

VJJ/HEV

April 2017

Dear Parents/Carers

I can't believe that we are coming to the end of the Spring Term already and I am sure that the students will welcome their well-deserved Easter break. For many of our students the focus is now on the summer exams. The thing for all students to remember is how important it is to manage their time effectively. Revision timetables are being written in school and students need to make sure they have started their revision to ensure they have enough time to cover all their subjects. When we think about summer exams our thoughts are on GCSEs, AS and A levels however it is also important to remember that all year groups will have exams in the summer. Thorough preparation for these helps students consolidate their learning and ensure they have secured the knowledge and skills they need to make progress next year. They need to prepare themselves for the exams and in that sense the Easter holidays should include revision for all students.

News

Pastoral System

After consultation with students and staff, we have decided that from September 2017 we will revise our pastoral system. We will keep the houses to ensure continuity of identity but we will change to a year group registration and pastoral support system. We have made this decision for many reasons but firmly believe that it will allow the pastoral system not only to concentrate on providing more focused and dedicated support for each year group but also to enable greater impact towards the academic progress of ALL students and to improve communication with parents. This system will also allow us to develop pastoral teams who are able to provide academic mentoring to help develop learning skills that can be transferred across a range of subject areas and address potential barriers as well as Form Tutors who are able to advise on age specific topics and issues. Later in the Summer Term we will contact you with details of changes to Form Tutors and to update you about information regarding Heads of Year.

Unconditional University Offers

This year more universities have made unconditional offers to students. Recently, at a meeting of Heads of Sixth Form it was discussed how we had all noticed the increase in this type of offer being made to students before they have completed their A levels. A cautionary tale was brought to my attention about a student at another school who last year accepted an unconditional offer and then promptly eased up on his work. Despite being warned about this, he did not heed the warning and achieved grades which were a long way below what he was expected to achieve. The university withdrew their offer to him when they received his final results so it seems that for some universities at least an unconditional offer does not necessarily mean unconditional! I know our students would not follow the example of this student but when accepting unconditional offers, students should carefully check with the university exactly what this means. The best advice when choosing where to select as your firm and insurance choices remains; they have to be the right course and the right place for you. Being swayed by an unconditional offer to compromise on what you really want to do and where you want to go is not the best policy. Anyone with any questions about making final choices should contact Mr James who will help where he can, but visiting universities and ensuring you know the course content as well as thinking carefully before replying is the best general advice all Heads of Sixth Form will give.

School Council

The School Council has been busy over the last few weeks. It organised events for Red Nose Day, raising over £350.00 through bake sales, donations, a Guess the Teacher quiz and Beat the Goalie competition with Mr Mitchell. Our Teaching and Learning Sub-Committee has met and will survey forms in the upcoming weeks to ask for feedback on the new grading systems in both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. We want to know how well students understand their targets and the new GCSE grades.

Young Enterprise Success

The Young Enterprise team, Twice Loved, made us very proud at the Young Enterprise North Cumbria Finals. The team won:

- Most Profitable Company
- Best Trade Stand
- Best Company Report

They were also crowned the Overall Winning Company and will now go through to the next round of the competition in late April. Congratulations to Elizabeth Read, Emelia Burbury, Hope Lawson, Abby Watson, Jess Hewitt, Rosie Steele, Hannah Smaile and Francesca Grimshaw.

Performing Arts News

Well done to all those students who performed in this year's Carlisle Music and Drama Festival! Both the School Choir and the Woodwind Ensemble achieved 'Commended' in their performances. It was a tough competition and they represented the school admirably to a packed audience.

The following students who performed a either a solo or duet and were placed either 1st or 2nd:

- Will Nixon - 1st in the Piano Recital Open class, 2nd in the Piano Solo for 15-18 years and 2nd in Woodwind 15-18.
- Holly Walker - 2nd in Singing over 16's
- Jack Edgar - 2nd in Woodwind 11- 13 years.
- Elisha Cuthbert and Nathan Coulson - 2nd in the Open Age Duologue class (Drama)

Other students who performed a music solo in the festival were:

- Caroline Wiles (singing) - Distinction (and a special mention for such an expressive performance)
- Alex Carruthers (singing) - Commended
- Charlotte Thomson (singing) - Commended
- Daisy Robert (singing) - Commended
- Lydia Richardson (singing)- Commended
- Paige Wilkinson (singing) - Commended
- Alex Carruthers (saxophone) - Commended
- Freya Taylor (saxophone) - Commended
- Emily Brown (singing) - Commended
- Macey Brown (singing) - Commended
- Heather Cartwright (guitar) - Merit
- Ombretta Crouch (clarinet) - Merit
- Ellie Charlton (singing) - Merit

A big well done to the other Drama students who also took part in the festival:

- Ingrid Messenger and Amy Lindsley - Merit in the Duologue 11 years and under
- Emma Wiles and Emma Watling - Commended in the Duologue 14 years and under
- Ellie Blackadder - Commended in the Solo Acting 14 years and under.
- Grace McIntyre-Ward and Sophie Coulthard - Merit in the Open Age Duologue class

Congratulations to everyone who took part and showed off their talents.

PE News

The school is proud of the many students who represent our teams but we must also remember that many of these students are also attached to clubs and have gained district, county, regional and national honours so far this year. Their commitment in terms of training, competing and travelling is enormous with the added pressure of exams at school.

- Megan Busby won the Scottish Indoor Championships in Long Jump and will be hoping to win a medal in the ESAA Nationals this Summer
- James Rowland was crowned National Boxing Champion
- Joe Harland has been selected to play hockey for the North of England
- Jack Smith won three medals at the National Swimming Championships
- Millie Bell finished 36th in the Year 7 National Cross Country Finals
- Hannah Graves has competed at a national level in equestrian
- Adam Willis has been playing for Carlisle United, Cumbria Rugby and Newcastle Falcons
- Gemma Harris, Holly Howson and Jessica Bulman have represented Cumbria in netball
- Lucy Smith has represented the North of England in Gymnastics
- Lewis Cartwright, Liam Short and Robbie Cullen won football honours for Carlisle

It has been a brilliant season for our Year 9 football team. The season kicked off with a solid 3 – 1 victory over William Howard School and the following week a 2-1 victory over Trinity (the first team to beat Trinity in Cumbria). This put the boys top of the league and into the semi-finals of the City Cup however the one blip of the season came the week after crashing 2-1 to RRMA. The players rallied, composed themselves and went on to beat RRCA, Newman and then RRMA in the semi-finals of the City Cup. They will represent the school at Brunton Park in May at the City Finals and have also finished top of the city league. The team's commitment to extracurricular training has been excellent and this has created a brilliant team spirit. The teamwork shown against some high quality opposition has been fantastic.

Well done to all our students. We are really proud of you!

Year 7 Intake September 2017

I am very pleased to report that we were oversubscribed once again for September 2017 and the new Year 7 will be full. Unfortunately, this meant that some first choice applicants were unable to be offered places here. We are full in all year groups and I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the faith parents and carers have put in us to provide your children with the best possible education.

Information

What is the school doing to support Year 11 with revision?

Year 11 have some extremely important weeks ahead of them. Revision is the “key to success” and it is important they start their revision early and do not leave things to the last minute. Students have at least nine subjects to revise. As a school we are supporting Year 11 with their revision in the following ways:

- We have both lunchtime and after-school revision sessions for the majority of subjects. Keep looking at our website for details of these sessions.
- Year 11 have been given a revision booklet which contains helpful advice for students on revision. It also contains information and advice from all subjects.
- There is a useful guide for parents/carers on our website which gives ideas and techniques to help support your child to achieve their potential.
- Students can access Doodle to help with their revision.
- Students can also access Moodle for their revision.
- As a school we have joined “PIXL – Partners in Excellence”. Students have been given details on how to download a Maths app and an English Literature app to help them with their revision. These can be downloaded to a PC, tablet or ‘phone. Please encourage your child to use them as they will really help improve their grades.

Attendance Matters

Thank you for joining us in raising the importance of good school attendance. Since the start of 2017, we have seen an increase in overall school attendance. Good school attendance is an area we value greatly as a school community and we will continue to strive to improve and sustain students’ attendance. One day of school missed is five hours of learning to catch up on. Over 300 students will be successful in achieving 100% attendance this Spring Term and they will be receiving their Easter egg to celebrate this achievement. Approaching the exam season when the Summer Term begins, good school attendance over 95% will be vital for all students to gain greater exam success.

Parent View

As you may be aware Parent View is an online questionnaire that records the views of parents on the school that their children attend and is referred to at times by OFSTED. Feedback from parents is always helpful to us and I would like to remind you that the questionnaire is available to complete at any time at www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk

Upcoming Events

Date	Description
27/04/17	GCSE PE Moderation Day.
04/05/17	Year 9 World of Work
04/05/17	A level Drama Evening
11/05/17	Year 8 Girls HPV Vaccination
15/05/17 - 24/05/17	Year 7 Exams
15/05/17- 21/06/17	GCSE Exams
15/05/17 - 29/06/17	AS/A level Exams

I hope that all our students and staff have a relaxing and purposeful Easter break.

Yours faithfully

Ms Vicki Jackson
Headteacher

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