

Principal's Newsletter
Issue 5 - January 2018

Dear Parent/Carer

Welcome to the January principal's newsletter for parents and carers. This month, has seen students take part in mock examinations, a Round Square Conference on the topic of Democracy at Felsted School in Essex and the usual wide variety of sporting fixtures. It has also seen our Year 7 students involved in our annual Founders' Day event to learn about the vision of our original founders and our Year 8 students start to think about their qualification options at a busy Guided Choices evening event.

Mock Exam Results and Parents' Evenings

Year 11 and Year 13 mock examinations have now taken place and today our Year 11 students received their 'brown envelope' of results in a special assembly. The key message was of how fantastically they conducted themselves throughout the exam period and how motivated they are to do well. The students were also encouraged to remember that although the mocks are an important practice, what really matters is how they apply themselves between now and August to ensure the real 'brown envelope' contains the very best grades that they are able to achieve in all of their subjects. The follow up Year 11 parents' evening is taking place as I write and students will be writing action plans for improvements as they speak with their parents and teachers. This process will be repeated for our Year 13 students next week on Wednesday 14th February.

Careers Inc.

It may be particularly useful to year 11 and year 13 students to be reminded of their entitlement to access independent advice and guidance regarding their qualifications and future career ideas. Rachel and Kath, our independent careers advisors, are usually based in the Learning Resource Centre. There is a portal on our website (<http://www.careersincportal.co.uk/samworthchurchacademy>) which contains links to a vast array of careers advice and this includes a section designed specifically for parents and carers. Please do take advantage of this resource and feel free to request careers interviews via the relevant Learning Manager.

Opportunities Trust

A reminder that we are very fortunate as an academy to be able to offer funding for special projects or activities to our students on a case-by-case basis. The Opportunity Trust was created by our Sponsors to work in partnership with parents/carers to support students to reach their full potential. This could be with relation to student involvement in activities, trips and courses or with equipment for events that run both within and outside the academy. The trustees will consider all applications. To apply to the Opportunity Trust students should firstly speak with their tutor who can provide a booklet (also available on our website) and explain what to do next.

Uniform

Once again and despite a number of reminders, a significant minority of students stand out amongst a majority of extremely well dressed students with regards to following our uniform policy. Particular reminders this month are:

- Skirt length – skirts should be knee length and not be rolled up to make them shorter.
- Trousers – trousers should not be of the 'skin tight' or 'drain pipe' style.
- Nail polish/gel – this is not permitted for students at all.



Car Parking and Road Safety

Please note that unless permission has been given for parents/carers to park in the disabled parking bays, may I please ask that you park considerately on entering the car park. In the best interests of the health and safety of all our students, anyone entering the car park after 2pm will be politely advised to turn around and park outside of the Academy grounds. Thank you for your support with this to ensure we have the best possible safety measures in place for our students.

During a series of assemblies in January, students were reminded of the importance of road safety and using the crossings on the way to and from school. Unfortunately we have had a couple of incidents involving our students on the way to school in the previous few months so please can you discuss at home where necessary. In particular, we often have emergency vehicles speeding past the main academy gate after school and it is important for students to be reminded that ambulances are allowed to go through red lights at pedestrian crossings in an emergency!

iSAMS Parent App

A further reminder that our iSAMS Parent App can be downloaded to your mobile device from your usual app store using the code SCA to log in the first time. You will then need your normal iSAMS Parent Portal log in details (help can be received here <https://parents.tscacademy.org.uk/api/login/> or by emailing parentportal@tscacademy.org.uk). It might also be a good idea to check we have up to date contact details for you in general, this can easily be done online via the Forms link in the Parent section of our website.

Attendance

January has seen an increase of students absent from education due to illness. In comparison to last year, we are requesting more parents to back up their child's absence with medical evidence and more are being considered for penalty, referral to our school nurse or to early help services. In addition, it will be rare for any holiday to be authorised as an absence unless I grant special dispensation for exceptional circumstances. As we move closer to the exam season we want to encourage our students to be resilient, stay well and healthy and enjoy their learning in the academy. We would also like to ask those parents who struggle to get their children in to school to get in touch with Mrs Bassett with a view to forming part of a new community group.

Key dates this half term

Tuesday 6 th February	Year 11 Parents' Evening
Thursday 8 th February	Year 9 Vaccinations
Wednesday 14 th February	Year 13 Parents' Evening
Thursday 15 th February	Year 10 PSHE Day Reports Available via ParentPortal
19 th – 23 rd February	Half Term
Monday 26 th February	Year 9 PSHE Day
Tuesday 6 th March	Year 8 Parents' Evening
Thursday 29 th March	Reports Available via ParentPortal Last Day of Term
30 th March – 13 th April	Easter Break

And finally ...

Thought for the month – from Alex our Chaplain

Our theme in the academy over the last few weeks has been forgiveness, one of our five key Christian values. We have looked at what it means to forgive others when we have been wronged but also at the importance of forgiving ourselves for our own mistakes. In the parable of the unforgiving servant, Jesus tells the story of a man who has his debt cleared on the understanding that he too will wipe out the debt of those that were owing him. Sadly, he did not offer the same courtesy that was afforded to him and the consequence was that his own debt was reinstated. In other words, we need to be as willing to forgive others when they have hurt or offended us, as we are to accept it when we have been wronged.



Forgiveness is powerful because it helps us not to forget the past but to deal with it without holding on to feelings of bitterness and anger, freeing us up to live as it is intended to be, to the fullest.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lisa McVeigh', enclosed within a faint, light-colored oval border.

Lisa McVeigh
Principal