



Newsletter

St Mary's Catholic School specialist Languages and Humanities College.

April 2008

From the Headteacher

May I start by offering you all an apology.... This newsletter would normally arrive before Easter and indicate how the school would be celebrating this important phase in the Catholic Calendar. As you may have gathered this year, the Easter programme has caused some interesting differences in school holidays and we wait another week for the end of this term!

Certainly our school liturgies and services have made us all focus upon the true meaning of Easter and I was proud of the work done by year 10 students who took the lead in preparing and delivering much of this. They have been inspirational and I hope they will continue to "grow" in faith and spirit with the work they continue to do.

The proposed Joint Church School has been voted to go forward to formal consultation. It is an exciting opportunity and would secure Catholic Secondary Education in North East Lincolnshire which for many years has found the financial constraints of being one of the smallest secondary schools in the county detrimental to the educational and spiritual opportunities we

would like to offer to our young people. I attach an information sheet to summarise progress to date.

We of course now move towards the examination period for years 9 and 11 with SATs and GCSEs on the horizon. We have already instigated a full programme of booster and revision sessions which will continue right through the exam periods. I would encourage every parent/carer to push their children to attend.

You will also find attached to this newsletter our bi-annual questionnaire to parents. On this occasion I would like parents to add a contact name and number so that we can respond to individual concerns or questions. I hope parents now feel secure in the knowledge that we will take each issue seriously and act upon it. These questionnaires should be returned to the school main office.

On behalf of the Governors, staff and myself can I thank you all for your continued support and encouragement to reach the highest possible standards at St Mary's Catholic School.

R Mellows – Headteacher

Diary Dates

Friday, 4 April	School closes
Tuesday, 22 April	School re-opens for both staff and students
Monday, 5 May	School Closed
Tuesday, 6 May – Friday, 9 May	Year 9 SATs begin.
Wednesday, 7 May – Tuesday, 23 June	Main period of GCSEs
Monday, 12 May – Friday, 23 May	Year 10 work experience
Thursday, 15 May	Year 10 parents evening (Provisional)
Friday, 23 May	School closes
Monday, 2 June	Teacher training day and Year 11 students back to school
Tuesday, 3 June	Year 7-10 students back to school

Joint Church School – Accessing the Headteacher Mr Mellows

I am expecting to be involved in a number of meetings and activities throughout the summer term and therefore I may not be as available to parents as I have been. Please feel free to contact Mr Howard or Mr Brolly who will act on my behalf or contact my

PA, Natalie Bartlett if you wish to make an appointment to see me, although I must apologise if this takes a little longer than normal.

Extra Training Day

You will have received a letter with the latest sets of working at grades and levels to inform you of an additional **training day on Monday, 2 June 2008**. This is a Government directive to secondary schools in support of the new KS3 national curriculum agenda. The school is open for Year 11 GCSE examinations and buses will run as **normal** for these students. If you have any concerns please contact Mr Brolly or Mr Howard

Change of lunch time timings.

To accommodate SATs and GCSE examinations, we will move to a 3 period morning (lunch at 12.00pm) and a 3 period afternoon from Monday, 12 May. This will last for the examination period towards the end of June.

Parents evening and reports

	Reports sent home to parents	Parent's Evening
Year 7	10/07/08	17/07/08
Year 8	26/06/08	03/07/08
Year 10	09/05/08	15/05/08

Car Parking

May I remind all parents/carers and visitors to select parking areas away from the school entrance, particularly when picking up or dropping off students. Community Police Officers will enforce no parking regulations with fixed penalty fines.

Work Experience

Year 10 work experience is from Monday, 12 May to Friday, 23 May 2008. Any student who for any reason is not involved ***MUST*** be in school; otherwise it will be recorded as unauthorised absence.

Enjoy the world of work Year 10.

Bag2School – Free fundraising for school

Bag2School is a company that specialises in good quality second hand clothing. All bags collected are weighed and they will pay us £200 per tonne (20p per kilo).

Following the success of the last collection in February where we raised £159.00. The Bag2School bags will be available from school on 2 June 2008. The more we weigh the more they pay so please return you bag2school bag by 24 June 2008 at 9.30am.

The following items are accepted: adult and children's clothing, bedding, curtains, soft toys, shoes, belts and handbags.

Year 11 Prom

The Year 11 Prom will take place on Friday, 20 June 2008 at Lucarly's. Tickets are £20 for a meal and music.

I am in the process of hiring my suit for the event!

Year 9 Boosters

Year 9 have SATs (standard attainment tests) in the first week of May. These are National tests and cannot be done at any other time. They will be used to set targets for KS4. As usual booster sessions have been organised to help students prepare.

Holidays

May I remind parents that students should not be taken out of school for family holidays. This is essential for Year 9 and Year 11. As you will be aware, I ***cannot*** sanction all holidays as authorised absences and they may well count against the student's attendance. Please contact Mrs McMullan if you have any queries or concerns before you book such a holiday.

Summer Uniform

Summer uniform (white polo shirt with the school logo) will begin on our return from the Easter holidays (22 April), a plain white shirt will not suffice, it must have the logo on it. Students not wearing this type of polo shirt will be expected to continue to wear shirt and tie. **I will send students home to dress correctly** if they are not in appropriate uniform, this includes shoes. I thank parents in advance for maintaining our high uniform standards.

Working at grades and levels

All parents/carers should have the latest set of working at grades (years 10 & 11) and working at levels (Year 7, 8 & 9). The format has changed slightly with an additional prediction for the end of KS if present progress is maintained. We hope parents/carers will find this useful. Further information is available from Mr Howard or Heads of House.

Dalguise – Scotland – February 2009

We have now completed the risk assessment visit and have the go ahead begin the organisation of this fantastic

event! Miss Hurdman and Mr Cooper will lead on the organisation with Mr Howard in charge of those left behind!. You will receive information in the near future and I am looking forward to dangling from ropes and doing Tarzan impressions (hopefully slightly better than my Elvis impression in the Christmas Panto).

Community Police Drop In Sessions

We continue to develop a strong relationship with our Community Police Liaison Officers. Zara Ryan is our main contact and she continues to meet us on a month by month basis. If you wish to speak to her about any matter in strict confidence please contact my PA, Natalie Bartlett who can arrange a meeting for you.

Student Smokers

St Mary's Catholic School is a non smoking site with fixed penalty fines for those identified. Students caught smoking will now risk being excluded but may be offered an alternative support package for one day in an attempt to help them stop smoking. More details to follow.

21st Century Science GCSE – Year 10 and Year 11

Pupils taking GCSE 21st Century Science A are assessed through five units:

- 3 modular examinations each of which counts 16.7% of the total mark.
- 1 'Ideas in context' examination which counts 16.7% of the total mark. This examination tests pupils' ability to scientifically analyse and evaluate information provided in a 'seen' paper.

- Course work made up of a 'Case Study' (20%) and a 'Practical Data Analysis' (13.3%).

Year 11 pupils have already taken the three modular examinations and should have submitted their 'Case Study' and 'Data Analysis' coursework. The preparation sheets for the 'Ideas in context' paper will be given to pupils in March so that they can prepare for the test on 12th May.

Year 10 pupils will take their Modular examinations in June. They too will take the 'Ideas in context' paper on May 12th. The preparation sheets for this will be given to pupils in March. Results for the units examined in June will be available in August.

Year 11 pupils are also being assessed for GCSE 21st Century Additional Science A. This too takes the form of five units:

- 3 modular examinations each of which counts 16.7% of the total mark.
- 1 'Ideas in context' examination which counts 16.7% of the total mark. This examination tests pupils' ability to scientifically analyse and evaluate information provided in a 'seen' paper.
- Course work made up of a Practical Investigation which counts for 33.3% of the total mark.

Coursework must be submitted by the end of April.

Year 10 pupils will take GCSE 21st Century Additional Science A in year 11.

Forthcoming Events

Former St Mary's student Rachael Hewer is appearing in **The Collector**, a psychological thriller at the Louth Riverhead

Theatre on 24, 25 and 26 April. This play will then transfer to the Etcetera Theatre in Camden London.

Another former student John Hewer has written a play to be produced at Louth - **News at two minutes past six** on 15, 17 and 20 April. This is a fast paced comedy.

Tickets for both plays are available from the box office on 01507 600350.

Forthcoming Events

On Friday, 4 July the staff at St Mary's are performing a play written by John Hewer - **Murder by the lift shaft**, this will be a murder mystery evening full of intrigue and fun. Watch this space for further details.

Contact Details

Please ensure that should any student contact details change that you advise the School office in writing at the earliest opportunity (e.g. home addresses, telephone numbers including mobiles).

The School must periodically send reports and letters to parents and in order to comply with the data protection act, these details must be kept up to date

Absence From School

We request that all parents telephone the school before 10.00am on the first day of absence if your son/daughter is not going to be in school due to illness. A note explaining the absence so that we may authorise it must follow this up. Unfortunately government guidelines do not allow us to authorise an absence unless we have heard from parents. Thank you for your attention in this matter.