

DECEMBER 2011 NEWSLETTER

YEAR 11 ACHIEVEMENT EVENING

On Tuesday 29th November, we welcomed last academic year's Year 11 students back into school to present them with their examination certificates and make awards for outstanding achievement, effort and progress. It also provided an opportunity for students to meet up again with their former teachers and fellow pupils.

It was wonderful to see the students looking so confident and mature; it is very pleasing to work with children that grow up to become such interesting and assured young men and women.

Special thanks go to Anne Wragg who masterminded the event superbly and to former Headteacher, Matthew Milburn, who presented the awards and certificates.

END OF TERM ARRANGEMENTS

Pupils will be dismissed at the normal time of 2.45 pm on Friday 16th December, therefore, school buses will be available as usual on this day.

School re-opens to pupils at the normal time on Wednesday 4th January, 2012.



SAD PASSING

As the autumn term draws to a close, we reflect over the untimely passing of two loyal and well respected colleagues this half term.

David Richards, former Headteacher, passed away on the 4th November and Annette Crossland, former Head of Year, passed away on the 9th November.

Both colleagues will be remembered with much affection and our deepest sympathy goes out to David and Annette's families at this very sad time.

SEVERE WEATHER

Severe weather can put significant pressure on pupils, parents and colleagues. It inevitably causes a level of stress and anxiety, particularly for those approaching examinations, when every lesson counts. We can't do a great deal about the snow and freezing temperatures; such things are way beyond our control. What we can do is react in a way that minimises the disturbance that the poor conditions cause.

If there is weather that threatens the safe opening of our school, we will place a message on the website to communicate if we are open or not. In order to judge the conditions, we will leave any decision until the morning, so families are asked to log on to the website which will be updated by 7.00 am at the latest.

If we are closed, parents and colleagues who have given us mobile phone numbers will also get a text message. If you do not receive a message, presume that the school is open. We also contact Dearne F.M. who broadcast a list of schools that have closed, as well as updating their own website. Finally, you can ring the school number where a recorded message will inform you of what is happening.

The decision to close is not taken lightly and involves an assessment of the forecast, conditions on site and the state of roads and buses. Once school reopens, it is vital that children return to school promptly. We may need to get used to longer winters and we all need to show some grit and resilience, in order that the children's learning is not unduly disrupted.

We would like to extend our thanks in advance, to staff, parents and pupils for all their support during periods of bad weather.

REMEMBERING OUR ARMED FORCES

Friday 11th November gave the school community the opportunity to pay our respects to those in our armed forces to whom we owe a great deal. Assemblies across all year groups allowed pupils and staff to reflect on conflict past and present. Thanks to the generous contributions made by our families, we were also able to send our forces in Afghanistan some 'hampers' to reassure them that they are in our thoughts.

... AND CLOSER TO HOME

Our Non-Uniform Day and various fun raising activities recently raised over £1,200 for Children in Need. Thank you once again for your generosity in support of others less fortunate than ourselves.

CHRISTMAS FAYRE

The Christmas Fayre, which took place on Sunday 11th December, was an outstanding success. Everyone got into the Christmas spirit. There were many stalls, including the Year 10 and 11 French theme items from their trip to Lille, plus Year 8 pupils who were involved in an Enterprise Challenge. Our thanks go to everyone for such a memorable event.

SPORTS CENTRE FITNESS SUITE PROMOTION

Countdown to 2012 – New Year's Resolution ...

THE TEN, 4 TEN POUNDS OFFER – Pay £10.00 anytime between Monday 5th December 2011 and Friday 6th January 2012 and you can have ten sessions in The Kube Fitness Suite.

Please contact the Kingstone Sports Centre direct on 738586 (after 3.00 pm weekdays and after 9.00 am weekends) if you would like to book these sessions.

CHANGE OF EMERGENCY NUMBER

For information, South Yorkshire Police's non-emergency number will change to 101. The introduction of 101 nationally has been agreed to relieve pressure on the 999 service and will enable Police Forces to better prioritise calls. In an emergency, when a crime is in progress or life is at risk – always call 999.



SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (2011/2012)

OUR OBJECTIVES

Objective 1

Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently at least 'good', by making sure all teaching offers:

- *A variety of good learning experiences, which provide sufficient challenge for all students*
- *Clear information about the next steps each should take*

Objective 2

Make sure the monitoring of teaching and assessment is consistently rigorous and has a sharper focus on the learning and progress of all students

Objective 3

To keep the 'Kingstone Flame Burning' with a series of events that engage children in deep learning and recognise the school's many achievements.

Work on the School Improvement Plan is going well. While there is still some work to do, we are proud of the achievements we have made to date and how the goals we have set are moving ever closer.

KEEPING 'IN TOUCH'

In order to keep our data systems up to date, please keep the school informed of any changes of address/phone/mobile numbers and email addresses. A number of parents have not, as yet, elected to have school letters sent directly by email. If you would like to receive correspondence electronically, and currently receive hard copies, then please contact the school and advise us of an appropriate email address.

SCHOOL MEALS PRICE INCREASES FROM JANUARY, 2012

As we all know, the price of food products has risen significantly over the last year, with economic experts forecasting this trend to continue. In order to sustain the quality and range of our school meal provision, we feel that unfortunately, we have no alternative but to slightly increase our prices from January, 2012. Under the current economic climate, this has been a very difficult decision for the school to make, but, having compared our increased prices to other local schools, colleges and local outlets, we are confident that we will still be offering good value food at very competitive prices.

SCHOOL UNIFORM – SCHOOL SHOP

Visitors at the school continue to comment on the high standard of uniform; pupil appearance remains a standard on which we place great emphasis. A small minority of pupils occasionally choose to come to school with items of clothing that are clearly not in keeping with our uniform expectations. 'Reminders' have had to be given to some pupils that the well publicised uniform states – plain black shoes and traditional grey trousers.

Where pupils have arrived out of uniform, they have been withdrawn from mainstream classes until such time as they are in correct uniform. We are grateful for parents' support of our standards and would remind parents that, if in doubt, consult with the relevant Link Tutor/Head of Year.

As if on cue, the school is currently offering for sale a number of uniform items (including skirts and trousers) at extremely competitive prices. Please contact the school for opening times.

CALLING ALL EX-PUPILS AND FORMER STAFF, AND GOVERNORS OF KINGSTONE SCHOOL

We have started work on our 'Keep the Kingstone Flame Burning' project which intends to unite every department within school, as well as the wider community, to recognise and celebrate Kingstone School's many achievements. One aspect of this project is the 'Kingstone School – This is Your Life' book, which aims to commemorate the 25 year life of the school, from its inception in 1987 to the final closing of its doors in August, 2012. Therefore, we would like to invite you to write in with recollections of your time at Kingstone School, which could include memories of someone who had a lasting or profound influence on your life. We would like to hear from as many people as possible through stories, reminiscences, letters or poems and would also be delighted to receive photographs depicting a particular time or event in Kingstone's 25 year history.



AND FINALLY ...

We would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a peaceful Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Yours sincerely,

I. Ellam
Joint Headteacher

P. Gallagher
Joint Headteacher

TRANSITION – AN EYE TO THE 'HORIZON'

Parents of pupils in Years 7 – 10 have now had the opportunity to meet the new Principal of Horizon Community College, Nick Bowen, as part of a series of presentation events in school. These events were well attended, giving parents the opportunity to share in the vision for the new school and to ask questions of Nick Bowen. Next term will see the staff appointment process begin in earnest, leading to increased collaboration and planning to ensure that pupils, parents and staff are in the best position possible in September, 2012.

PARENTS' GATEWAY

Access to the Parental Gateway through SIMS is now available to all parents by logging on to the school website and clicking on MY SIMS. If you haven't already received your username and password, please contact your child's Link Tutor.

EXAMINATIONS

Key Stage 4 Module tests have been a key feature of our work this term. We continue to take every opportunity to ensure that pupils are as well prepared as possible for these vital examinations. We cannot stress enough, the importance of these opportunities, in terms of pupils 'banking' marks ahead of the final examinations at the end of Year 11.

Achievement of all pupils in all year groups in school remains our core purpose. This is becoming particularly focussed for Key Stage 4 pupils, as they await results of recent examinations and prepare for subsequent ones in the next two terms.

SOME IMMINENT KEY DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES

- 25.1.12 – Year 9 Consultation Evening
- 26.1.12 – Year 7 Pantomime
- 30.1.12 – Year 10 commence Work Experience
- 7.2.12 – Year 11 Mock GCSE Results
- 9.2.12 – Year 9 Assessment for Living
- 9-10.2.12 – Year 11 Assessment for Living
- 22.3.12 – Year 8 Consultation Evening

