



From the Headteacher - 4 April 2025

Dear Parents

My regular update has deliberately slipped back a week as I am conscious of the number of emails sent to parents recently; a direct result of it being such a busy time of year and the Spring Term being lengthened by a rather late Easter. Our pastoral teams will also be sending a detailed update on the term next week.

Founder's Fortnight

I am really pleased to announce that, as things currently stand, Founder's Fortnight in March raised an incredible £4,980.36; Northgate House raised the most with a total of £1,020.92, and the top money-making form was 9S with £498.69. As ever, pupils were enthusiastic and inventive in their choice of fundraising activities, from cake sales, to 'splat the teacher' and football shoot-outs – plus the always popular girls v boys netball, and staff v pupils basketball matches. Whilst special thanks go to Mr Buttle for co-ordinating our Founder's events, a huge thank you and well done goes to everyone who contributed ideas, time and donations to help us support the education of girls at our link school, PMM in Uganda.

Poetry By Heart

Our Year 7 pupils took part in the annual Poetry By Heart competition at the end of March, with the Poetry By Heart team joining us to film the event, having selected Sir Thomas Rich's to be one of nine schools in the country to be recorded for their promotional feature film. Well done to the three finalists, Abinav in 7R, and Aarush and Anders in 7C, who were filmed performing the poems *Mr Kartoffel*, *Daffodils* and *Jabberwocky*. Their entries are now with Poetry By Heart for judging; if selected for the final, they will get to perform their poems at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre in London.

FameLab STEM Competition

The FameLab Academy final recently took place at the Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury, with Hem B from 9R being awarded the runner-up prize for his fantastic talk on time dilation: *The Truth Time Won't Tell*. We are very grateful to Mrs Mee for coordinating and supporting our pupils taking part in this competition, which not only promotes science and social science, but also offers a valuable opportunity to develop oracy skills in a topic area of their choice. Very well done to Hem on this impressive achievement.

Curriculum Aims – Year 7

This week, we have had the pleasure of watching our Year 7 form groups take it in turns to present each of our School Curriculum Aims:

- 7S – Self-Discipline
- 7T – Thinking Skills
- 7R – Resilience
- 7B – Behaviours for Learning
- 7C – Core Knowledge and Understanding.

Full credit goes to the pupils for the creative and informative presentations they prepared with their tutors. The boys managed to give practical examples of how each Curriculum Aim can be seen in school, and how developing these traits will help ensure success, not just in school, but in future life and careers. The presentations also included reference to the famous *Marshmallow Experiment* (for self-discipline), as well as stories of key sporting figures overcoming adversity (for resilience).

Whilst this is the first time we have invited pupils to deliver such presentations, Year 7 have certainly set the standard for future year groups to match. We will certainly revisit these presentations to keep our Curriculum Aims connected to the work pupils complete and the experiences they have as they move through the School.

[Our Curriculum Aims](#)

House Speaking

A third example of our pupils developing their public speaking skills took place last week with the House Speaking competition. Year 7, 8 and 9 pupils formed the audience for what was a very close-fought competition.

Westgate won the Junior round; their topic was *Should social media companies be allowed to censor our opinions?*

Eastgate won the Senior round; their topic being *Should we continue to grow genetically modified crops?*

Well done to the winners, and to all the speakers for taking part.

Rugby 7s

As you may have seen on the School website and social media channels, our Rugby 7 teams have ended the season with a string of successes. The Year 7 side went to the Summer Fields 7s competition and won the Cup, beating Berkhamstead School 20-10 in the final. The Year 8 side only narrowly missed out, reaching the final but losing to Berkhamstead School 10-5.

Our U15 side finished second in their group at King's Worcester 7s and went on to win the Plate with a 26-7 victory against Ysgol Bro Edern.

The 1st VII ended their season by reaching the Cup Final, playing against Ellesmere College. The first half proved to be a close battle with our boys having the majority of possession; the score was 14-14 at half-time. Ellesmere proved to be very strong in the second half, scoring two breakaway tries that ultimately lead to Ellesmere's victory: 40-14. Despite this, achieving second place was a great achievement for the young Sir Thomas Rich's side.

Congratulations to all the teams and coaches involved.

End of Term

During our final whole school assemblies next week, I will make the point that we are arriving at the time of year where certain year groups start to go their separate ways. Year 10, who have been completing their mock examinations this week, will be experiencing the world of employment next week for their first official period of work experience, and the external examination period will start for Year 11 and 13 very soon after the Easter break.

Indeed, the last day of formal lessons for both Year 11 and 13 will be Wednesday 7 May, with examinations commencing Thursday 8 May. As GCSE and A Level courses come to an end, we are reminding students of the most effective ways of preparing for their examinations. To quote elements of the Year 11 revision sessions, led by Mr Daniell and Mr Tilley, as well as Mr Williams' recent Year 13 parent email, these strategies include:

- Interleaving revision – studying topics/subjects in a varied order throughout a day, rather than focusing on one subject for an extended period;
- Splitting a revision day into three sessions of approximately 3 hours – (for example morning (9.00am-12.00pm), afternoon (2.00pm-5.00pm) and evening (7.00pm-10.00pm) – then studying for any **two** of these sessions in a single day;
- Completing past paper questions and comparing them with the mark schemes provided by the examination board;
- Regularly referring to the available departmental revision and subject content resources;
- Ensuring regular breaks, fresh air and exercise;
- Seeking support from staff and peers whenever needed.

It goes without saying that we appreciate how busy this time of year is, especially for our examination students and their teachers, but we hope that Easter will be used as a productive period of preparation, with a long and much deserved summer break coming at the end of the examinations.

For all year groups, the Spring Term finishes on Friday 11 April at 12.45pm; we return for the start of the Summer Term on Monday 28 April.

As previously mentioned, Heads of Year will be in touch next week with a final update for the term, leaving me to say that I hope you have an enjoyable Easter break, and thank you, as ever, for your continued support.

Best wishes



Matthew Lynch

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