

Spring Newsletter

I very much hope that we haven't seen the best of the summer weather! I just wanted to let Parents/Carers know about some key events in school over the next few weeks and months.

This time of year is always extremely busy. We are finishing off courses with year 11s and working hard to make sure they are well prepared for examinations and that they have appropriate post 16 plans. This takes quite a lot of planning and organisation and "tweaks" to the timetable. I apologise for changes but this is one of the challenges of being in a Pupil Referral Unit. The benefits are that provision is closely matched to students- but the inevitable drawbacks mean that we have to make much more frequent changes than in mainstream school.

School closures

One of the changes is that there are some school closure dates coming up. Most of our Year 11s have specific arrangements for their examinations – which means that for larger exams (such as Maths English and Science we have to close the school for part of the day to non y11s as all staff are involved in invigilation.

School will be CLOSED to all students in Year 7-10 on a number of dates over the exam period

Date	School closed	School open
14 May	12.30 onwards	8.45-12.30
24 May	8.45-12.30	12.30-2.45
5 June	8.45-12.30	12.30-2.45
7 June	8.45-12.30	12.30-2.45
8 June	8.45-12.30	12.30-2.45
12 June	8.45-12.30	12.30-2.45

In addition to the above dates there will be partial closures- key workers will keep you up to date and dates are on the school website

I appreciate that school closure does present a problem for working parents but sadly we have no choice.

Attendance and Punctuality

The majority of our students arrive punctually every day looking smart . We are looking very closely at a group of students who are persistently late for school or who have poor attendance. As a school we follow ***Staffordshire Local Authority Code of Conduct for issuing Penalty Notices***

On arrival students MUST hand in mobile phones and any other valuables. Please note that any smoking products – vapes, cigarettes and lighters or matches MUST be handed in. All valuables are held securely in the school office. There is very strong evidence that use of mobile phones in schools is having a detrimental effect on student education – not just in Tamworth but globally! By taking in mobiles we hope to offer a 6 hour “detox” from technology.

Changes

In September we trialled a system whereby Key Stage 4 students could leave site at lunchtime. The benefits of this are clear. Many more students are now all day in school compared to a year ago. This is exactly what we are aiming for. We very much want students to be able to access a full day of quality education. However it has become common practice for an increasingly large number of students to be smoking outside the school. I am sure you will agree that this does not show the school in the best light with our neighbours. Furthermore there has been a huge increase in litter dropped outside school. It simply isn't fair. Staff work an intensive day at Kettlebrook and policing the streets at lunchtime and collecting litter isn't really what they need to be spending their lunchtimes doing. I have asked for an increased presence of PCSOs and street wardens. Any student seen littering by a street warden will be subject to a fine. This includes cigarette ends. However this isn't just about not being caught. It's our school and we need to feel a part of the community. I want students not to litter anywhere- no matter whether or not a street warden is there. It's a poor habit.

As from Monday 30 April we will be returning to a system whereby students are expected to be in school all day. This means that students are responsible for ensuring that they have drinks/snacks in school before arrival at 8.45am. Students will not be allowed to “pop to the shop” at lunchtime. We have a tuck shop in school and meals are provided – so this really shouldn’t cause an issue.

This is of course a great opportunity to get into the habit of going nicotine free for 6 hours. As a school we aim to promote healthy lifestyles. We would love to see no students smoking ideally. We are happy to make referrals to the School Nurse team for smoking cessation. Moreover we have a trained therapist in school – Mrs Harris – who can work with students on quitting addictive habits. For this to work the young person has to want to stop.

I am sure that the change in school policy will promote strong feelings in students. We are happy to discuss via Student Voice but for the time being there will not be a change to this policy.

Damage to School Property

There has been quite an increase in damage to school property. In the event that school property has been damaged or broken as a result of poor behaviour choices school will be charging in order to recoup the cost. In severe cases we shall be informing Staffordshire police and making a charge of criminal damage.

Planning for September.

I am busy getting out and about meeting with different providers for alternative education. I genuinely believe that being inside a classroom completing writing tasks for 6 hours a day doesn’t suit all learners. I am in discussion with various providers about courses in Animal Care, Motor Vehicle Engineering and Construction. These courses run over 2 or 3 days. As I am sure you would expect standards of behaviour for these courses are high and the colleges and providers operate a **“zero tolerance “ approach** to poor behaviour. Students who wish to attend a college course ,and who staff feel have the right level of maturity to manage in this setting, will be invited to look around these provisions

and prepare for interview. Days not in alternative provision will be spent in Kettlebrook where they will be preparing for qualifications at GCSE/BTEC level.

New staff

We have welcomed three new staff members this term. Mrs Angus has replaced Mrs Seedhouse as she starts her maternity leave and Ms Harrison is an additional member of staff supporting the newly formed “H” group. I think students have been impressed by her sporting prowess!!! This week we welcome “Mr T” who will be working with our students on managing their behaviour.

I am sure that most parents /carers have heard the wonderful news that Mrs Seedhouse gave birth last week to a baby boy. Both are doing well and we look forward to them visiting us !!!

New courses

For a Pupil Referral Unit we have an extensive curriculum .

The full curriculum offer – which leads to external examination for Key stage 4 is

- English GCSE , Step up award and Functional Skills
- Maths GCSE, Entry Level and Functional Skills
- Science BTEC and GCSE (for students arriving part way through y11)
- Art GCSE and Arts award
- Personal and Social Education –
- Sports Leaders award
- BTEC Home Cooking
- BTEC ICT Creative Media

In addition students are offered a course in Mindfulness and have regular tutor sessions as well as other courses.

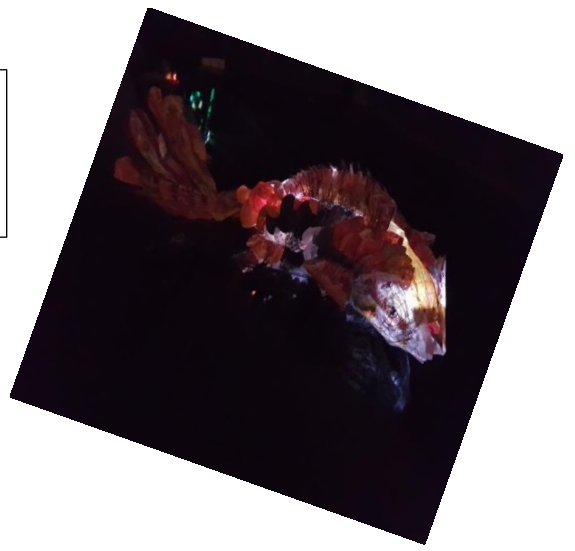
This term we are looking to introduce “Princes Trust Achieve Club”.

Staff are trialling courses to see which will suit our learners. The year started with 3 of our students gaining a Princes Trust Award and we feel that other students may well benefit from this type of experience. Watch the website for any developments !

Out & About

Last half term some students worked at a farm in Water Orton as day farmers. This term our 4th group of student are working on the Alpaca Farm in Leicestershire. There are frequent trips to parks and to Conkers, and a forthcoming theatre trip. We have regular visitors to school . We welcomed Anna as a guest artist last term and our fabulous carp – which was displayed on the canal in Nottingham will shortly be on show in the school garden. This term we welcome a graffiti artist and external sports providers- Rubicon. I know I don't need to say that school budgets are extremely tight. Money is a huge issue for all public services. We have no plans to change our charging policy. As a school we are committed to allowing all students to have access to varied experiences. If your child has signed up to a programme PLEASE can you encourage them to keep attending. The cost per session can be as high as £30 and simply not turning up is a waste. It isn't as simple as simply slotting another student in place as we need consent forms – so please help us to keep these activities going by making sure your child attends!

The carp created by staff and students. We all had a great time- and it was a reminder to us to reduce plastics so that marine life is protected



Staff enjoying a craft session at the end of a KSSS day!!



Tractor driving at the Alpaca farm.

Both KSSS students now successfully "transitioned" to mainstream thanks to their time at KSSS.

Myself –taking a hit for the team !!!
All in a good cause – we raised more than £6 for Sports relief!!!!



What's next?

Students need to find their “talent pants” as we are preparing for another spectacular showcase of performance skills at KSSS!!!!

Examinations- we are now starting our exam season .

Please encourage your child to study at home- school staff and keyworkers are happy to advise on study skills and techniques. There are a huge number of websites but we recommend the following as being of particular use.

BBC bitesize

my maths

Mr Barton Maths (great for past papers)

And of course “You tube”.

Revision sessions are on every night after school. Please encourage your child to attend.

Past papers are an essential part of the revision process. Better to find out what you don't know BEFORE the exam than on the day! See staff for past papers!

Of course we expect extremely high standards of behaviour throughout the examination season. Any student not following the expectations will be asked to leave site. It is likely that students who cannot follow basic behaviour expectations will not be invited to attend College courses.

Federation News

From April 1st we have now become a Federation with Burton Pupil Referral Unit. This should allow for even more opportunities!

I am sure that I have missed many items of news- so much happens and staff are constantly planning new opportunities for students in school!

As always if you wish to discuss anything please contact your child's key worker in the first instance to discuss.

Kind regards,

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Deputy Head of School