



Welcome Back

Welcome back: I hope everyone had a restful and rewarding break over Easter. It was a longer break than usual and we now have a longer term than usual, although the countdown to exams has begun for most. My thanks to the teachers and students who were in school during the holidays completing coursework or doing revision classes. As a famous supermarket's slogan says, every little helps.

House Masses

We celebrated Easter as a school with our liturgies on the final morning of last term, and for once this was during Holy Week. We are now in the season of Easter for the next month. During this time we have the two remaining House Masses for this year: **Rochester House** have theirs next Thursday and **Westminster** have theirs the following Monday. During these students will be praying for their own intentions and we will be making use of our Door of Mercy, as Luke explains overleaf.

Peers in Schools

This morning we welcome Lord Balfe to speak to Sixth Form students. This has been arranged through a scheme called 'Peers in Schools' which sees members of the House of Lords visit schools and talk to students about the work of our parliament and the Lords in particular. We are fortunate to be one of the schools that has been chosen this year and I am grateful to Lord Balfe for giving his time to come and speak to our students.

Coats and Blazers

We have started the term with a growing number of students in 'coats' that don't fit over their blazers. I have put coats in quotes as some are black jackets that are being worn instead of blazers rather than actual coats. Our uniform includes a black blazer which should be worn all of the time and coats should be able to be worn over the top of this for protection from cold or rain. I would ask for parents support in maintaining our high standard of uniform, about which visitors often comment.

Sean Hayes



Compulsory Academisation

In his budget statement, just before Easter, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that the government intends to force every school in England to become an academy by 2022. We have known for some time that the government was keen to pursue this as they feel that the way forward for our education system is for every school to become an academy.

The announcement has caused a lot of negative response nationally for various reasons: this was not in the Conservative manifesto, so was not something people voted for; there is little evidence to suggest that academies perform any better than other schools, and there is concern that the degree of local democracy in education will be lost. This last point relates to the fact that each academy, or the chain it belongs to, is not answerable to the Local Authority. Indeed, local authorities are likely to cease to exist. At the same time as this announcement we were told that the requirement for some governors to be parents is to be relaxed, and this too has caused some concern.

Parents will be aware that our governors have previously considered the pros and cons of becoming an academy and each time have decided that we should not. In anticipation of this announcement the bishop had asked all schools in the diocese to explore further ways of co-operating and I have written about this in previous newsletters. The heads of the four Peterborough schools and the three in Cambridge have been meeting regularly to discuss this and other issues. This week we arranged for a joint meeting of the governors of all of these schools to discuss academisation, and this took place in the atrium on Tuesday evening. The governors were joined by a speaker from the Department for Education, the head of the Diocesan School's Service, Julie O'Connor, and the head of the new Catholic Multi-Academy Trust in Luton. The three speakers outlined the reason for schools to consider joining a MAT, the lessons to be learned from those who have already done so, and answered questions from those present. It was an interesting and informative meeting.

The next stage will be for each governing body to consider the points raised and agree a way forward. Our governors will do so at this term's full meeting and I will report back on that in a future newsletter. Until then, everything remains the same for our school and governors.

Door of Faith

As we leave Lent behind and continue into Easter and beyond, our Door of Faith continues to be a presence in our school hall during assemblies and other celebrations, to remind us that the Year of Mercy is still ongoing and we can continue to choose to walk through that door together.

As part of the upcoming House Mass celebrations taking place for Rochester on 21 April and 25 April for Westminster, we will be thinking and praying upon that choice as well as the celebration of our Risen Lord.

Our House Masses continue to be a time of community and a chance to offer up our prayers and intentions as a House group as well as an opportunity to receive the Eucharist. All students are invited to enter into the spirit of the celebration, whether they are Catholic or not, and all are welcome to receive God's blessing.

Luke Turner, Chaplain

Voice in a Million

At the end of last term our Rock Pop Choir performed at Wembley Arena to an audience of thousands. The choir rehearsed relentlessly for six months and their hard work really paid off. It was certainly a day to remember.

Thank you for all the parental support throughout the rehearsal process and another big thank you to Lewis, Luke and Lynne who helped make the trip such a success.

Mr McCoy



Spelling Bee

The Year 7 Spelling Bee took place before the Easter holiday. Congratulations to these students on their achievements.

Mrs Winlock

Group Winners:

Umaarah Ahmed B3
Julena Farrimond W3
Zainab Hussain R2
Kacper Zamojski W1



Individual winners:

1st Haleema Ayoub C6
2nd Awais Islam W6
3rd Georgina Bowden C5

Learning Leaders

Congratulations to the following students who have achieved Learning Leader status in Science:

Fred Cook C4
Ryan Hall C4
Finley Allen B4

Lexann Souza W4
Irmina Falkowska B4

St John Fisher in Idomeni, Greece

During the Easter holidays I was part of a charity team that visited the Idomeni refugee camp in northern Greece. Thanks to the generous donations from staff and students, the team contributed towards several days of food and water supplies for some 12,000 refugees camped on the border between Greece and Macedonia. We also visited a makeshift tent school in the refugee camp with the most basic of facilities that included a single whiteboard but no chairs or tables. On behalf of St John Fisher School, we gifted books, pens and other stationery items to the students in the tent school - the gifts were gratefully received by all.

Mr Akbar



Peterborough ADHD / ASD Monthly Support Group for Parents and Carers

Are you the parent or carer of a child who has non-diagnosed or diagnosed ADHD / ASD?

Would you like to meet other parents to share your experiences and gain practical advice and support?

Along with Family Voice Peterborough, Pinpoint is running 3 monthly support groups for parents/carers whose children are on the waiting list, have had a referral turned down or are accessing services for ADHD/ASD. Each month they aim to invite speakers that will offer advice on how to support you, your child and your family. In April, Elisa Ferriggi from Think Autism will be the speaker.

The first meeting will be on Thursday 21 April, from 10.00 to 12.00 at The Fleet Centre, Fleet Way, Peterborough. Childcare and Travel expenses can be reimbursed and refreshments are provided.

For latest information and directions see the pinpoint website:

<http://www.pinpoint-cambs.org.uk/events>

To book your place contact:

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