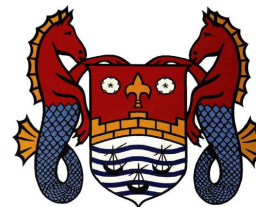


# The Netherhall School and Sixth Form Centre

## Newsletter to Parents



Issue 275

December 2010

### Letter from the Principal

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Friday, 17 December marks the close of the long Winter term. Students and staff tell me that they are looking forward to spending time with family and friends and to a change in routine. No doubt there will be even more appreciation of the comforts of home given the cold snap of early December. The weather forecast is predicting a further period of bad weather in the next week so we may have a white Christmas.

Please note that students should be back in school on **Wednesday, 5 January 2011**. Please ensure that your son/daughter is in full school uniform (in the correct trousers and shoes for Years 7 - 11). Staff will be back in school the day before the students (for a Training Day).

I would like to make you aware of a few matters:

#### 1. Coursework, Assessments, Examinations

Our student usually work hard and with enthusiasm and at times they produce inspirational and remarkable work. However when balancing the heavy workload required of them, students of all abilities can lack organisational skill. Sadly, poor organisation can greatly hamper their learning, progress and final grades so we are working hard to help them with this.

Where some students have been 'last minute' the school has this year provided even more support to assist the completion of coursework pieces / examination revision. Many thanks to my staff for giving so generously of their own time to do this.

Inevitably, there will again be an array of exams and assessments for students from January 2011. Therefore, I do urge students to use some of the holiday time to 'declutter' their lives. Sorting out work/room space, having a bag clearout, putting the finishing touch to projects, going over difficult topics, replacing equipment can make all the difference. Some reflection about priorities in readiness for the Spring term will be useful so please encourage them with using some of the next two weeks for this. I appreciate it can be difficult when routines change.

Consideration given to these things should improve 'readiness' for learning. It will sharpen focus, boost confidence and make learning more enjoyable.

#### KS4

Years 10 - 11 will begin the important next stage of their assessed work upon their return to school in January.

They won't be surprised when I express that I expect them to get down to work upon their return to school. The time will fly between January and Easter.

Year 11 will receive their 'mock results' at lunchtime on 5 January. They are a great year group and they should do well. No doubt receiving good results will prove encouraging. However, disappointing 'mocks' can be used constructively. Analysis of areas where marks were lost and a game plan to get back on track will be crucial. We had specific cases last year where students had disappointing mocks. The students realised that it all really did matter and they worked really hard for the rest of the year.

#### KS3

I have watched Years 7, 8 and 9 with great interest as they have settled to life on The Queen Edith's Way site. Feedback suggests that students appreciate not having to change sites as was previously the case. I would like to thank them for their flexibility. Their playground space has been more cramped than usual owing to the construction of the new All Weather Pitch, the new Dance studio and the associated changing rooms.

# Letter from the Principal (Continued)

However, the building work is scheduled for completion by April 2011 and we may be able to access some of the new facilities in advance of that. I know that they will enjoy these facilities in the future.

## Post 16

Sixth form students are in the midst of the UCAS process-interviews and decisions about the future are the main topic of conversation. Last year virtually all students received their first choice university destination. We are aiming for 100% this year.

## 2. Dining Room

On the whole students have adapted well to the new dining room arrangements. We are operating a 'first sitting' rota of turn taking for Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. Some Key Stage 4 students have been a little grumpy about having to give way to younger students because of the rota but most recognize that such a system is fair to all. Key stage 5 has a separate system and use of The Atrium dining service.

In the new term we will be reminding students that they must keep bags and coats off the dining tables. Routinely, students are good at clearing away their own plates. However, we can do better about clearing bags, scarves etc from tables. This will make for consistently good hygiene and for a civilised dining ambience.

We will continue to offer the traditional 'knife and fork' meal as well as a range of salads. The trial 'grab and go' service has proved to be popular for sandwiches etc. So we will continue with that service.

## 3. Health & Safety

The holiday period is of course to be welcomed but it can be a time of increased risk for young people. Please share with your son/daughter my request that they pay particular attention when they move about the city and when they go out with friends. Ideally, they should never travel unaccompanied at night.

My experience of young people is that many of them think they are immortal and beyond risk. Please remind your son/daughter to take care when crossing the roads. Lights on bicycles should be checked and helmets worn. It is strongly advised that devices are not used when travelling around the city as students are unable to hear what is going on behind them.

## 4. Recent announcements by The Secretary of State for Education

The Rt. Hon. Michael Gove, The Secretary of State, has introduced some significant changes in relation to the way in which the curriculum and its assessment will change. This will have greatest immediate impact on the current Year 9. Mr Wilson (Deputy Principal) will provide detailed information on the implications of these changes on 21 January at the school's 'Information & Guidance Evening' for Year 9. I very much hope you will attend this important Year 9 evening and further details will be provided by the Key Stage 3 office in January.

## 5. 140 Years of Netherhall

Next year we will begin an exciting year of celebration to commemorate the foundation of the school in 1871. We have much to celebrate and we will

host a range of celebrations in the course of 2011.

We will hold the first of these celebrations on the week beginning 10 January 2011 to mark the formal opening of the school's Science Centre. Each of the five new laboratories is currently in use but these will be formally commissioned to launch our 2011 celebrations. The new laboratories are to be named as follows:

**Darwin, Franklin, Cavendish, Rutherford, Widdowson**

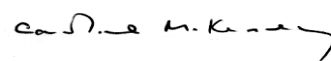
We will also commission The Turing Suite in honour of Cambridge mathematician, Alan Turing who made a significant contribution to code cracking (The Enigma Code) at Bletchley Park. Many of our students have worked on various projects in relation to the work inspired by Alan Turing.

## Retirement of Mrs Julia Court

After twenty three years service to students at Netherhall, Mrs Court will retire from teaching Physical Education, Dance & Music. We wish her every happiness in her retirement which takes effect from 31 December 2010.

Netherhall is a very fine school and it is a great privilege to lead it. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support of the school.

All good wishes for the festivities and for 2011.



Caroline McKenney  
Principal

# Examination News

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Monday 10th January -  
Wednesday 2nd February 2011  
GCE and GCSE module  
examinations.

### Examination Timetables

Students have already been given a copy of their own personal exam timetable. However, the complete timetable can be found on The Netherhall School website.

**Morning exams start at 0900 hours and afternoon exams at 1330 hours.**

Students must arrive 20 minutes before the start of each examination.

Daily lists showing exam room/s and students' desk numbers will be displayed each day and must be checked by students prior to each examination. Students will be called into the examination room according to their desk number. Once in the examination room, and until they leave, examination rules will be enforced.

## Examination Rules

Exam rules and regulations have been displayed in many classrooms for the last few weeks and can be found on the exams noticeboard outside the Sports Hall. However, if you wish to view the rules and regulations they can be found on the school's website.

### Equipment, bags, books and mobile telephones

Students must only bring the appropriate equipment to each examination - **black** pens, pencils, calculator, etc. Any pencil case must be clear plastic. Water in an unlabelled clear bottle may also be taken into the examination room. **All valuable, including mobile phones, MP3 players and iPods should be left at home or in the student's locker as we cannot guarantee their safe-keeping.**

Students should not have notes in their pockets or anything else that might be considered cheating.

There are strict penalties enforced by the examination boards for anyone found to be in contravention of the rules and which may result in a student being disqualified from that examination or the whole qualification.

### Sickness

Any student who is unable to sit an examination due to sickness **must inform the school before the start of the exam and evidence from a medical practitioner must be provided.** If a student feels unwell during an examination, the invigilator must be informed. Other matters which may affect a student's performance, such as bereavement or other crisis should also be reported.

### Non-attendance

Please note that it is the school's policy to charge for examination entries when a student fails to attend a public examination without evidence of a legitimate reason.

## SUMMER EXAMINATION 2011 - ADVANCE NOTICE

*Please note that the summer 2011 GCSE and GCE examination season starts on*

*Monday 16 May and finishes on Wednesday 29 June*

*We wish all students every success in their examinations*

## GCSE Science exams are:

Yr 10 Science A211 (B1, C1 P1) on Thursday January 13th

Yr 10 Science A212 (B2, C2, P2) on Monday January 17th

Yr 10 Triple Award Physics A331 (P1, P2, P3) on Wednesday January 26th

Yr 11 Additional Science A215 (B4, C4, P4) on Wednesday January 19th

Yr 11 Triple Award Physics A332 (P4, P5, P6) on Monday January 31st

Some Year 11 students may be resitting the Yr 10 exams including A213 (B3, C3, P3) on Wednesday January 26th

# We Will Rock You

The idea to stage the fantastic and ambitious We Will Rock You had been around for a few years, but then in 2010 everything seemed just perfect; we had a brand new hall to launch, talented students and an enthusiastic production team.



It wasn't all plain sailing. When we started in September on the stage there were no stage lights, no light sockets, no electrical wiring! As the production date grew nearer it was a race against time to turn an empty box of a stage into the multi-media extravaganza capable of staging our show. Stephen Berry and Tom Bedford worked tirelessly on

the project and the result was amazing. It was a privilege to work with such an amazing cast, band and crew.

We received many lovely comments. Here are just a few of the emails we received:

"We just wanted to thank you and all the staff & students at Netherhall for yet another fantastic show! I don't know how you do it - well apart from loads of hard work and dedication"

"We came to see We Will Rock You last night and thought it was just brilliant! I so admire your energy to stage something as professional as this"

"We both thought it was way beyond what you would expect of a school production .. The Leads were fab - great voices - and enthusiasm in all the children was lovely"



"I felt I had to email you straight away to tell you that I have just enjoyed a fantastic evening watching We Will Rock You. What talented pupils we have at Netherhall"

"Really well done for last night's performance. I thought it was excellent. A great cast, great staging, great band, great costumes - am all out of greatness, but it was all fabulous"

We would like to thank the many, many staff who gave so freely of their time and energy.

Kaye Allen  
Emma Snow  
Polly Watkin

Directors

## Rikki Beadle Blair visits Netherhall during Anti Bullying Week



We were privileged to have Rikki Beadle Blair visiting us during the Anti-Bullying Week (15th - 20th November)

We have been using the DVD KIT he wrote, directed and starred in for KS4 PSHE lessons on homophobia.



Rikki spent the day in PSHE classes. He ran a workshop for the Netherhall Anti-Bullying Crew (NABC).



He also took part in a dance workshop at lunchtime led by Nye Rees and spent time with the cast of "We Will Rock You" at the end of the school day.



# Kitchen Awarded 5 STAR RATING

Following an inspection on Wednesday 8th December 2010 by the Cambridge City Council Environmental Health Officer the School Kitchen was once again awarded a 5 STAR RATING (Excellent).



Congratulations to Mrs Weilding and Mrs Mitchell the Kitchen Mangers and their team for maintaining the highest standards of Food Safety and Hygiene in the School Kitchen.



*A note for your diary*



*Information Technology Evening - 7th February*

*Atrium Building 7.00pm (Details to follow)*

## Student Records



If you wish to update your contact details please email the Student Records Officer at [studentrecords@netherhall.cambs.sch.uk](mailto:studentrecords@netherhall.cambs.sch.uk) or by telephone (01223) 242931 ext 229.

## Electronic Communication



The Netherhall School now use a communication system called Keep Kids Safe and no longer use Parentmail.

We have been alerted to the fact that messages are not always getting through and the Keep Kids Safe office advise us that all parents/carers should check their Spam Filter to ensure that it allows communication from @schools.keepkidssafe.co.uk

If you have provided an email and are not receiving communications please check your Spam Filter in the first instance and thereafter contact Student Records Officer at [studentrecords@netherhall.cambs.sch.uk](mailto:studentrecords@netherhall.cambs.sch.uk) or telephone 01223 242931 ext 229.

