



14 February 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

As we reach the half way point in the academic year, we thank you for your continued support in all aspects of school life.

School Updates

Our Year 11 students have shown exemplary attitude and behaviour during their mock GCSE examinations. Please continue to keep them in your thoughts and prayers as they prepare for their final exams in May/June.

It was great to see so many Year 10 students and their parents/carers at our Y10 parents' evening. As our Year 11 start preparing for exams, our Year 10 students will be encouraged to take on more student leadership opportunities within school.

As part of our student leadership programme, 12 pupils in Y10 completed anti-bullying ambassador training. They will be updating our anti-bullying policy and will start their new roles in the next half term.

Many of our Year 9 students have been successful in their Sports Leader training. They are already supporting events for local primary schools.

We have started the first round of this year's Diana Mentoring Award programme with a group of Year 9 boys. They are developing team work skills, leadership qualities and working with mentors from Ralph Lauren.

Our Year 8 football team were runners up in the national final and displayed great sportsmanship.

Students in Year 8 and Year 9 Combined Cadet Force have been practising their drills, completing first aid training and starting field work skills. We will be starting to recruit for next year's intake from Easter.

During the national 'Apprenticeship Week' we had a range of activities for different year groups including workshops, quizzes and assemblies.

All students have had assemblies this week on 'Internet Safety', the national theme has been 'Exploring Online Identity – Acceptance'. On our 'Internet Safety Day' students covered aspects of Internet Safety as part of their lessons.

An increasing number of parents have received P4 text messages in recognition of their child's efforts and achievements in class. Every classroom now has a recognition board to praise students for extra effort.



Home/School Partnership

The partnership between school and home is very important to support our young people to reach their full potential. Lots of parents ask us what they can do to help their child learn.

One of the areas we are working hard to improve this year is keeping you informed of the knowledge, skills and understanding that your child needs in each of their subjects so that you can further support them at home.

Each curriculum area will be updating their sequences of learning and this information and links will be added to our website over the next few months.

We are also trialling new ideas and our English department has already started information events for Year 11 parents to help them have a better understanding of the GCSE examination questions. The feedback was very positive after the first event.

We are interested in any other suggestions or ideas that you might have that will help you to further support your child in their learning. If you have any thoughts, please let us know by enquiry email or you could provide feedback at parents' evenings.

Next Half Term...

Year 8 had their initial options assembly this week and will be bringing the options booklet home. A copy will also be on our website. In the week commencing 2nd March, they will have taster sessions in the option subjects and careers guidance as part of 'Careers Week'. The Y8 parents' consultation is on Wednesday 11th March. Details are in the booklet.

On Wednesday 26th February we have our Ash Wednesday whole school Mass which marks the start of Lent. During Lent, as part of the Good Shepherd Appeal, we hope to raise money for CAFOD. Staff and students will be following the Lenten Calendar, this encourages reflection and simple actions that can make a difference. We will end next half term with a whole school liturgy and reconciliation service on Friday 3rd April.

One of our focus areas this year is 'Mental Health and Wellbeing'. Ten members of staff are training and taking the 'Children and Young People's Mental Health Qualification'. This follows the introduction of KOOTH, an online mental health and wellbeing platform for young people. Year 7 to Year 10 have already had assemblies from the KOOTH ambassadors. All students can log into KOOTH.com where they can find advice, support and direct access to trained counsellors.

Key Dates

Monday 24 February – School opens

Wednesday 26 February – Ash Wednesday Mass

Thursday 27- Friday 28 February – Arts Trip to London
W/c Monday 02 March – Careers Week
Wednesday 04 March – Dance & Gym Evening
Wednesday 11 March – Year 8 Options & Parents' Evening
W/c Monday 16 March – Year 11 Assessment Week
Thursday 26 March – Year 9 Parents' Evening
Friday 27 March – Non-uniform Day for Good Shepherd Appeal
Friday 03 April – Whole School liturgy & Reconciliation Service
Friday 03 April – School closes for Easter
Monday 20 April – Staff INSET
Tuesday 21 April – School opens

We look forward to welcoming our students back on Monday 24th February. We hope you have a peaceful and relaxing half term.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "D. Mitchell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial 'D'.

Mrs D Mitchell
Headteacher