



Attendance Update

There is still much in the news about the issue of students being taken out of school for holidays. A court case involving a family on the Isle of Wight has progressed through many levels of our justice system, with some people hoping it will result in a change in the rules and others hoping that it will not. Meanwhile, the rules have not changed and it remains the case that requests for absence can only be granted by headteachers in exceptional circumstances and even then for no more than five school days. Despite this, I still receive several requests a week, most of which have to be denied.

I would like to expand on two aspects of this. First, any absence – whether granted or not – is still an absence. It therefore affects the student's attendance level, and in turn the attendance figure for the school. Our figure for 2015-16 was 94.5%, slightly below the national average of 95% and so we are expected to continue to take a tough line on absence from school. But, as I say, even authorised absences still count as absences.

The second issue is that the government classes any student whose attendance is less than 90% as a 'persistent absentee'. This is why we quote the expected attendance as 90% on our reports, and why we contact parents if it falls below this level. Last year 16.5% of our students had attendance below this level. A long illness can cause this, or occasional days off, or absences for other reasons that are not authorised. The government firmly believes that good attendance is essential to success at school and so continues to expect school to work hard to improve it. The support of parents is therefore requested. Please check your own child(ren)'s attendance figure each time we send a report home.

Sean Hayes



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@sjfpeterborough

Uniform focus

Just a reminder that all students need to be in uniform style trousers or skirts. After half term any student who does not meet this standard will receive an after school detention. Well done to the vast majority of students who turn up every day looking smart, dressed for success.

Focus Day

The next Focus Day falls on the first Friday back, 3 March, and involves the following activities:

Year 7: Technology – *Day of the Dead Celebration*

Year 8: Science – *Chemistry in Action*

Year 9: Languages: *Ole! A journey to Spanish and Latin American Cultures*

Year 10: Work experience

Year 11: Maths

Year 12: Safe Driving

Year 13: Life Skills

A Catholic New Primary School

There is still time to register support for this proposal:

- Register support at www.rcdea.org.uk/freeschools
- Visit the Facebook page and 'like' it: RCDEANewSchools
- Follow @RCNewSchools on Twitter

Thank you to those parents who have already done so.

Half-term Holiday

We have staff training days tomorrow and Monday week. This means that students' last day at school is today and they return on **Tuesday 28 February** which will be Week 2 of the timetable.

That week is the start of PPE exams for Years 11-13 and Work Experience for Year 10 which begins on **Monday 27 February**.

We break up for Easter on Friday 7 April and return on Monday 24 April.

Drama Update

Year 10 GCSE Drama students studying for the Arts Award will soon be taking a trip to London to see 'Wicked' in March. We look forward to telling you all about it on our return

**Year 9 - Academic Tutoring
28 February to 10 March**

Year 10 Work Experience

Please remember that Year 10 Work Experience takes place from Monday 27 February to Friday 3 March. All Year 10 students must attend their placement promptly on Monday morning and remember to take their booklet with them. Good luck!!

Online Safety

Our Key Stage 3 students are in the process of completing an Online Safety Survey which has been set up by the Peterborough Safeguarding Children Board to help them find out about the online experiences of young people in Peterborough.

UN Children's Service Day

On the evening of Wednesday 8 February we took students to Peterborough Cathedral to perform in the Peterborough Interfaith Council's UN Children's Service Day. The performance was a joint one with Iqra Academy Girls School on the readings from the Bible and Quran. There was also an Arabic song, Tala al Badru Alayna by Yusuf Islam (Cat Stevens) jointly performed by Mr Akbar and Miss O'Connor!

This is an annual event where children from different faith communities put on performances and pray together for peace and compassion in the world. Indian food was provided by PIFC and tea and coffee by the Cathedral. There was a collection for the Cathedral at the end of the event. Well done to our students who represented the school impeccably.

Mr Akbar

Classics Sixth Form Visit to London

On 2 February the Year 12 Classics group embarked on a day out to London. The morning was devoted to exploring the British Museum, giving students an opportunity to extend their knowledge of Classical Culture, with particular focus on the Greeks and Imperial Athens. Lunch was a mixed affair, with some students choosing to sample the delights of independent cafes in Bloomsbury, while Lewis and Elvis demonstrated their cultural awareness by going to McDonalds!

After lunch we walked to the Shaw Theatre in order to watch a production of Sophocles' Antigone, performed by students at UCL. Antigone is an A Level set text and students appreciated the opportunity to watch a performance, rather than just reading the script and also compared the quality of this production with a previous production watched in October.

There was just time before the train at King's Cross for more food and a quick visit to the Harry Potter shop. Thank you to all students who came for an enjoyable and informative day.

Miss Wilson

**St Peter & All Souls and
Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Churches
Social Evening on Friday 24 February at
The Fleet, Fleet Way, Fletton at 7.30pm
Tickets are £10 from St Peter & All Souls
Live Music – Bar – Finger Buffet**

Sports Update

It has been a busy few weeks for our sporting teams. Our Under 15 boys cricketers enjoyed a superb win over Stanground in the Indoor Cricket league, winning by over 25 runs. Ibrahim Javed top scoring with the bat with an unbeaten innings. The Under 13 boys lost a close fought game against the same opponents in their first ever cricket game – Ali Ejaz scoring a huge 6 off his first ball. The boys have more games this week to try and progress to the next stage.

Our footballers have enjoyed some recent success. Our Year 10 boys finished 3rd overall in the recent 7 a side tournament that has been attended by all schools across the city. Milosz Gorecki was the top scorer, the boys finished with an impressive 3-0 win over Jack Hunt. The Year 9 boys had similar success, playing some lovely passing football and finishing 4th overall. In the 11 a side game we had a cup game against Neale Wade school. The boys going agonisingly close to progressing to the next round. The boys were 3-2 up entering the last moments of the game before conceding 2 late goals to miss out on a fabulous win. Sidney Pereira scored the goals whilst Ronnie Jeeves made some superb saves.

The Year 7 girls played their first Netball match against OBA on Tuesday 7 February. Despite being nervous and playing on unfamiliar territory the girls played exceptionally well. Throughout the match they worked well as a team and were prepared to play a variety of positions, some even having a go at shooting. The girls narrowly lost but they are keen and excited for their future fixtures. The next Year 7 Netball match is on Monday 6 March against Sir Harry Smith.

On Monday 13 February students from Years 7, 8 and 9 performed Dance routines that they have been learning and working on over this half term. Members of staff and students saw the Year 7 students perform an Urban Dance, Year 8 perform a Bollywood inspired dance and Year 9 performed a piece based on Robert Cohan's Waterless Methods of Swimming. The performances were a huge success and the students really appreciated the support they received.

Music News

Music students have been chosen to represent the school in a musical performance at Kingsgate on 30 March to take part in a celebration of Peterborough's cultural diversity. The Banding Together Project is a collaboration between Peterborough Music Hub and The National Youth Jazz Collective engaging up to 120 young people from 4 schools in creative music making and performance. Participants will work with workshop leaders and professional musicians from The National Youth Jazz Collective in a series of three in-school workshops. Inspired by cultural diversity they will collaboratively create a new work for performance to 1500 of their peers.

Mr McCoy