St John Fisher News

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Another busy week

Friends who are not teachers often comment to me that a particular time of the year must be a busy one for schools. I always respond that every week seems to be a busy one. After the concert last week we had a very successful visit by students from St Thomas More School on Friday for a science lesson. During this they released some balloons and we have already had a phone call from Germany where one has been found.

I spent the weekend at the annual conference for School and College Leaders where we heard from the government and Ofsted, among others, about changes that are to be implemented in the coming months and years. The large list of these was very daunting and there was much concern that too many changes are being made at once and rarely is the effect they have on each other being considered. I will return to some of the detail of these in a future newsletter.

This week we have had our Lenten Reconciliation services yesterday and I am grateful to the priests who came in for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. It will be Palm Sunday this weekend and then, unusually, we will be at school for Holy Week: more on this in next week's newsletter.

We have also been having our Celebration Assemblies this week, marking the various successes that students have had this term. These are always good events and are valuable opportunities to celebrate good news.

I spoke to Year 10 in a special assembly on Tuesday morning as the first step in starting to support them through their final year. We will be repeating many of the types of support that we have used with Year 11 this year but starting with some students after Easter; it can never be too soon.

And this week we also had a very successful parents' evening, the first time we have used the online booking system. We will discuss with staff whether or not this was a better system – so far the comments have been favourable – but any feedback from parents would be welcome.

Term ends next Thursday at the usual time. We will hold our Easter Liturgy that morning to start the traditional three days of services running up to Easter Day and the resurrection. It will be good to be commemorating this in school in Holy Week itself rather than the week before as usually happens.

The Summer Term begins on **Monday 15 April**, which will be timetable Week 1. Please note that this is a normal day for students and not a staff training day, as it is in many other city schools.

Sean Hayes

One Night Only

Last Wednesday saw a packed house enjoying a sensational evening of musical theatre as our students performed their night at the musicals show 'One Night Only'. The evening consisted of a variety of big numbers from musicals such as Blood Brothers, Les Misérables,, Oliver!, Sweeney Todd, Fame and many more. The audience were guided through the evening by the hilarious comperes with their over-the-top acting and terrible one liners.

It was a fantastic show and the standard of talent display was simply breathtaking. It was so nice to have students from Year 7 to Sixth Form taking part and to see both students and staff rewarded for all their hard work. Some students had to cope with the added pressure of their numbers in the show counting towards their Level 3 BTEC Music assessment!

Rather than taking a well deserved rest Year 12 BTEC Music students are already busy planning the school's summer show. This will be a charity concert in aid of Cancer Research UK on 7 July, at 7.00 pm in the school's main hall. *Mr Burgess, Head of Expressive Arts*

Miss Bird, Head of Music

Mr Chris Dodds RIP

We were very sorry to learn this week of the death of Mr Dodds, a former Headteacher of St John Fisher School and current governor of Sacred Heart School. He was very supportive of our school, even as recently as the parents' meeting at Sacred Heart last week. Our condolences to his family; may he rest in peace.

Borrow a Mystery Library Book for Easter

Action and Adventure
Romance
Comedy

What will you discover?

Beverley Blog

This week we celebrated the achievement of students within our House. It was fantastic to see so many awards handed out in our assembly. The awards ranged from 100% attendance to competing in the Peterborough Drama Festival.

We also had students receiving certificates from a range of subjects for both effort and achievement.

For part of the assembly we looked at what was next for Beverley and how we are going to improve as a House.

An element of this is our new House Blog. The link for the Beverley House Blog is: http://beverleyhouse.blogspot.co.uk/ .

This can also be added to your smartphone if you have a QR scanner, by scanning the QR code above. This blog will be kept up to date with the latest news, events and activities within the house. *Mr J Hayes*

Good News from the Maths Faculty

On Thursday 7 March, students in the top set in Year 10 and the top ten highest achievers in Year 9, took part in the UK Intermediate Mathematical Challenge. This is a national competition which is run by the University of Leeds and challenges students to apply their skills to solve some very difficult problems. We are very pleased to announce that these students were awarded certificates:

Phoebe Kuc: Best in Year 10
Stephen Coombe-Boxall: Silver Certificate
Irina Demba: Best in Year 9,
Silver Certificate and Best in School

On Tuesday 12 March, a team of 4 mathematicians: Finley Allen (Yr 8), Cerys Porter (Yr 8), Stephen Coombe-Boxall (Yr 9) and Sercan Ustuner (Yr 9) entered the UK Team Maths Challenge. All students did very well; participating in 4 gruelling rounds of Mathematical challenge and finishing 14th overall.

Cerys Porter says: *"overall I really enjoyed my trip to King's and even though we didn't win I was proud as we all tried our best."*

Well done to all Mathematicians! *Mrs P Helcoop*

Rochester Rocks Red Nose Day

Well done to all Rochester Students and staff who helped to add to the Red Nose Day fun, by painting faces and singing along to the lunchtime Karaoke. Fun was had by everyone who turned up and it was all in the aid of charity. Mr Burgess' impression of Robbie Williams will be remembered for a long time!

Rochester House is also selling Daffodil pin badges in support of our House charity, Marie Curie Cancer Care. Badges are £1 so if you would like to support this nationwide charity drive, please ask your child to purchase a daffodil from the Rochester House Office. Thank you. *Ms Stevens*

Congratulations Year 11 Travel and Tourism

The Geography department would like to congratulate Jesus Couto, Toseeq Hassan, Maria Horvathova, Sara Kandracova, Victoria Kostiajevaita, Josef Kotlar, Pawel Osieja, Szymon Osieja, Dominik Paluszczak, Teresa Tancosova, Koloman Tiser and Simona Vitanova on the successful and early completion of their BTEC course in Travel and Tourism.

This is an excellent result for all students concerned and builds on the success the same class had last year when completing their BTEC in Public Services.

Thank you to all students for their hard work in lessons and we wish them success in the future, particularly those going to PRC to study the courses at a higher level. *Dr Bottrill and Mrs Anderson*

Library Word of the Week: Precipitous

~~ dangerously high or steep ~~

Lent Fundraising - Non-Uniform Day

To support our Lent fundraising activities, the School Council has agreed with Mr Hayes that Tuesday 26 March will be a non uniform day. You are allowed to wear any non-uniform clothing within reason but if you choose to do so, please remember to bring in £1 as all money goes to House charities. It is a normal school day so don't forget your equipment and books.

Mr Reilly

Year 10 Focus Day

Last Thursday as part of the Expressive Arts Faculty's Focus Day, the whole of Year 10 took part in a morning of team building activities and an afternoon of adventure as they rock climbed, street danced, problem solved, tested themselves in a fitness boot camp session or took aim in an archery and curling session. Head of Faculty Mr Burgess said "*this is what Focus days are all about, enriching the curriculum for students and giving them an opportunity to experience something new and something we couldn't offer during a normal school day*". Shaun Szapjko described his experience of the day as "*really fun. I enjoyed the new activities I got to experience such as firing an arrow in archery and reaching the top of the climbing wall. The team building activities were fun also and taught me the importance of planning, communicating clearly and working together to achieve a shared goal*".