



## A New Year Begins

I would like to begin this week's newsletter by welcoming everyone back for the new school year. I hope that you all had a restful and relaxing holiday and are ready for what is sure to be a busy and rewarding year. We have much to celebrate and much to look forward to.

## Exam Results

The celebrating relates especially to this summer's exam results which are very good. I am very pleased to say that the hiccups of last year when grade boundary changes affected some core subjects have not happened again to our students.



The **A Level results** were improved again with a rise in the pass rate to 99%. There was also an increase in the quality of the grades with 44% at B or above. I always feel that the important thing at this level is that students achieved the grades they personally required for what they had planned to do next, and this year a larger number than before did this, with the vast majority of those who had chosen to go to university being accepted at their first choice institution.

**GCSE results** were even more pleasing with most students achieving predicted grades or better. The way that results are reported is changing this year with schools being judged on the amount of progress that students make from primary school. This new measure is called 'Progress 8' and as it is based on comparing the results of every student in the country final calculations are not expected until later this month. At the moment schools can only estimate their figure based on 2015 entries but we are delighted to find that our figure is very high, indicating that students on average achieved half a grade above other students nationally. This new method requires a little more explanation so I will say more in a future newsletter when the 2016 figure is available.

## Twitter

Please follow Twitter feed – you will see pictures of Focus Days and Sports Day as well as updates and urgent messages.

Our school Twitter account is [@sjfpeterborough](https://twitter.com/sjfpeterborough)



## Welcome

This week we have welcomed a full cohort of new students into Year 7, where we are now oversubscribed and have a waiting list for places. These students have had an excellent first few days and will have a formal welcome with a special Liturgy on Tuesday morning. Yesterday we were joined by our new Year 12 students, most of whom are continuing from Year 11 but some are joining the school for the first time and are most welcome. There are some further students joining other year groups as well.

We also have several new teachers this term:

Adefemi Adedapo, *Maths*  
McKenzie Byrne, *Science*  
Diane Coleman, *Geography*  
Eliza Devanny, *Art*  
Barbara Essilfie, *Health & Social Care*  
Adrian Goddard, *Head of Maths*  
Sadie Gray, *English*  
Atul Karia, *Assistant Headteacher*  
Mehru-Nissa Khan, *RE*  
Donna Maudsley, *PE*  
Aidan McGarry, *French and Music*  
George O'Hara, *Maths*  
Pauline Stewart, *English*

We also have a new Head of House for Westminster as Laurence Davis moves to this position from Head of Science, and welcome Kevin Martyn and Rosie Roe to our Admin Team.

I hope that you all, students and staff, enjoy being with us and make the most of the opportunities provided to you to contribute to the life of the school.



This weekend the Catholic Church celebrates Education Sunday. Previously this was marked in January each year but it was decided that it was more appropriate at the start of the school year. The theme for 2016 is 'All Are Welcome' and this fits very well with our ethos as we welcome new students and staff to the school.

On Tuesday next we will have our Welcome Liturgy for Year 7 at the start of period 1. This short service enables the students to come together in prayer as they join the school and will be reflected in a similar liturgy when they leave.

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## School Cup Winners 2016

Very many congratulations to **Cambridge House** on winning the School Cup last year. This is the first time that they have won the cup, which was finally decided on Sports Day but for which Cambridge had a commanding lead for much of the year.

The competition for 2017 is already underway with Year 7 students taking part in a series of competitions on their first day. Current positions are always available on our website and updates will appear in the newsletter from time to time.

## Blood Donors

On Tuesday 12th July Year 12 students had a talk by Natalie Shaw who represents Give Blood UK. Students were introduced to the idea of giving blood, which is possible from the age of 17 and were encouraged to register their interest. Giving blood is a simple procedure that is possible for most adult men and woman 3-4 times a year. The blood from one person's donation can save the lives of up to three adults and potentially 5 babies. After a 15 minute talk students stayed to ask Natalie questions and over 30 students signed up to the process. If you are aged 17 and over and are interested in donating blood, please visit:

<https://www.blood.co.uk/>

Miss Hayes

## The Mayor's Charity

During his year as Mayor of Peterborough, Councillor John Peach visited the school several times and was Guest of Honour at our Celebration of Achievement. One of the charities he aimed to support in his period of office was the Combined Cadet Force in our local schools. We were delighted to receive a cheque from him for £3250 at the end of last term being a donation for our own Cadets from the monies raised. This was very generous and much appreciated.

## Weekly Newsletter

This newsletter is issued each Friday and is our main method of communication with parents. We do send text messages and emails where we have correct contact details, but we expect students to hand this newsletter to parents each week: please ask for it if they forget!

The newsletter, and past editions, is available on the website as well.

You will notice a logo of an open door on the newsletter most weeks until December. This is because we are in a Year of Mercy which was announced by Pope Francis last December. It has been a focus for us and is also the reason for an actual open door appearing on the stage in the hall.



## Key Dates

Dates for the year are posted on our website and frequently referred to in this weekly newsletter; please make sure that you check the newsletter each Friday for new dates or changes. The term dates for 2016-17 are as follows:

### Autumn Term 2016

24 – 28 October Half Term Holiday  
21 December Term Ends

### Spring Term 2017

3 January Staff Training Day  
4 January Term Begins  
17 February Staff Training day  
20 – 24 February Half Term Holiday  
27 February Staff Training day  
7 April Term Ends

### Summer Term 2017

24 April Term Begins  
1 May Bank Holiday – school closed  
29 May – 2 June Half Term Holiday  
20 July Term Ends

The dates for Peterborough schools this year are different to those of surrounding authorities: this is something that was beyond our control.

Parents should ensure that holidays are not booked during term time. Although there was much publicity last term about a particular case on the Isle of Wight, the regulations about student absence have not changed. Headteachers may grant up to a maximum for five days absence in exceptional circumstances, but these do not include holidays and visiting relatives. I will say more about attendance in a future newsletter. A longer list of dates for the year will be included in next week's newsletter, but the following are worth sharing with you now:

Year 10 Information Evening: Tuesday 20 September

Year 6 Open Evening: Tuesday 4 October

Year 12 Open Evening: Tuesday 18 October

Year 7 Parents Evening: Tuesday 8 November

Years 10-13 Parents Evening: Tuesday 22 November.

Most after school events take place on Tuesdays.

## Eid al-Adha

Next week is the Muslim celebration of Eid al-Adha: we wish our Muslim students and their families well on this important occasion. Students are entitled to one day's authorised absence per year where such an occasion falls in term time. When parents wish to keep their child off school for religious observance the school should be notified in the usual way so that we can authorise the absence. Please note that it is not possible to have a further day's absence for Eid al-Fitr as well. Headteachers were asked to clarify this at the start of the new school year.

Sean Hayes