

Dear Parent/Carer

As we come to the end of a very busy half-term, may I say 'thank-you' to the support that you have offered myself and the staff. We are in the process of appointing a new Principal ready for a September 2010 start date. Interviews for the post are scheduled to take place in March. The information pack for candidates includes the pupils' ideas about the sort of headteacher they would like, they have been very frank!

Motivational Speaker

On Monday 1st February all of Y11 had a motivational seminar with Richard McCann. Richard is an exceptional communicator whose ability to inspire an "iCan" attitude is guaranteed to give the message of an "iCan" approach. Not only does Richard live and breathe the "iCan" philosophy, but has helped thousands of people in the business, corporate, and education worlds to change the way they think. Every pupil that I have spoken to has said how inspirational he was and his message of "iCan" has made them really think about what they can do to help themselves succeed.

Pupils Voice

Our Pupil Voice group have been reviewing school uniform. They have asked Governors whether they would consider allowing pupils to wear a black jumper as well as a grey one, and have the option of wearing a black or grey waist length cardigan. Governors were happy to support this decision to be effective immediately.

Bands

One of the bands at school "We Beat The System" which consists of Y11 pupils (**INSERT NAMES once checked with parents**), together with a solo artist "Oliver Hawick – **again checked with parents**" suggested and organised a well attended band night to raise money for the Sisters of The Insured Salvation orphanage in Lesotho and the Haiti appeal. Thank-you to all those parents who came to support our young people. I was astounded at the calibre of their performance. They raised £346.60! A big thank you and well done to them all.

The bands are also involved in a musical exchange with Ian Ramsey school, Stockton. The first leg of the "musical exchange" event took place last week with a band called "The Boredom Theory" from Ian Ramsey School putting on a lunchtime performance for our pupils. This week our bands will play Ian Ramsey School. Again, these lunchtime concerts are in aid of the Haiti appeal.

Options

Our Y9 pupils are going to be making choices for their KS4 courses over the next few weeks. Each pupil will receive a copy of the school "options booklet" which contains all of the information they need to make informed choices next week. This can be studied at home so that pupils can discuss choices with parent/carers. The options evening itself will be held on February 24th. School will be open from 5.45 pm for a prompt start in the main school hall at 6.00.

Year 9

Pupils have already started their GCSE Science course and we are planning that they will begin their GCSE Maths course after Easter. This will help pupils to adapt to GCSE skills in a stepped way.

Year 11

In the run up to the GCSE examinations we are planning extra lessons during half term and at Easter. All subjects are also planning intervention strategies to enable pupils to be well prepared for the approaching GCSE examinations.

Sport

We have had some great successes in the sporting arena. Our Year 7 boys won the Sunderland schools 5-a-side competition and were semi finalists in the county competition. Year 8 boys are currently top of league and in the semi finals of City Cup!

Lunchtimes

One of the things that parents/carers, pupils and staff continually talk about wanting to change is the split lunch. We have spoken to the pupils about this and they agree that it would be a positive step forward. I believe it would be possible to do this if we increased the seating capacity for lunch by using part of the hall and changed the lunch break to 1 hour. There are many benefits in doing this and I have listed the main ones below. I would like to seek your views about this and would be happy to receive your feedback. Please refer to the attached consultation sheet.

Lost Property

We have collected various articles of property that have been lost within school. Could I remind everyone to check at the Learner Welfare desk for any property that they may have lost in school. We cannot store lost property indefinitely. Any property that is not collected by the end of the spring term will be donated to charity.

Internet Safety

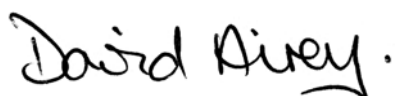
I have attached a useful factsheet containing information about internet safety. I would urge everyone to read this and have a look at the suggested websites. They contain a lot of practical tips to make your child's access to the internet safer.

School Website

I intend to publish all general mailings to parents on the front page of the school website as well as sending out a paper copy. Could I urge you to check this regularly just in-case you child does not give you the copies of the letters that we send out.

Finally, can I thank you again for your continued support as we work together to ensure the success of your child or son/daughter?

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Airey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent underline under the name.

Acting Principal

Proposed changes to school lunch timings

In order to have a more streamlined lunchtime that minimises disruption to learning, the following structure is suggested. This could be implemented for the Summer Term 2010.

8.25 – 8.50	Registration / Worship
8.50 – 9.50	Period 1
9.50 – 10.50	Period 2
10.50 – 11.05	Break
11.05 – 12.00	Period 3
12.00 – 1.00	Lunchtime (all pupils)
1.00 – 1.55	Period 4
1.55 – 2.55	Period 5
2.55	End of school day

There are many benefits to having all pupils on a 1 hour lunch break at the same time.

1. Learning will not be disrupted.
2. Lunchtime activities will be able to be organised more easily.
3. We will be able to open up more of the school to pupils.
4. Pupils will have a longer break giving them more time to relax.

Please let us know what you think.

Name: _____ (optional)

Parent of: _____ (optional)

I would like to see lunchtime changed to 1 hr for everyone; Yes No

Comments;