditions are planned for April, June and July.

For further information please see the DofE noticeboard in the Humanities/English corridor.

Mr Jones

School Council Road Safety Plea

As a school we are entrusted with your children's safety, whether they are on trips or playing on the field at lunchtime. A short while ago a young child from St Thomas More was hit by a car. Thankfully the student was alright but the issue of children not paying attention when crossing the road is rising and therefore something must be done. The School Council is aware that the number of cars entering the school is rising, therefore causing more traffic. As a result there are blockages, occasionally causing the school buses to be late getting passengers home. More importantly the risk of injury to our students is greater. We implore you to try and avoid parking inside the school and to make your children conscious of looking both ways when crossing the road, in a mature manner. Please be considerate of others and park safely in order that no other students are injured.

Tristan Goodfellow, Deputy Head Boy

Report from the School Council Meeting - Friday 25 January 2013

At the last meeting of the School Council we agreed some items that we wish to notify you about.

1. We began by talking about Safe and Unsafe places in school. We found that most places in school were safe but a few areas, including the dining hall, were found unsafe by some students. We have begun working on this matter by having sixth form officers monitoring those areas in which students feel unsafe. A big thank you to those sixth formers who have done such a great job so far.
2. We also discussed the Anti-Bullying Policy. We agreed that it has been working well to stop bullying. We unanimously agreed a new Anti-Bullying Policy.
3. The next topic was the student questionnaire. We read through the questions on it and discussed whether we would like to change any. We found that the questions are all good, so we agreed that they should remain unchanged.
4. Finally we talked about the merit system and how we could recorded them electronically. A suggestion was made about how, instead of carrying merits around in your merit book, they could be recorded on a programme like SIMS. If a teacher wanted to award you, they would find your name on the system and add on the relevant number. We agreed this would be a good way of keeping track as no-one would lose their record.
5. To conclude, we talked about having new television screens placed around the school, particularly in the Science block and in the main block. Also we have now finished the road safety poster.
6. Finally, a new order of honour board has been ordered for sixth form officers to be recognised for years to come.

We hope you have found our changes useful and if you have any questions, feel free to talk to one of the School Council members. *Sam Maxwell – W1*