



Newsletter

Student
Name.....

October 2007

A SPECIALIST MATHS AND COMPUTING COLLEGE

Letter from Ms Dews and the Staff

Dear Parents/carers,

As we approach half-term it is time to update you on developments at Holy Family School. The school has changed in many ways. The major change is in the building for we now have a wonderful new classroom extension with generously proportioned rooms and staff work areas and two vocational rooms where ICT and Science/Design Technology can be taught. The Food Technology Room has also been moved and is now situated within the Design area. At last we are able to take the three temporary mobile classrooms out of use. Finally, the boys are very pleased with their new toilets and the girls are upset that they have not been treated to such luxury!

External work has begun on the entrance to school and this week the old mobile at the front of school has been demolished to make way for additional car parking. The sprung floor in the new sports hall is currently being laid and the toilets and shower areas are being tiled. This area is due to be handed over by the builders in November. This will mark the closure of eleven months of build and refurbishment and some four years of planning and preparation. It will ensure that students have top class facilities in which to learn.

The arrival of 97 eager and enthusiastic eleven year olds in to year 7 has changed the profile of the school. They have settled in very quickly as have our new staff: Mrs Walker, Head of Geography;

Mr Devlin, Science; Mrs Garbutt, Mathematics; and Ms Cann, English. We also welcomed a number of new teaching assistants: Mrs Butterill, Mrs Drake, Mrs A Megson, Mrs Wilson, Mrs Sowersby and Miss Taylor. Our new year 11 have made an excellent start in their final year. They completed work experience and are now focused on learning. We hope that they remain highly motivated in order to ensure that they work to fulfil their considerable potential in their GCSEs.

The curriculum has seen some minor changes for we have introduced GCSE drama in year 10 and SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) in to year 7 although this will be a whole-school focus for it underpins the way we work in school. Our former year 11 students are to be congratulated on their results as re the year 10 students on their Keystage 3 SATs results.



2007 EXAMINATION RESULTS

Once again we had excellent results at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. When the value added tables are published for Key Stage 3, we expect to be in the top 5% of school nationally. At GCSE there was tremendous performance in many areas. The new figures that the government will be publishing in the performance tables will be the percentage of students who achieve 5 or more A* to C **including** Maths and English, and the percentage achieving 2 Science GCSEs. Our results are outstanding in both these areas. We achieved 53% A* to C including En and Ma (the national figure last year was 46%), and 68% of students achieved 2 science GCSEs (National figure 56%). This year we also had 48 Year 10 students sitting a GCSE in Science. 98% of these students achieved A* to C, with 40% at A* or A Grade. This shows the hard work and dedication of all staff and students. We continue to strive for excellence and fully expect even higher levels of performance in 2008.

R Pritchard
Deputy Head

ACCESS TO THE SCHOOL SITE

We are also on the final phase of the external building programme. This is the laying of the access road around the sports hall and also a new car park at the front of school. Over the next few weeks, the congestion at the end of the day may get a little worse before it gets better. We ask for your patience and cooperation and not to drive into the school grounds unless it is vital for you to do so, and also please do not park in the bus lane. I am sure that in a few weeks the new landscaped front of the school will ease the current access problems, and maybe we will even miss the mobile classroom that has been on the grass at the front of school for many years.

R Pritchard
Deputy Head

Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning

In July Holy Family was asked by the LEA to be a lead school for the pilot of secondary SEAL. SEAL stands for Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning and is aimed at the whole school. All of year 7 are having SEAL lessons where they have been finding out more about themselves and each other. They are also learning about how to be aware of feelings such as fear or anger and how to deal with those feelings effectively.

Alongside this, they have been learning how to work together as groups and recognise individual attributes and how to utilise them. There is a big emphasis on valuing one another and showing empathy and understanding each others feelings. This has always been the main ethos of the school, SEAL simply highlights it.

L Megson
ATA

PUPILS' VIEWS

"SEAL is one of my favourite subjects because of many different reasons. My first reason is because you get to talk to other people in your form and learn much more about them. Also SEAL is great because whatever work you do there is no right or wrong answer. It is only what you think not what you should know. It is really fun, enjoyable and interesting too."

Megan O'Neill 7DD

"SEAL is basically a fun lesson to help people in lots of different subjects like English. At the moment we are talking about Space Missions. We are working in groups to come up with a team name, a logo and a catchphrase for a space team. We are trying to find a new planet because the world's resources are getting dangerously low."

Will Townend 7ADa

YEAR 6 OPEN EVENING

On Wednesday 3 October we held our annual open evening for prospective year 6 students. The event was very well supported and over 120 families visited the school to have a look at our facilities and hear presentations from staff and students. The new Head Boy, Tyler Gregson and Head Girl, Helen Wise recounted a few of their experiences of Holy Family:

"Having been pupils at Holy Family for 4, nearly 5 years now, it's a little strange to think back to when we sat where you are, trying to find the best school to come to and spending time looking around the variety of educational establishments that we have in our area. As nervous year 6s moving from the comfort of "ruling the roost" in primary school, year 7 - never mind year 11-seemed a long way off and yet here we are today in our last year preparing ourselves for college. I'm sure that many of our fellow classmates will agree that over the years it has been an..... interesting experience with highs and lows, with a few tears and plenty of laughs along the way. Arriving for the first day was a somewhat daunting experience surrounded by these people who seemed so much bigger than we were. Obviously some of us still have that problem (points to Helen). The school has given us so much, not just academically but socially as well. We have grown up knowing that we'll always have the support of everyone here, with people to turn to left, right and centre. There's no wonder we're going to miss it when we leave after the exams. But since that first encounter with the building and all its staff, we have gained a great respect for the school as a whole and the prevailing sense of community that we feel sets our school apart from the rest. This sense of community is reflected in the name "Holy Family", often referred to, with good reason, as the "Happy Family" by pupils and staff alike."

Tyler Gregson & Helen Wise
Head Boy & Head Girl

SPORTS NEWS

RACE FOR LIFE

Despite the fact that the school participation in this year's Race for Life event had to be cancelled due to the flooding of the racecourse in York. Some pupils persevered with the weather and were able to take part at another venue.

"In July, I completed the Race for Life event at Pontefract race course with my friends Brooke Knight and Kelsey Stephenson. We dressed as characters from popular films—Wizard of Oz (Brooke), Alice in wonderland (Kelsey) and me as Cinderella.

We completed the route in one hour exactly and raised approximately £200 for Cancer Research. It rained all day and was very muddy but the atmosphere was brilliant"

Jenny Malton 10 HD

BARCELONA FOOTBALL TRIP

During the half term break, Mr Cooper is leading a group of 47 boys from years 9,10 &11 to the Costa Brava in Spain. They will be playing a number of games against local sides and will have the opportunity to visit the famous Nou Camp stadium, home of Barcelona Football Club as well as spending a day at the Universal Studios Theme Park- Port Aventura. We wish them all a safe journey and good luck in their matches.



IMPORTANT REMINDER

PLEASE DO NOT BOOK YOUR HOLIDAYS IN TERM TIME - ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL CAN SERIOUSLY AFFECT YOUR CHILD'S LEARNING

Other News



OPEN DAY

Finally, a date for your diary. I know that many of you will be interested in visiting Holy Family and looking round the new buildings. We are therefore opening the school on **SATURDAY DECEMBER 1ST** between 11am and 2.30pm for anyone who wishes to look around. You will be most welcome. School will be partially closed the day before i.e. Friday November 30th for a service of thanksgiving to celebrate the school's 40th Anniversary and the new building, followed by tours for past staff, governors, LEA and Diocesan guests and others who have been instrumental in the design and building work undertaken. We hope that a good number of students will volunteer to come in to school on that day as representatives, supporting in classrooms and acting as guides on this special day. Unfortunately because of the number of invited guests in the building, this cannot be a normal school day and for others it will be a school closure day.

I hope that all who visit the school on December 1st, and at other times during the year, will share our enthusiasm for our new, hard won and long-needed facilities which will ensure that today's students have the best possible environment in which to learn and develop.

A Dews
Headteacher

COOKERY TASTER COURSE

To coincide with the opening of the newly refurbished food tech room we are hoping to run an evening taster course for parents/carers later in the term. The theme will be "Fridge to table in 20 minutes" and will be a fun session designed to promote ideas for fast, healthy food along the lines of "Ready, Steady, Cook". Look out for details after half term. Places are limited so if you are interested please contact the school office with your name as soon as possible.

SCHOOL TRANSPORT

Letters were sent home on 4 & 10 October to notify parents of pupils who travel on SW3 & SW4 Swayne coaches of changes to these services. Copies of these letters are available on request. Please remind your child(ren) to behave whilst on school buses. Instances of bad behaviour or damage may result in the withdrawal of transport provision to individual pupils.

INFORMATION UPDATE - REMINDER

As you are aware we hold in school important medical and contact information for each pupil. Please remember to inform the school office if there are any changes to your child's details eg medical condition, address, contact numbers including mobile numbers.

We are sending out with this newsletter the North Yorkshire Education Authority's guidance on Holidays in Term Time and Data Protection: Fair Processing Notice.

Please be aware that information from the Fair Processing Notice will automatically be passed to Connexions unless Mrs Parry in the school office is informed to the contrary. Pupils aged 16 and over will also receive their own copy of the Fair Processing Notice.

A Dews
Headteacher

TERM DATES FOR 2007/08

SCHOOL CLOSURES	SCHOOL OPENS
Friday 19 October	Tuesday 30 October
Thursday 29 November	Tuesday 4 December
Friday 21 December	Monday 7 January
Friday 8 February	Tuesday 19 February
Thursday 20 March	Monday 7 April

The staff and Governors at Holy Family School hope that the year ahead is a happy, peaceful and successful one for us all and ask for your continued support and cooperation as we work in partnership with you in the education of your children.