



Our Lady Queen of Peace

Catholic Engineering College

Glenburn Road
Skelmersdale
Lancashire WN8 6JW

t: 01695 725635
mail@olqp.lancs.sch.uk
www.olqp.org.uk

20th March 2025

Dear Parents & Carers

We have had lots of lovely weather which has added nicely to the positive feel in school.

Catholic Life & Mission

We started our Lenten journey with the distribution of ashes on Ash Wednesday. Students took part in an Ash Wednesday Liturgy in form groups. We are all reminded that fasting, prayer and almsgiving are different ways in which we deepen our awareness of God. It is also a time when we remember God's great love for us in the person of Jesus Christ. During the last two weeks we have focused on the Scripture readings from the Temptation in the desert and the Transfiguration.

Congratulations to our Year 11 students who have already led the way in making a positive contribution to Lent and have generously given up their time to take part in the Lent Walk in aid of donations to CAFOD. Well done to all those who took part!

Year 9 Options

This week students in Year 9 have had additional assemblies to give them lots of information about the courses available to them next year and what they entail. This is then followed up with the Year 9 Options Information Evening on Thursday where students and parents will get their options forms and have a short presentation by Mr Hughes on the Key Stage 4 curriculum and the impact that these options may have on college and university applications in future. All Year 9 parents and carers are invited to join us on Thursday 20th March at 5:30pm in the Sports Hall.

Year 11 Mock Exams

Year 11 students have just finished their final set of mock exams before the summer exams which start in May. Feedback from the external invigilators is that conduct has been excellent and students are working hard during the exams – well done! Results will be available in time for Parents' Evening on Thursday 3rd April which gives staff an excellent opportunity to discuss what needs to be done in these last few weeks to be as successful in summer as possible. Year 11 attendance during the mock exams has been over 95% which is excellent – this now needs to be maintained for the remainder of the year as we know that being in school and attending lessons gives students the best chances of academic success – even a few days off can make a massive difference.

I have been impressed by the number of Year 11 students in school at 7am attending early morning revision classes and those who have stayed behind after school to attend revision classes too. We will soon be sending out the Easter revision classes to parents and encourage students to attend as many as they can. The hard work will be worth it in the end.

French & Spanish GCSE Examinations

GCSE French and Spanish speaking exams start week beginning 28th April 2025 and are worth 25% of the final GCSE. Students need to learn their conversation questions and attend the speaking booster classes on Tuesday 8th April 2025 at the start of the Easter holidays.



In Christ We Grow

'As a learning community, we live out our Mission Statement striving for excellence through caring, sharing and achieving'.

Year 7 and 8 Exams

When we return after Easter, it is a very short term before May Half Term and in that time Year 7 and 8 students will complete their exams in all subjects between **Tuesday 6th May and Friday 9th May 2025**. Please do not book any appointments during this time. The exact timetable for this will be shared with parents and carers shortly and as with the mid-year exams the parental booklet will include key topics that students should be revising in preparation for these exams. Teachers will then use the final half term to ensure that this key content has been learned and remembered well and use the exam feedback to tailor lessons and homework to ensure that students are well prepared to start the new academic year in September.

Year 9 and 10 Exams

Year 9 and 10 exams will take place after the Year 11 GCSE exams have been completed so that students are able to experience the formality of sitting their end of year exams in the Sports Hall as part of our work to prepare students for their GCSE exams. These will take place between **Monday 16th June and Friday 27th June 2025**. Please do not book any appointments during this time. Our experience shows that students who try and catch-up exams later do not perform as well as those that sit it as scheduled.

Thank you for your continued support for students to help complete their homework, last half term we had the highest completion rates since September. Please continue to use ClassCharts to support your child with their homework. If you require new log-in details, please email your child form teacher.

Teaching & Learning

It is good to see that attendance at after school study support has increased, particularly in year 8. All students are welcome to attend Monday - Thursday from 3pm until 4 or 5pm. Students are given a free bus ticket for that evening.

As we approach the exam season, please speak to your child about revision. Year 11 students have been given revision lists for all subjects. To support your child at home it is helpful to create a quiet space for them to work and encourage them to attend after school revision sessions offered by staff. Years 7 - 10 will also be completing end of year exams after Easter and revision lists will be sent home and available on ClassCharts. Seneca learning and Sparx both offer useful revision tools which can be accessed at home or in study support. For further help, please contact your child's form teacher.

Safeguarding

This week as part of their Personal Development Day, students in Year 7 and 8 have been celebrating 'Empathy Day' with lessons and activities around Faith in Action led by Mary's Meals; Anti-racism and Anti-bullying as well as celebrating the diversity in their form groups. Students were well behaved and sensible whilst discussing sensitive topics. Many have submitted entries for the 2025 'Give Racism the Red Card' schools competition. Let's hope for some winners as prizes are distributed by Premier League football players! Misuse of social media accounts remains a concern. Please supervise your child's online activities and ensure appropriate parental controls are in place. We send out advisory materials around online weekly in our 'Wake Up Wednesday' email. Additional materials regarding Snap Chat were sent out last week.

This week, five of our students represented Skelmersdale at the 'Lancashire Hope Hacks' event, sharing their ideas on community safety with other young people from across the county, police and youth services.

Careers

As part of Personal Development Day, students were encouraged to think about their aspirations for the future. Years 7 and 8 participated in an online assembly from the NHS, teaching them about the 350+ careers in that sector! Year 8 also participated in sessions led by Future U, where they reflected on their personality type and preferences in order to map pathways to career ideas. Year 9 worked on the employability skill of oracy with visitors from 'Talk the Talk' or English staff. Year 10 visited the massive North West Careers and Apprenticeships Fair in Salford, following an assembly by Future U designed to help them get the most out of the event. At the end of the day, Years 10 and 11 were also invited to a careers and apprenticeship talk by the Army which was well attended.

As ever, if you can offer our students an insight into your career path and work place, or you know a former student of ours who has a story of success that might inspire our young people, we are always looking to provide our students with real employer encounters in the form of short informal talks to small groups of interested students. Or, if you are able to offer one of our Year 10 students a work experience placement during week commencing 14th July - you simply need to be willing and hold employer liability insurance - please contact Mrs Evans by email: s.evans@olap.lancs.sch.uk.

Attendance

As we move towards the Spring, and hopefully more nice weather, in addition to what we have now, the message regarding attendance remains clear - the best place for students is in school, learning. We know that when a child misses school that it impacts on their knowledge and leaves gaps. We do all we can to close those gaps but when a child misses too much school it can, and likely will, impact on future progress and therefore their outcomes at GCSE.

As a school, we do see a drop off in attendance on Fridays. Having reviewed the curriculum all of our children enjoy a rich and packed curriculum on Friday with every year group having Maths, English, and for Years 10 and 11, their option choices.

Please ensure that your child is in school every day. As you may know, our magic number for attendance is 97% and a significant proportion of our pupils have attendance over this figure with a large group still claiming 100% attendance. If your child is sick and needs to be absent, please make sure they are back in school as soon as possible. If there are issues, please contact your child's learning manager or pastoral support assistant and ask for help and support.

Mental Health

We know the impact that mental health can have on the long-term well-being of our young people. We would therefore continue to promote the use of certain on-line support tools that can help our young people, or others, who may be struggling. There are several resources which parents can use to help them before the mental health concerns of their children escalate.



The first is the **Hub of Hope**.

This is an app in which pupils simply enter their postcode and it will indicate to you or them for what is available in your area.



The other support can be found on **Kooth.com**.

This requires the young person to complete a few questions and they will then access the right sort of support they need.

Sports News from the PE Department

Mr Evans has put together a collage of events and photos from recent sporting events. Well done to all our students who take part and represent our school in the many different activities. They are great ambassadors for the school.

Things are starting to get busy again as we approach Easter for team PE

Y7 – 9 Girl's biggest ever football event @JMO

Over 250 Girls playing / leading football for international women's day



Y11 West Lancs football tournament

1st place, POTT – Josh D (Captain fantastic)



Y8 Girls Lancs cup @Lytham St Annes

Narrow defeat

Y10 Boys West Lancs football tournament

POTT – Jack G



Y11 DD day sports activity

Winning football tournament team

Well done to those doing alternative sports also!

Super busy week for Team PE last week!!!



Y9 Boys West Lancs football tournament

1st place in league
2nd place in final (It wasn't handball)

POTT – Brad J



Y8 Boys West Lancs football tournament

1st place
POTT – Ollie S

Y9 Girls PE

Making shapes during gymnastics lessons



Key Dates

Thursday 3rd April 2025

Friday 4th April 2025

Tuesday 22nd April 2025

4-6.30pm

3pm

8am

Y11 Parents' Evening

School closes for the Easter holidays

School re-opens for the start of the Summer Term

Thank you to all our parents and carers for your ongoing support.

Yours sincerely

Mrs M. Henshaw

Mrs M. Henshaw
Headteacher