# St John Fisher News

11 January 2013 No. 166

## Happy New Year

Welcome back – I hope you had an enjoyable holiday and a good rest. Breaking up so close to Christmas Day has meant the latest January start for many years, and certainly it is a long time since we returned after the Epiphany. Coming back in the second week of January and having a half term of only five weeks means that time is very precious, especially for students taking exams this year. GCSE and A level exams have started already and continue next week: we wish the students well and trust that they spent time during the holiday revising. The next big event for Year 11 occurs on Tuesday when they will receive the mock results and spend the morning doing some work on these and setting personal targets for the relatively short time remaining until the summer exams. We expect to see them again in the evening when their parents come for the Parents Evening. Please remember that this one is for Year 11 only and there are sessions for parents during the evening on how you can best help your child: more details below.

## Certificate Presentations

On Wednesday afternoon we welcomed back students who had taken GCSE and A level exams last summer as they came to collect their certificates. This is the second year that we have presented certificates in this more informal way and it seems very popular with the students themselves. It was good to see so many of them, especially those that have left us, and to hear what they are doing now and catch up on their news. We were very pleased to note that we did not have any Year 11 or Year 13 students without a destination this year – all went on to employment, education or training. We believe that this very high success rate is due to in part to the fact that we interview every student to ensure that they have made decisions and made applications in time, which we are just completing for the current Year 11.

## Miriam Mason MBE

Our school along with other schools and parishes raised enough funds for Miriam Mason to leave her job as a language teacher in London and start a school in Sierra Leone, which we continue to support. This has gone from strength to strength and now there are 5 or 6 schools. We are delighted to announce that Miriam has been awarded an MBE in the New Year's Honours for this work and we send her our congratulations. The next time that current students hear Sierra Leone mentioned in our fundraising they will know what the link with our school is and that this work has been recognised.

## English GCSE

We were very pleased to hear that all of the students who retook GCSE English last term achieved the grades that they should have been awarded in the summer. Congratulations to those that sat the exam again. Unfortunately many of the students who were affected by the grading scandal had left school and although they were invited to return to take the exam again many did not do so.

We were expecting to hear the outcome of the court case concerning the summer results just before the end of term but the judgement was delayed. It is expected in the next few weeks and will hopefully conclude that students were wrongly penalised in the original exams. Whether it does or not, the government have said that the 2012 performance tables will only show the original grades and so these tables for this year will be of dubious value.

In a further blow the current Year 11, who sat English GCSE yesterday, have been told that they will not be given a grade until August. This is seemingly being done so that the students cannot take the exam again in the summer and compare their results, thus avoiding the same problems again this year. This is not something that benefits the students at all and is proving a further hurdle to jump: we would rather focus on ensuring that each student achieves the best possible grade and not have to play these guessing games with such important qualifications. GCSE exams are with us for at least four more years and need to be recognised and reliable.

Sean Hayes

## Twitter

We now have an official Twitter feed that you can log on to, for news updates from the school. You can find us here: @sjfpeterborough.

*Mr Sargeant*

## House Update

| Up to week ending 21 December 2012 | House Points | Attendance % |
|---|---|---|
| Beverley | 5825 | 92.9 |
| Cambridge | 5350 | 94.0 |
| Rochester | 6925 | 92.3 |
| Westminster | 7700 | 94.1 |

## FAO Year 11 Parents
## Tuesday 15 January

Parents' Evening from 4.30 pm - 6.30 pm

Parent Workshops on how to help your child to succeed in their GCSEs.
There are two times available:
4.30 pm - 5.15 pm
5.15 pm - 6.00 pm
You can attend either session

## News from Beverley House

We closed the end of 2012 with a fantastic celebration of our achievement in Beverley. Although not top of the house cup (yet!), we still had over 200 certificates to hand out which was a proud moment for the staff of Beverley. So well done and thank you to those who have made such a positive difference to our house so far and I look forward to the next term and the success it will bring.

We are now starting to plan Red Day. This is a day where Beverley students can wear an item of red clothing by donating £1. We will also have a number of events and stalls running throughout the day to raise money for our House Charities. This year Red Day falls on **Wednesday 6 February**. For those new to the House we support the Peterborough Special Baby Care Unit and EducAid Charities.

This year we hope to arrange a visit to Peterborough Special Baby Care Unit to see the work that they do and to present the money we raise through our fundraising efforts.

I look forward to seeing the Year 11 parents at the Parents' evening on **Tuesday 15 January**, which runs from 4:30 - 6:30. Students should ask their form tutors for appointment sheets and made appointments with their teachers. *Mr J Hayes*

## A Chewing Gum Free School

We are pleased to announce that we have seen a huge decrease in the number of people chewing gum in school this week and we hope that this continues.

Could I remind parents that any student who flouts this rule will complete community service after school the same day, for up to 30 minutes.

Could I also remind parents to please check your child's homework diary weekly and to sign it to confirm that you have monitored your child's diary and homework. Thank you. *Mr Reilly*

## Sports News

The Key Stage 3 rowing team had some good results before the Christmas break. The team achieved first place in the 1000m relay competition beating Jack Hunt, Hampton, Stanground and Orton Bushfield Academy. A number of the boys also achieved top 3 positions. Congratulations to Sarunas Snitkas, Lukasz Pinkowski, Radoslaw Czekaj, Nuno Andrade, Patrick Horvath and Charlie Moore. *Mr Plane*

## Peterborough Streets Food Donation

It was amazing to see such a large amount of food donated to Peterborough Streets, making this a huge success and ensuring they had a meal for Christmas. It was a great experience as we managed to help people, at this time of the year, by providing them with food. It was an honour for us to deliver the items in person and it was a great joy to see the impact it made on the homeless people of our community. Thank you so much for all your contributions. Your generosity directly benefitted the homeless and made an immediate difference in their lives.

*Ruby Eric and Ayisha Saleem*

## Change to external examination rules

This year there has been a small change in rules for students sitting public external examinations. This rule is for all students across the country and does not just apply to students at St John Fisher School. Students who bring water bottles with sticky (removable) labels on them to an exam will be asked to remove the label prior to the start of the exam. This action was taken to prevent students from using the back of labels to write notes on. If the student refuses to remove the label they will not be allowed to have the bottle in the exam. This does not effect the sports style water bottles which have printing on the surface of the bottle, only those bottles with removable labels.

If you have any questions regarding this update please ring the school and speak either to Ms Rotondo (Exams Officer) or myself, using the normal school number. *Mr Berry*

## Year 11 Parents' Evening and Workshop

On **Tuesday 15 January** there is a Year 11 Parents' Evening from 4.30 to 6.30 pm. This will be an opportunity to meet with your child's subject teachers and discuss their mock exam results, which they will have received that morning.

The whole day for Year 11 students is also going to be aimed at next steps now that they have their mock exam results, so it is vital they are in school. The school has hired a company in called 'Positively Mad' which is a team of motivational speakers who work with the students on exam techniques.

During the Parents' Evening, 'Positively Mad' will running two workshops on **how to support your child to succeed in their GCSEs**. This will be an excellent opportunity to learn what else you can do to help your child get the best possible results. These sessions will run in the Atrium at 4.30 - 5.15 and 5.15 - 6.00 pm. You can attend either session and only need to attend one. *Mr Sargeant*

**Keep the date**

**Year 9 Options Evening**

Tuesday 22 January 2013
7.00 pm in the School Hall