



Changes: Key Stage 4

Continuing from last week's article

The changes I summarised last week affect different year groups in different ways. This week and next I will explain this in more detail.

Year 11: students are doing the old GCSEs in all subjects and will receive the traditional A*-G grades. BTec courses are still graded as Pass, Merit or Distinction. School results will be reported using the new Progress 8 measure, and this is the only one with a 'floor target', which is that it should be above -0.5. Although the method by which this number is calculated is complicated, it is in GCSE grades so -0.5 means that students achieve half a grade lower per subject than other students nationally. As I said last week, we expect our figure to be positive.

Year 10: students are taking new GCSEs in English, English Literature and Maths and will receive a grade from 9-1 for each, 9 being the highest. All other subjects are the old GCSE courses and will be reported using A*-G. The government has decided that a 'good pass' will be grade 5 or above (5-9) even though a grade 4 will be equivalent to a C. Logically parents who want to know how many Cs their child achieves will count Cs and 4s.

The other big change with the new courses, which all students below Year 10 will take, is that they are much harder and examined only by end of course exams: no coursework and longer exams. We will hold an information evening next term for parents and students as well as keeping you posted as the course proceeds.

Parents' Evening – Years 11-13

This is on Tuesday next, 15 March, from 2.30-6.30pm. Students will be dismissed at 2pm that afternoon. Online appointments may be made in the usual way, or on arrival that afternoon. Year 11 students will be issued with reports and revision guides at this event.

Ramadan 2016

Headteachers have been discussing the fact that many of this year's GCSE and A Level exams will be during Ramadan. There was some coverage in the news last month, saying that the examinations timetable had been altered, but this is not the case. We have therefore been having discussions with local Imams about how students might approach their exams. I am putting some information together and will have this with me during Parents' Evening next Tuesday. I will be happy to talk to any parents about this issue during that event: please come and speak to me in Room 201.

GCSE Results

Most students in Year 11 sat their English Literature GCSE exam in January, to ease their load in the summer examination period. The results have now arrived and are really impressive, with close to 60% achieving a C grade or better. I would therefore like to congratulate the students and trust that having one successful result in the bag will spur them on to add many more in the summer.

A smaller group of students also sat Maths in January which means we have some who already have two GCSE passes. So congratulations to *Shabnum Amin, Brandon Calderbank, Szymon Durma, Ali Ellahie, Ricardo Gomes, Vera Holubova, Bradley Jones, Amy Opie, Samanta Palacionyte, Lukasz Pinkowski, Raul Pires, and Dominik Pulcyn.*

Study Leave

Please note the following arrangements for study leave:

- **Year 13** Study Leave will start at half term, **Friday 27 May**. Their Leavers' Liturgy will also take place that day.
- **Year 11** study leave commences **Friday 17 June**. Students will be in lessons until that day but likely with a revised timetable.
- **Year 11 Leavers' Day** will be on **Friday 24 June**. This will comprise the Leavers' Liturgy in the morning and Prom in the evening.

Headteachers' Conference

The national headteachers' conference last week was busy with the very large number of changes and initiatives that are being implemented. Both the Secretary of State and the Chief Inspector acknowledged that recruiting teachers is currently very difficult and this made the national news headlines. There was also concern about the provision of mental health for children, and that many of the new GCSE and A level courses have yet to be approved.

As ever at these events, making contacts and picking up ideas from other headteachers or schools is invaluable and I have brought a few things back for us to consider. The most interesting presentation that I attended was given by Sir David Carter, the new National Schools Commissioner. He was talking about his new role and how he sees the next few years, and for once his ideas were very sensible and agreeable. It will be interesting to see if these come to fruition.

Sean Hayes

Learning Leader

Congratulations to Sabina Strug (R7) who has recently been made a Learning Leader in Maths. Well done Sabina!

Miss Wilson

Peterborough Drama Festival Success

Congratulations to our three Year 10 Drama students, Yasoda Thapa, Natalia Ciborowska and Julia Piotrowska, who took part in the Peterborough Drama Festival last weekend. Natalia performed a Shakespearian monologue from Romeo and Juliet and achieved a First Class certification. Julia performed a modern day monologue from the play Shakers by Jane Thornton and John Godber and achieved a Distinction certification. Finally Yasoda performed a breathtaking and dramatic Lady Macbeth which captivated the audience as well as the judges and won the Shakespeare Cup. We are very proud of the students' achievements and hope more will be inspired to enter next year. Many thanks to Miss Stevens and Mr Burgess for helping the students prepare.



Humanities Faculty Visits 2016

As part of the History and Geography curricula, students in Years 7, 8 and 9 have been given the opportunity to attend a variety of educational visits in the Summer Term. All students have been given letters and I would like to encourage you to return outstanding permission slips to school, in order to guarantee places on the following visits:

Year 7: Ferry Meadows Country Park
(1 or 5 July – Class Dependent)

Year 8: North Norfolk Coast (16 June)

Year 9: Holocaust Centre (22 June)

Replacement letters are available through subject teachers for the trips, if required.

Dr Bottrill

Vážení rodičia,

Dovoľujeme si Vás pozvať na predstavenie, ktoré si pre Vás pripravili Vaše deti. Predstavenie sa bude konať dňa 17.3.2016 o 4:00 hod. v Drama Studio na škole St John Fisher.

Tešíme sa Vás.

S pozdravom,

Rudolf Pohlodko : Home Liaison Support

Egg Roulette

To raise money for Marie Curie Cancer Care, Rochester students are organising a 5 day 'eggstravaganza' in the Sport Hall each lunchtime from 17 to 23 March. Doors will open at 1.25 pm for Egg Roulette and it will cost 50p to enter.

Watch the showdown between two teachers to see who will get egg on their face!

Contenders in the Egg Roulette are Miss O'Connor, Mr Mannion, Ms Stevens, Luke 'the Chaplain' Turner, Mr Clarke, Mr McCoy, Mr Burgess, Miss Wilson, Mr Plane and Mr Van Lier.

2 teachers ... 6 eggs ... 1 egg will break

The teachers for each day's contest will be announced on the day. Don't forget your 50p if you want to have a 'smashing' time watching, just for the 'crack'.

Ms Stevens

World Book Day

On Friday 4 March, we held our annual dress up for World Book Day. This involved staff and students dressing up as their favourite book characters. There was much participation from staff and students alike, including characters from Winnie the Pooh, Dr Jekyll, Holes, Harry Potter, Dr Seuss and Peter Pan.

Congratulations go to the best dressed member of staff, Mrs Bancroft, and the best dressed students, Bruno Walewski, Ibrahim Javed, Julena Farrimond and Ruth Goodstadt. Overall a brilliant day, enjoyed by all.

Mrs Stevens

