



EASTER 2010 NEWSLETTER



Tuesday 23 March 2010

Dear Parents

I am starting this newsletter with a specific message for our parents who have children in the public exam years. I have indicated to all students that their personal revision should start on 1st April i.e. this Thursday. It is vitally important that every student facing public examinations has a personal revision programme and they stick to that programme.

When the school is open the revision schedule should be each evening after homework and/or set work has been completed. For year 11, it should mean working for 2½ hours a night. For year 13 and year 12 it should be working for 3 hours on private study each day, whether that be during the school day or at night. My recommendation is that on Friday evening it should be a 1½ hours work and then either Saturday or Sunday should be completely free of school work, with the other day having 3 hours dedicated to revision. As always my recommendation is that revision starts no later than 10.00 o'clock any morning and should be finished no later than 3.00 o'clock, so that late afternoon and evening is free for the essential social activities and relaxation.

During the Easter holiday and indeed the Whitsun holiday, the weekend work format should kick in i.e. year 11 – 3 hours a day; years 12 and 13 – 4 hours a day. My view is that an hour's work should be done followed by a 15 minute break before the next hour commences. In one sense brutally, but essential for their future, the students who are giving their time to go to Lourdes must ensure that in the week when they are not at Lourdes that they undertake 6 hours of revision a day, so that the excellent work they do

in Lourdes does not add to the pressure of revision when they return to school.

If students can work in such a disciplined and organised fashion they will find that the Easter period enables them to get a great deal of revision under their belts. Particularly for those who have been learning the work of the day as they have gone along, they will be very well placed at the end of the Easter holidays to have as little pressure as possible for final revision in school.

There is no way such important exams cannot be a pressure. What we will try to do is to ease the pressure as much as possible by the students knowing exactly what they need to revise. I ask that you, wherever possible, support them by making sure their study facilities are as good as possible in your homes. I also remind you that during term time if students find it difficult to work at home, for any reason, they are free to remain back at school and work in our sixth form study library until 6.30pm each night. If year 11's wish to avail themselves of this opportunity we can make appropriate arrangements for them to work in the sixth form.

We are very pleased with the way our year 11, 12 and 13 students are working in general. As always the issue that has held many of them back is the independent study i.e. working at home on their own or in the case of the sixth form, making the most use of free time in school. That must change now, as the key to examination success will be how prepared they are to revise in a totally dedicated manner so that they can achieve their full potential.

SUMMER UNIFORM

I remind parents of students in the main school i.e. year 7 to year 11, that when we return after Easter we will be in summer uniform i.e. the St Peter's green polo shirts. In the past the students have responded magnificently to our change of uniform whether it be after Easter or when we return to winter uniform in September. I trust we will have the same cooperation when this change is made.

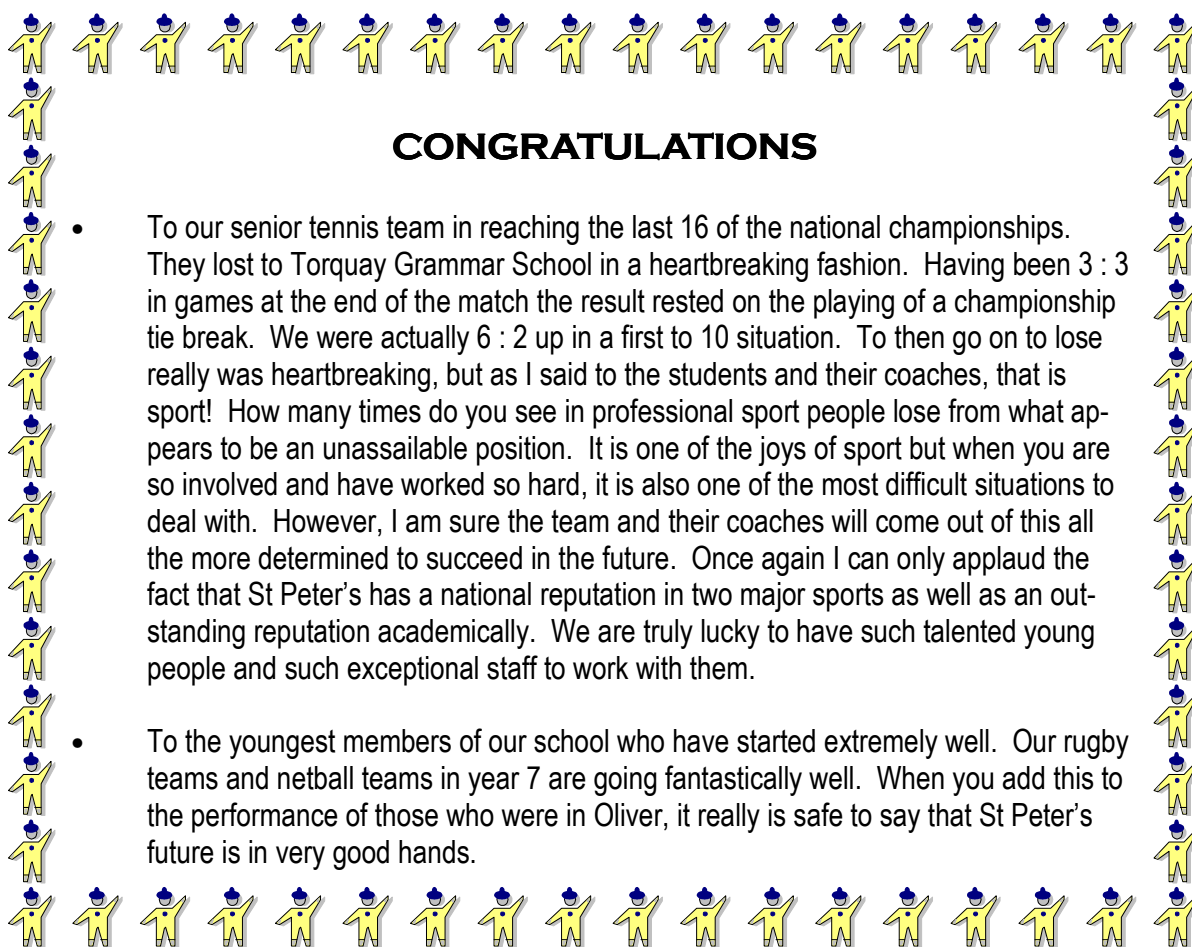
I emphasise to parents that if any of you are having difficulties financially in acquiring the summer uniform please do not hesitate to contact me personally, Mr Coughlan or your appropriate head of year.

LOURDES

As mentioned in the revision section of this newsletter, once again our year 12 and 13 students, together with Miss Tedstone, Mr Kilty and Father Kevin will be spending a week in Lourdes working with disabled young people. This is an incredible witness to what our school stands for and the young people in the Lourdes group are an absolute credit to our school. I think there is some misinformation about their fund raising activities throughout the year. Some people assume it is to pay for them to go to Lourdes. In reality they pay their own way in going to

Lourdes and what the money is raised for is to help send disabled young people on the pilgrimage. I think this makes the whole Lourdes group's work even more laudable. I am most grateful to Father Kevin, Miss Tedstone and Mr Kilty for the time they give and also to one of our former staff, Mrs Gill Hickman, who will also be on the pilgrimage.

I am sure the group will pray for St Peter's and, indeed, the wider community of St Peter's during the religious ceremonies they will be at with the young people they are helping.



CONGRATULATIONS

- To our senior tennis team in reaching the last 16 of the national championships. They lost to Torquay Grammar School in a heartbreaking fashion. Having been 3 : 3 in games at the end of the match the result rested on the playing of a championship tie break. We were actually 6 : 2 up in a first to 10 situation. To then go on to lose really was heartbreaking, but as I said to the students and their coaches, that is sport! How many times do you see in professional sport people lose from what appears to be an unassailable position. It is one of the joys of sport but when you are so involved and have worked so hard, it is also one of the most difficult situations to deal with. However, I am sure the team and their coaches will come out of this all the more determined to succeed in the future. Once again I can only applaud the fact that St Peter's has a national reputation in two major sports as well as an outstanding reputation academically. We are truly lucky to have such talented young people and such exceptional staff to work with them.
- To the youngest members of our school who have started extremely well. Our rugby teams and netball teams in year 7 are going fantastically well. When you add this to the performance of those who were in Oliver, it really is safe to say that St Peter's future is in very good hands.

STAFFING

I WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS MY THANKS TO HELEN KING, ON OF OUR TAs WHO LEFT US AT THE END OF LAST WEEK AND TO PETER HOLMAN OUR ENGLISH TA WHO IS LEAVING US AT THE END OF THE MONTH. WE WISH BOTH EVERY HAPPINESS AND SUCCESS IN THEIR FUTURE CAREERS AS WELL AS THANKING THEM FOR THE WORK THEY HAVE DONE DURING THEIR TIME AT ST PETER'S.

TERM TIME HOLIDAYS

I would like to remind parents that if you wish to take a holiday during term time you must submit a 'Request for Absence during School Term' form, which is available from Reception. If the school does not agree to you going, the absence is unauthorised. Obviously I am very aware of the economic advantages of taking holidays during term time, but unless it is absolutely

necessary I would ask you to consider how disadvantageous it could be to your son or daughter. This is the case at any stage of their school career, but from year 9 onwards any time lost can have a negative impact in terms of future examination performance.

UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

Recently we have had an issue where some younger students have taken a photograph of a member of staff and posted it on the social website 'Face Book'. This then elicited totally inappropriate comments from other students and made the member of staff the subject of ridicule. I have emphasised to students that everyone is entitled to a private life and no person should expect to have their private life intruded upon simply because of the job they do. I am sure you will agree with this and emphasise to your sons and daughters that on no account are they to indulge in, or contribute to, such behaviour. I emphasised to the students that one of the great joys of St Peter's is when you are around the county and meet our students out of school hours there is always a polite greeting and, in my experience, there is never any embarrassment for the member of staff concerned. It is a real strength of St Peter's and emphasises the ethos that we work together for the success of the students.

Could you please emphasise to your sons and daughters that what I have said above is so important that I will take very serious action against any student who contravenes what I have requested?

MATHS CHALLENGE 2010

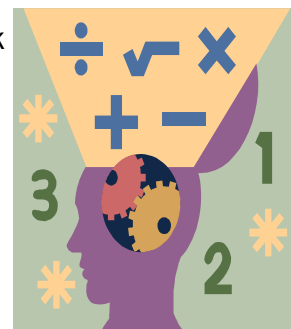
- Well done to the Year 9 and Year 10 students who participated in the UKMT National Intermediate Maths Challenge. This is a demanding competition which tests our most gifted mathematicians.
- Congratulations to those who achieved certificates at Bronze, Silver and Gold level:
- Bronze:** Ja Coughlan, Ayesha Lake, Josef Stones, James Richards, Madelein Glover, Luke Brick, Alice Boydell, Harry Barr, Iona Hughes, Joshua Tobin, Adam Currie, Liam Gittins, Anna Pitts, Henry Simmonds, Michael Puddicombe, William Murphy, Bethany Walsh, Grzegorz Simkow, Katie Taylor, Cameron Morgan, Tobias Sheerhardwick, Alex Simpson, Isaac Parker, Calum Harper, Chris Thomas,

Jack Hardiman, Jack Molloy and Sinead Dangerfield.

Silver: Connor Hayes, Dean Hopson, Thomas Blackburn, Claudio Baldari, Cameron Golding, Ieuan Poole, Colm Flaherty, Eilish Fletcher and Patrick Davie.

Gold: Daniel Robertston.

A special mention for Daniel – not only was he best in school, he also progresses to the prestigious Mathematics Olympiad competition.





FORTHCOMING CONCERT

St Peter's High School Choral Society and Orchestra present 'England's Great Composers - past, present and future'.

This concert will take place at St Peter's Church on Tuesday 4 May at 7.30pm as part of their 150th Anniversary Spring Festival.

It will showcase works by Henry Purcell, Bob Chilcott and one of our own Year 13 students, Daniel Ryan.

Pieces being performed include:

Come Ye Sons of Art - Purcell

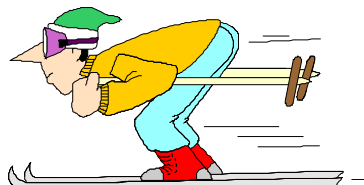
A Little Jazz Mass - Chilcott

At Least - Ryan

Tickets will be available from reception after Easter and proceeds will go towards the restoration of the church's sanctuary ceiling.

AUSTRIA 2011 - SKIING

Students in Y10, Y11, Y12 - ARE YOU INTERESTED???



- Learn to ski or improve your technique
- February half term, 8 days - £840
- Full board accommodation at the hotel Markushof in Wagrain, near Salzburg
 - 6 days' tuition in the huge Amadé ski region
 - Travel by coach and ferry
 - All insurance, ski and boot hire included

Letters available from Mrs Beamish in ML4

EASTER BINGO

I remind parents that the PFA's Easter Bingo is this Friday at 7.30pm in the School Hall. It is always an enjoyable evening and not too expensive. Entry fees are 50p and I hope many of you will support this evening. If you cannot support the evening by attending perhaps you could support the function by providing a seasonal raffle prize of an Easter Egg or perhaps a bottle of wine.



Sixth Form Art Study Trip to Amsterdam

This year's Sixth Form Art Study Trip was to Amsterdam. Students enjoyed a packed itinerary visiting major museums and Art galleries. Our trip began with a visit to the Van Gogh Museum. After an introduction from the gallery's educational staff, students had time to work in their sketchbooks in the galleries, which chronologically follow the life of Van Gogh and the development of his unique and unmistakable style. Many familiar paintings were studied, including self-portraits and one of his famous sunflower paintings. The same day students were very fortunate to visit Coster Diamonds who

do not usually give tours to groups of students. This business dates back many years and we were told about the different styles of diamond cutting and shown replicas of the Koooh I Nor diamond which was re-cut by Coster for Queen Victoria's crown. Excitement grew when the group were locked into a showroom and diamonds and jewellery were brought out for everyone to try on. No sales were made but inspiration was gained for some hard saving!

After the treasures of the diamond factory more treasures were seen at the Rijks Museum. This major museum is undergoing considerable renovation but its most important paintings and artefacts are displayed in a special exhibition called, The Masterpieces, which includes paintings and craftwork from the Golden Age. Again sketchbooks were used and students from St Peter's could be seen working intently throughout the museum.

We took the tram back to our hostel at Zeeburg for supper and then went straight out again for a night time boat cruise along the main canals of Amsterdam passing many places of interest.

Before taking the tram back to Zeeburg and despite the freezing temperatures, we took a short walk through some of the evening sights of Amsterdam with Mr Beever stopping to discuss the many different styles of Dutch street lamps! It was a real eye opener!

Our second day in Amsterdam was spent visiting the Anne Frank Museum and FOAM Contemporary Photography Gallery. After a very interesting,

illustrated introductory talk, students were able to walk through the doorway hidden by the bookcase that sealed off the annexe where the Frank family lived until they were discovered by the Nazis and sent to their fate in the concentration camps. Everyone found it a very moving experience.

After a picnic lunch and a walk along the Keizergracht canal, our students were split into two groups to take a guided tour around FOAM, which was hosting a travelling exhibition of photographs by Rodchenko as well as an exciting collection of work by contemporary Dutch photographers, some of whom made inspiring use of 'found' images from the internet. Students were challenged by museum staff to consider and discuss the works on display and choose their favourite piece.

There was just time to do some last minute outside sketching and souvenir shopping before taking the tram back to the hostel for supper and the traditional sketchbook exposition. And again, as usual the standard of work achieved by our students was very high and received admiring comments and glances from other people staying at the hostel. The competition for the best sketchbooks went to Yasmine Brain in Year 12 and Naomi Gwynne Year 13.

Our journey to and from Amsterdam by coach was long but mention has to be made of our driver Mike. He was an immediate hit with us all; an excellent driver as well as being friendly and helpful – especially in communicating with our tour company when bad weather delayed our outward journey on our first day and he was prevented from driving us all the way to Amsterdam. His knowledge of local coach companies meant we were able to follow our entire itinerary rather than spend a night in Bruges and miss our first morning in Amsterdam.

As always on the Sixth Form Art Study Trip, students gained a great deal from the experiences we were able to offer them and they all have some wonderful first hand evidence in their sketchbooks of experiencing Art 'in the flesh'.

And just as importantly, we were complimented on the excellent attitude and behaviour of our students wherever we went, making the students a credit to us, their parents and our school.



Art Trip to Tate Modern

In February a number of Gifted & Talented Year 10 GCSE Art students were given the opportunity to attend a workshop at Tate Modern led by Effie one of the gallery's education team.

To support their coursework unit entitled 'Who Do You Think You Are' which encourages students to research & reflect upon their own cultural inheritance, the students visited a show by American artist Michael Rakowitz. Rakowitz's work is very much influenced by his Jewish Iraqi background & Year 10 were able to see that although Rakowitz was born & lives in the USA, his art very much explores his family roots & current affairs within Iraq.

See Michael Rakowitz's work on www.michaelrakowitz.com

Students were superb in responding to Effie's vocabulary task & came up with a wide range of words in describing their reactions to Rakowitz's work; most agreed it was very different to any other artist they had looked at before.

A practical task was completed in the gallery sitting on the floor! In response to the prints on the wall where Rakowitz had combined images of warfare with science fiction, Year 10 made collages based on cartoon heroes. They accompanied their work with light-hearted back stories.

Following a look at 'Artists' Rooms' on Level 5, the group made its way to the National Gallery to research more traditional art works.

Year 10 behaved superbly; Effie was very impressed with all aspects of our students' work but mostly enjoyed their willingness to discuss some challenging work in a mature & confident manner.

Well done to all the students involved on a great day out, you did yourselves & St. Peter's proud.



As a way to launch the Arts Award at St Peter's, local musician Pete Rosser inspired pupils, parents, governors and staff. Around 15 pupils from year groups across the school are participating in the Arts Award this year hoping to achieve Bronze Award.

The Arts Award is endorsed by the British Arts Council and Trinity Guildhall. The Bronze Award involves 4 elements:

- **Take part in an arts activity**, anything from dance to creative writing to beat boxing
 - **Go to an arts event** of your choice
 - Find your arts **hero or heroine**, research their story, and discover how they got to where they are today
 - **Share your skills** by helping to run a workshop or by giving a demonstration to others
- Pupils chose activities that range from dance to music to drama.

On the evening of Tuesday 9th March, pupils, their parents, governors and staff were invited by teachers Miss Potter and Dr Moore to attend a launch event in the Pavilion. The Arts Award was then introduced by Miss Potter before Pete Rosser spoke passionately about his involvement in the Arts and played funky Jazz on the piano and a fantastic tango on the accordion. The Arts Award aims to engage young people in the Arts particularly locally helping them enjoy watching and participating in the Arts, develop their skills and then being able to share these skills. Staff, pupils, governors and parents are very excited about being involved in this kind of initiative.



Year 7 ICT Bristol Zoo Visit – don't miss out!

A great many Year 7 students still have not returned their reply slips and cheques for the Bristol Zoo visit on Tuesday 8th and Wednesday 9th June. Please bring them in as a matter of urgency!

This is an important trip, where you will find out about the major role that ICT plays in the Zoological Gardens. The visit also provides many insights into conservation, in preparation for the 'Fragile Earth' project, when you enter Year 8.

The Education team at the Zoo provide an

outstanding, highly interactive seminar, where friendly Madagascan hissing cockroaches, exquisite Egyptian tortoises and exotic snakes are handled by the children (and staff!). The worksheets they complete, and the photos and video footage taken, will provide the basis for further ICT work on databases and multimedia projects.



Fantastic Mr. Fox!



From L-R: Gianluca Bertone, Dan Lutman and Roberto West as Bunce, Bean and Boggis

From L-R: Isobel Hancocks, Henry Hudson and Laurence Padfield as Sam Fox, Fox Jr and Fantastic Mr. Fox



From L-R: Taonga Mwale, Stephanie Taylor and Cerys Poole as Cleo Fox, Mrs. Fox and Alisha Fox



Tickets available after Easter! See Mrs. Skyrme for further information.

Helping your children explore career ideas



It always helps to know where you are going! It is widely acknowledged that those students who have some future career ideas and aspirations are often more focused and motivated in their studies. The programme of careers education and guidance and work related learning delivered throughout school is designed to include the exploration of possible career options. The reality is most of us find it hard to identify a job or career in which we are interested and in which we will be fulfilled and successful. In the modern dynamic labour market, where many of the jobs your sons and daughters will be doing haven't yet been invented, the task of choosing a career direction isn't getting any easier. My advice to students (and parents) is always-

Don't panic if you have no idea what you want to do when you leave education. It is perfectly normal (although if you are leaving in June this year you should be making plans!)

Do spend time exploring possibilities. It is only through finding out about possible jobs, talking to people in the industry, undertaking work experience and work shadowing that you can make informed decisions.

There is a wealth of excellent material available on the internet and links to some of the best websites are provided in the careers section of the student/ subjects page on the school website.

www.connexions-direct.com/jobs4u is an excellent database of jobs information. It links to related jobs to widen the career search and also groups the jobs into 'families'.

www.u-explore.co.uk A great visual interactive resource to explore careers. Students (and parents) will need a password to access the website. Just e-mail me (hairdrie@st-petershigh.gloucs.sch.uk) and I will supply this.

www.focusoncareers.co.uk Another useful resource which includes local labour market information together with general information on career areas and relevant courses.

Do use your networks. Talking face to face with someone in the career area in which you are interested is invaluable and can lead to a rich source of future contacts. The St Peter's School community is a good starting point.

Do remind students that the careers and Connexions office is always open and students are free to drop in with their career related queries at any break or lunch time.

**Helen Airdrie
Careers**

Papal visit dates announced!

Pope Benedict XVI will visit England and Scotland on a four-day state visit from 16-19th September 2010.

The Holy Father will fly to Scotland where he will be welcomed by The Queen. He will also celebrate a public Mass in Glasgow.

In England, amongst other things, His Holiness will make a speech to British civil society at Westminster Hall, meet with the leaders of other Christian traditions, take part in a service of Evening Prayer with the Archbishop of Canterbury, lead a prayer vigil.

Pope Benedict will also visit the West Midlands to beatify the nineteenth century theologian and educationalist Cardinal John Henry Newman at a public mass in Coventry. This Mass is likely to be at Coventry airport.

We will have the opportunity to attend this historic occasion... watch this space for more details!



All students have had year reconciliation services in preparation for Easter. Once again I have to commend the manner in which the students approached these services. Over the next two or three days there will also be an Easter service followed by an appropriate token of Easter celebration!

Once again I ask you to consider encouraging your sons and daughters to join you in attending your own churches to celebrate this most important feast in the Christian church's year. Without the death and, more importantly, the resurrection of Christ on Easter Sunday, our life would be a meaningless interlude followed by oblivion. As Christians we believe that far from being meaningless this life is a preparation for eternal happiness in God's presence. This was all made possible by the resurrection of Jesus on Easter Sunday. It, therefore, offers a whole meaning to our lives and emphasises that no matter how long or how short our time on earth happens to be, there is a purpose in it for a future existence in eternal life. It is, therefore, a period which gives us great hope and great encouragement, particularly if we have lost loved ones or are actually grieving the recent death of a member of our family or close relative.

Cont/...

It is, therefore, a feast which should be celebrated, and the very least I hope is that you will consider asking your sons and daughters to join you in your own churches on Good Friday and Easter Sunday. It is so important at a time when it is all too easy to believe that material goods are the 'b all and end all' of our existence that our young people are asked to consider what the true purpose of life on earth is about. It is about our contribution to making the world a better place for ourselves and for other people and not simply about taking all we can when we can.



I am delighted to report that our students continue to show the qualities of concern for others in many different ways. Our excellent young people in the Lourdes Group are off to Lourdes again this Easter. What better witness to Christian life can there be than what those young people and staff will be doing during the week they are in Lourdes. We have also raised a significant amount of money for CAFOD during Lent and again, this proves how our young people are prepared to consider others and not just themselves. It is so important that we adults help our young people by example and word of what it means to be Christian and the importance of taking part in Christian celebrations, particularly a major feast such as Easter.

I hope you and your family are able to enjoy some quality time together over the holiday.

Yours sincerely

Lawrence Montagu
Headteacher