

24th November 2014

Dear Parents & Carers,

Gearing up for Christmas...

Hasn't time flown since half term?! It has been a hectic three weeks - amongst other things, so far in November we have had mock GCSEs for Year 11, gained a Sports Active award for our work in girls' PE, had students take part in the Battle of the Bard at Bedford Modern School, and provided musicians for the "Youth Makes Music" season at St Lawrence Church in Willington.

None of these things happens without the hard work of our staff - so can I thank **Mr Donald & Mrs Farooqui** for the mocks, **Mr Cox** for the continuing improvements in PE and **Miss Wood** and **Miss Goodship** for the Battle of the Bard & Youth Makes Music respectively.

It will be the Christmas holiday before we know it - although there is still a huge amount going on in school before then, including:

Y10 Work Experience Information Evening - this Thursday - sessions at 5.30pm & 6.30pm

A final reminder that this Thursday sees us kick off the **preparation for Year 10 Work Experience**. Many schools have scrapped Work Experience in recent years - we introduced it last year and see it as a vital part of building our students' CVs and helping them build networks that will aid them in future.

We managed to secure some amazing placements last summer - including slots at **Unilever, Chicksands and even at the Department for Education shadowing government ministers!** This was only possible with the support of friends and family of the school, and this Thursday is a key part of ensuring everyone knows what they need to do and how they can help others too. We look forward to seeing you there.

Progress Evenings

We had a brilliant turnout for last week's Year 9 Progress Evening - and it was so nice to see so many familiar faces amongst the families. **Just a reminder that Progress Evenings for Years 8, 10 and 11 are coming up soon** - the dates for these are at the end of this newsletter. Grade sheets will be out for these students beforehand too, so there will be lots to catch up on with teachers.

Winter Spectacular

Miss Wood and other staff are busy preparing lots and lots of students for this term's showcase evening - the "Winter Spectacular". It's taking place at 7.30pm on December 8th at the Trinity Arts & Leisure theatre, tickets cost £3 (£2 concessions) and are available from in school.

Christmas Lunch

In case the letter passed you by, we are once again organising a Christmas lunch for students. This year it will be on the **18th December, cost £3.00** and will of course come with the compulsory cracker, paper hat and rubbish joke. If you want your child to take advantage of this, **please ensure they return their slip and money ASAP to student reception.**

Christmas Assembly

Preparations are well underway for the end of term Christmas Assembly at St Paul's Church. **It will start at 2pm and as before all are invited to join us on the day.** I am really looking forward to this - these assemblies have proved to be amongst the highlights of the School since we opened. With 470-odd students and 56 staff at the school, plus friends and family joining us, it should be a packed church and a lovely way to wind down as the term comes to a close.

Staff training day – Monday 5th January 2015

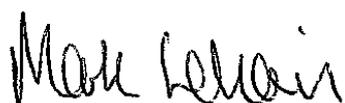
I mentioned in my last newsletter that we are making some further improvements to the curriculum from January as, through a combination of careful financial management and a bit of luck, **we have been able to appoint some excellent additional English and maths staff.**

With this in mind, I have decided that would be an appropriate time to have **a staff training day – and this will be on Monday 5th January**, with students back in school the following day (Tuesday 6th)

So as you can see, it is going to continue to be a busy term right up until the end. From my perspective it is reassuring to see how all our new students have settled in. It's also clear that Year 10 has knuckled down to their GCSEs with dedication and maturity, and that Year 11 has approached their mock GCSEs with focus and preparation.

We are still fielding a steady stream of phone calls from the families of prospective students, to join us in Year 7 both now and next September. As ever, **if you know of people who might benefit from looking around the school, please pass on our contact details to them** so they can organise a tour here.

All the very best,



Mark Lehain.

Key dates for this term

27th November	Year 10 work Experience Information Evening – sessions at 5.30pm and 6.30pm
28th – 30th November	French Trip
4th December	Year 8 Progress Evening – 5.30pm – 8.30pm
8th December	Winter Spectacular – end of term showcase event at the theatre in the Trinity Arts & Leisure complex (former Bedford High)
11th December	Year 11 Progress Evening – 5.30pm – 8.30pm
16th December	Year 7 Harry Potter Trip
17th December	Whole School Christmas Assembly – St Paul's Church (all invited, details to follow)
18th December	Christmas lunch in school!
18th December	Year 10 Progress Evening – 5.30pm – 8.30pm
19th December	End of term – school finishes at 3.15pm
5th January	Staff training day – NO students in school
6th January	Students return to school, 8.25am start, week ONE on timetable
29th January	Year 7 Progress Evening – 5.30pm – 8.30pm