



Our Lady Queen of Peace

Catholic Engineering College

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Dear Parents / Carers

Catholic Life and Mission

At the start of December, we have been focusing on the meaning of Advent and have learned that Advent comes from the Latin *adventus*, meaning 'arrival' or 'coming'. It is the season before Christmas we use to prepare ourselves to celebrate the Lord's coming into the world.



This week we light the second candle on the Advent wreath. Our Advent wreath is made of evergreen branches and holds four candles, each representing one of the four weeks of Advent. The key themes of Advent are: Hope, Peace, Joy and Love, helping us prepare our hearts and minds for the celebration of Christmas. The four candles on the Advent wreath represent the light of Christ entering the world. A candle is lit each Sunday in church and during our weekly assembly, marking the progression of the four weeks of Advent.

We are grateful to Mr Yarwood who has designed a stand for our Advent wreath and has also made the stable for the crib in our reception area.

Chaplaincy News

This is an exciting time of the year. Our school choir is preparing for our Community Carol Service later this week. The Charity Committee is busy supporting the PaperCup Charity and will be making a visit to the homeless project on Monday 16th December.

The Pensioners' Party is taking place on Thursday 19th December at 12.30pm hosted by our Year 10 Hospitality & Catering students. Grandparents and members of the parish are all very welcome to attend. Please register in advance by contacting the school reception. On the final day of term, students will be delivering care packages and Christmas cards to our local nursing homes.

This week we are looking forward to revealing which form group in each year group won the award for the best Prayer Corner in each form room.

End of Term Christmas Activities

Thursday 6th December 2024, 6pm - St Mary's Church OLQP Community Carol Service: 9 Lessons & Carols

Monday 16th December 2024, 5-6pm & 6.30-7.30pm - Winter Wonderland – Dance Show

Tuesday 17th December 2024 6pm - OLQP Pantomime

Please ensure that you register in advance for all events to avoid disappointment as seating capacity is limited.



In Christ We Grow

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

Term Dates

The final day of term is **Friday 20th December 2024**. School will close at **12pm**. Buses will collect students at 12pm. School will re-open on **Monday 6th January 2025 at 8am**.

Awards Evening – The Class of 2024

It was lovely to see so many of our past students with their parents and carers attend the Annual Awards Evening last week to receive their GCSE certificates. Subject Awards and Special Awards were also awarded for students who had excelled in their studies or contribution to wider school life. We are extremely proud of all of them and wish them the best of luck for the future. Thank you to our special guest and past student, Antony Flynn for returning to school to talk about his career and successes as an accountant.

Visit to HMS Prince of Wales

A small group of students who have been working on the Royal Navy Electric Car Project were delighted to go on a visit last week to the HMS Prince of Wales, the Navy's largest Aircraft Carrier. After sailing into the Mersey earlier in the week, the aircraft carrier finally docked at Liverpool Cruise Terminal for a week. The 65,000-tonne vessel has a company of 700 sailors - increased to around 1,600 personnel with aircraft on board. Students were presented with certificates in recognition of their work on the Electric car project. Well done!

Sparx Reader December Challenge

Year 7 to 10 are invited to take part in the Sparx Reader December challenge. For the next three weeks each student must achieve at least 250 Sparx Reading Points on their Sparx Reader homework to be in with a chance of winning. There are three prizes for each year group:

1st Prize - £25 voucher

2nd prize - £10 voucher

3rd prize - £5 voucher.

Everyone who is eligible will be entered into the draw on Friday 20th December. The results will then be announced during form time sessions on the last day of term. Good luck everyone!

Year 11 Mock Exams

Students in Year 11 are currently sitting their mock exams to check how well they are doing and to get them prepared for the expectations of the summer exam season. It is essential that students continue to be in school on time each morning, so they get key messages from their form tutor and have the calm start that is needed to allow them to do their best in the exams that day. During the mock exams students are expected to abide by the exam board regulations – these apply from the moment they enter the exam room to when they leave. Mobile phones and all types of watches are not allowed in the exam rooms and any water bottles must be clear and not have any labels.

Following the examinations students will receive timely feedback on areas that have gone well and what needs further development to allow them to secure the highest possible grades. Students need to be in school on the final day of term as they will receive their results on **Friday 20th December** and reports will be sent home to parents/carers that day.

Year 9 & 10 Mid-Year Exams

Students in Years 9 & 10 have been given their revision lists and exam dates for their assessments which will take place from Monday 13th to Friday 17th January. A parents information booklet has also been sent out with all the revision lists and key dates. It is essential that students take time to prepare for these assessments as they allow teachers to check what students know and can remember from what has been taught.

Year 7 & 8 Progress Reports

Following the recent assessments in Years 7 & 8, their work is currently being marked by teachers and students will be getting clear feedback on what has gone well and what needs further work in the next few weeks. Progress reports will be sent home in the final week of the term before the opportunity to discuss your child's progress in greater detail with their class teachers in January:

Year 7 Parent's Evening – Thursday 16th January (4pm to 6:30pm)

Year 8 Parents' Evening – Thursday 23rd January (4pm to 6:30pm)

Attendance

Congratulations to those students who have attendance of over 97%. As you may know, our magic number for attendance is 97% and a significant proportion of our students have attendance over this figure with a large group still claiming 100% attendance.

Whilst we acknowledge that 97% seems a high number, all of the research shows that an attendance rate less than this can impact on your child's future progress.

There are also many other benefits of being in school. School allows our children to develop into fully rounded young people with the initial skills and knowledge to be successful in the ever-changing world they face. As they build their knowledge, they also develop social skills, wider knowledge outside of the curriculum and as such a greater resilience – much needed in our rapidly changing and turbulent world. Please ensure that your child is in school every day and on time so that they can get the skills and knowledge they need to be successful.

This term we have begun to monitor students and have communicated with their parents where we consider that improvements in attendance can be made. This has included a small group of students for whom we feel they may be taking too many Fridays off school. The message is clear that every day counts in school and that gaps in learning can hinder progress.

I again, draw your attention to the diagram below and highlight the impact poor attendance can have on progress:

Attendance %	Impact on Progress
100%	Excellent attendance. No impact on progress.
97- 99%	Good attendance. Minimal impact on progress.
91- 96%	Room for improvement. Gaps in knowledge and understanding will impact on progress.
Below 90%	'Persistently Absent'. Serious cause for concern. Equates to missing half a year's education during the course of Years 7-11. Noticeable impact on progress. Grades achieved are significantly lower than peers who attend well.
Below 80%	'Persistently Absent'. Acute cause for concern. Equates to missing a full year of education during the course of Years 7-11. Catastrophic impact on progress.

In the final few weeks of term, we are launching our annual attendance drive and will be giving out prizes to 5 students in each year group who have either improved their attendance or who have maintained their 100% attendance.

Mental Health

As the Christmas period approaches, we know that it can be challenging for many individuals. Therefore we will continue to draw parents' attention to key sources of support. We know the impact that mental health can have on the long-term well-being of our young people. 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 students simply enter their postcode and it will indicate to them, or yourself, 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.

Teaching & Learning

In a week's time, we are looking forward to our Celebration Assemblies where students will have the opportunity to be recognised for their hard work and to receive certificates for Achievement and Progress across a range of academic subjects. Good luck to all our students!

Safeguarding / Support for Families

Christmas time for young people might mean new devices and increased screen time which can come with increased risk of students being exposed to inappropriate content or the difficulties that can come with socialising online. The following articles may be of use to parents:

Screen time and your family: Vodafone discuss screentime and what you should consider when setting your own rules in this useful article:

<https://www.vodafone.co.uk/newscentre/smart-living/digital-parenting/screen-time-and-your-family-a-guide-to-what-works-and-what-doesnt/>

How to Remove Social Media Access After Granting It. Have you given your child access to social media but are now regretting that decision? Bark have published this article to help you take back control by

removing social media: <https://www.bark.us/blog/removing-social-media>

Sports Updates

Well done to all those students who have supported our teams in the last two weeks and to those who achieved successes in their sporting activities.

Y11 Boys & Girls badminton tournament

Boys Doubles team – 2nd place

Y8 & 9 Girls Football Lancashire Cup match

7-1 win

Y10 Girls Badminton tournament at Ormskirk

Doubles – 3rd place, Singles – 4th place

Thank you for the ongoing support of all our families.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Mrs M Henshaw'.

Mrs M Henshaw
Headteacher