

18 December 2015

Dear Parent/Carer

End of Term Newsletter – December 2015

I write to you at the end of another packed term for students and staff, rounded off with the school production of 'Little Shop of Horrors', the Year 8 Drama Festival, Children in Need fundraising and a lot more. Students have been busy supporting local charities and in particular those that care for people who are in need at this time of year. This term alone over £1700 has been raised in events organised by students via the various Student Voice Sub-Committees, and it is hoped this will exceed £2000 today after our 'Christmas Jumper Day'. Students too have worked hard in the community, particularly with regard to charity fundraising and helping others in difficulty, some of which has received local press coverage. Thank you to parents for your support, including a good deal of kitchen space being devoted to baking cakes to sell at such occasions!

I give some information below that I hope will be helpful.

End of Term/Start of Term

Term ends for students at 2.30pm on Friday 18 December 2015.

Term resumes on Monday 4 January 2016 at 8.20am.

Please note that doors into the Academy continue to be open from 8.00am only for students.

Y8 Options and Y10 Information Evenings

There will be an Options Evening for students in Year 8 moving into Year 9 on Monday 11 January, at 6.00pm. For Year 10 students there is a Parents' Information Evening on Thursday 7 January at 6.30pm.

Careers Fair 19 January 2016

To support our Year 11 & Year 8 students (and their parents/carers) as they prepare to make important decisions about their futures and subject choices, we have organised a Careers Fair. This will be held in the main hall on Tuesday 19 January 2016, from 5-7pm. The event will be attended by representatives from over 30 employers, training and apprenticeship providers, Sixth Forms, F.E Colleges and Universities who will be available throughout the evening to offer information, advice and guidance on Post-16 opportunities.

First Aid Training Opportunity

There is an opportunity for any interested students in Y8 and Y9 to complete an introductory First Aid course delivered in school by St. John's Ambulance. This will take place on Monday 1 February 2016 between 2.30 and 4.30pm for two hours. Places are limited and students who are interested should give their name to Mr Collins or via r.collins@bydales.outwood.com Places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

After-School Enrichment from January 2016

Booklets giving details of the extensive after-school activities we will be running from January went home via students this week, including where necessary, how to sign-up. This will be uploaded, as usual, to our website shortly here: <http://www.bydales.outwood.com/enrichment-activities>

Book Review Winners

Thank you to all students who completed their book reviews, it was a VERY tough decision to make as there were so many fantastic reviews, but the winners are Matthew Pearson - Oceania (TUV), Ryan Emmerson - Americas (BRZ), Jacob Phillips - Africa (KEN) and Francesca Thompson - Asia (IND). Reviews will be displayed in the Library and added to shelves so other students can read them and get recommendations for future book choices.

English and Maths Y11 Mock Examinations

For GCSE English Language there is a mock examination on Monday 11 January 2016. Students should be revising using the previously issued revision booklets and guides, from the Maths/English 'Fish & Chips' Information Evening Earlier in the Term. There is an English Literature GCSE mock exam on Monday 7 March 2016, and another English Language mock exam on Monday 21 March 2016. There is a letter from Mr Upex being issued today also, explaining preparation needed by Y11 for the mathematics GCSE mocks on Monday 11 and Tuesday 12 January 2016.

Science Y11 Mock Examinations

For future reference, the Y11 Additional Science GCSE Mock Examinations are on Tuesday 1 March and Thursday 3 March, for all of Year 11.

French/German Speaking Exams/VocabExpress

All students in all year groups have a username and password to access VocabExpress software purchased by the Academy. Please can you support us by encouraging regular vocabulary building and spelling practice, it makes a huge difference.

The first of two speaking exams in Y10 and Y11 will take place during the week beginning 18 January 2016. All students have questions and answers to practise during the holidays to ensure they are ready. It is important to note each test is worth 15% of the final GCSE grade.

PE Information

Please can we remind students about keeping warm and safe outside during PE lessons at this time of year. Rugby tops should be worn of course, however, **black** base layers can also be worn underneath. Any hats and gloves work for sport should also be **black**. Trainers should be clean when working indoors, for obvious reasons.

For forthcoming lessons in the New Year:

Y7 girls (Fitness) One indoor lesson, one outdoors lesson per week. Studded boots should be worn on the field.

Y7 boys (Football) Shin pads are required and goal keeper gloves are recommended where appropriate.

Y8 girls (Rugby) Gum shields are strongly recommended within this unit of work and studded boots are required.

Y8 boys (Fitness) One indoor lesson, one outdoors lesson per week. Studded boots should be worn on the field.

KS4 Core PE students will opt into activity blocks in the new year.

All students are reminded that they should arrive to lessons with an appropriate drink to stay hydrated. C4 detentions will be issued if kit is not appropriate for lessons. For any questions regarding PE please contact Mrs Hill, Head of PE via n.hill@bydales.outwood.com

Alumni

We love to catch up with ex-students, regardless of the year they left. A Facebook page will be set up in the New Year and we would love our alumni to join and keep in touch. It is hoped you will support us occasionally by coming in to share employment choices and provide inspiration as our students aspire towards successful careers. It is hoped to reinforce this with permanent displays about individual alumni and 'where they are now'.

Praising Stars

The second Praising Stars report, known as PS2, was issued via students earlier in the week. The envelope also contained a cover letter explaining the codes on the report. Such reports, which aim to give a simple summary of the progress and effort your child is making, are issued six times a year, towards the end of each half-term. We respectfully ask for a prompt return of the reply slips so we can then check all reports have made it home. If you have not received the report, please contact your child's Learning Manager via email addresses here: <http://www.bydales.outwood.com/contact>

Aerosols

As per my letter sent on Thursday 17 December no aerosols (including deodorant and body sprays) are allowed onto the academy site. The carrying and use of aerosols is strictly forbidden and students who violate this instruction will receive a C4 detention. Repeat offenders will receive a C5 day in Consequences. Students who wish to use a deodorant should purchase a use a roll-on variety, for use following a PE lesson or Enrichment session for example.

Road Safety and Parental Parking

Thank you for respecting my wishes to park in the designated parking bay on the school site, rather than on double yellow lines or elsewhere, and taking care when pulling out after collecting your children. Please do park to collect students, rather than pulling out into the queue and then stopping suddenly to pick up children, which is then causing frustration to other drivers. Churchill Drive is for residents' access only, and using it as a short-cut or a place to pick up students is a traffic offence.

Letters

We continue to send all generic letters home via students, although it appreciated some do not always survive the journey in the bottom of school bags. Letters are routinely posted on our website and can be accessed via Information > Letters To Parent on our website or by using this link:

<http://www.bydales.outwood.com/letters-to-parents>

Parental Emailing List

Parents can sign-up with an email address to our parental emailing list, to receive occasional updates, including when generic letters have gone home. This is via an online service called MailChimp and it is easy to subscribe or unsubscribe. Please consider this service if you have access to email. The link to subscribe is here: <http://tinyurl.com/m9hwchd>

Bydales Social Media

Whilst the parental email list will be used occasionally, we do not want to fill email inboxes. If you would like to have more frequent updates about what is going on in school day-by-day, you could follow the

school on Twitter using @OutwoodBydales or 'like' our Facebook page called 'Outwood Academy Bydales'. We will of course continue to send letters home too. Our current website www.bydales.outwood.com includes the most recent Tweets so it is not be necessary to join Twitter yourself.

Goodbyes

Finally, at the end of this term we say goodbye to Stuart McGhee, Assistant Principal who is leaving us for a well-deserved promotion to a Deputy Headteacher position in Richmond. He is an outstanding teacher who will be missed, and we wish him well in his new post. Ms Jo Ferris, who teaches mathematics with us already, will become Acting Assistant Principal from January.

I wish you and your families a wonderful Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.

Yours faithfully



Andrew Wappat
Principal