

Dear Parents and Carers

Thank you for the supportive messages and positive comments made in surveys during the recent Ofsted monitoring visit. We were very pleased with the way it went and will share news with you as soon as possible.

November saw our Year 11, 12 and 13 students undertake their first mock exams. I am thrilled at the way the students conducted themselves and the improvement in grades they have achieved. This Friday, during assembly, students will receive their results in envelopes to give them a feel of how it will be on results day in the summer. There will also be reward vouchers in each subject for those who have improved by one whole grade since last summer.

As we move into December, the weather has suddenly worsened and temperatures have been below zero for the first time this term. The building is lovely and warm and therefore we discourage students from taking their coats everywhere with them – it really is not necessary and they should be stored in lockers. Having coats allows some students to avoid the school rules on mobile phones, as having a big coat with many pockets suddenly gives more places to hide them.

Just like last year, students will be allowed to wear coats from class to class if the temperature remains low for any period of time, and rest assured lesson line ups are cancelled if it is raining.

There are many activities to fit into the last two and a half weeks such as the reward trips and celebration assemblies. Years 7 and 8 are going to see Jack and the Beanstalk at the Grove Theatre, while Year 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13 will be going to GoBowling. All students who have behaved well this term will be invited to go and, to ensure there are no barriers, the Academy fully funds these trip so they are free to everyone.

On the penultimate day of term, Tuesday 19th December, everyone in the Academy will enjoy a Christmas dinner. At this time they will be invited in as a year group, be served by the staff and sit and eat their meal, with Christmas crackers and seasonal music playing in the background. Again we see this as something all of our students should participate in and therefore will be free to all.

The examples given above are all building a strong rewards culture with our students and is much more conducive to happy learning than only giving sanctions. The students deserve to be praised for the way in which they are conducting themselves in class and around the building and I am pleased to report that all of our measures for behaviour issues are falling, such as permanent exclusions, suspensions, isolations and call outs to lessons.

I will write again at the end of the term to share photos of the celebratory events I have mentioned above.

Best wishes

Liz Furber
Executive Principal

Dear Parents and Carers

It is difficult not to be affected by the situation in Israel-Gaza, and most especially the impact this is having on children and young people on both sides of the conflict. Their education, which we too easily take for granted, has been severely impacted by the on-going conflict.

One of my personal privileges is to support the education of a blind student in Uganda. Cyzia is a High School student who has developed some exceptional skills despite his disability.

He was recently selected to represent his High School at the local Junior Paralympic Games, where the school gained overall second place. He hopes to be able to be selected for the All Africa Games. In addition, Cyzia has been sworn in as a secretary for People with Disabilities at district level for the Ugandan National Students Association. Without financial support, students in many developing countries would not have access to education and the opportunities that it brings.

There is no need to fund students in the UK because education is free at the point of delivery, which is why I and my colleague governors therefore choose to give our time freely as volunteers. Sadly, there are still a number of parents and students who do not appreciate the value of a full-time education, which is why there is a national problem with persistent absence.

We ask all parents and carers to support us in our drive to achieve full-time attendance because it is only in this way that students will achieve the skills and abilities they need to lead fulfilling and productive lives.

Best wishes

David Fraser
Chair of Governors

Canteen Spend Limit

We would like to remind parents, carers and students that there is a daily spend limit in the canteen and once this amount has been reached, students are not able to purchase any additional items, even if their account has further funds available.

The limit we have set across the Academy is £5 per day. If you would like your child to be able to spend more, or less, each day, please let us know as we can make adjustments to individual accounts.

The canteen have also asked us to remind you that if you top up accounts through ParentPay, to do this in plenty of time as it may not show on the tills straight away and if there is not enough funds showing on student accounts, they will not be able to purchase their chosen items.

Sixth Form

Law students this term have been receiving books and tasty treats for outstanding contributions in lessons. Well done everyone.

During
Character
Education,
Year 12 and
Year 13



have been working with Listen 2 Hear, an 8 week programme which focuses on employability skills such as problem solving. Students have had to solve escape boxes, learnt CV writing skills and present business plans. All students have engaged well and we are proud of their efforts.

During the recent mock exams, despite the pressure of predicted grades, students have committed to their revision well and have been mature with exam protocol. Well done Sixth Form!

Looking Ahead

6th December

Y12/Y13 Parents' Evening

12th December

Y7-Y11 Flu Vaccinations

13th December

Y11 Parents' Evening

13th December

Y7/Y8 Panto trip

14th December

Y9/Y12/Y13 Bowling Trip

18th December

Y10 Bowling Trip

19th December

Christmas dinner for students

19th December

Y11 Bowling Trip

20th December

Last Day of Term

3rd January

INSET Day

4th January

First Day of Term

Year 9

This term, Year 9 have been working prodigiously in lessons. It has been a pleasure to bear witness to their excellent behaviour and focus around the academy. Currently, we are the second highest year group in terms of House points – a fantastic effort all around. Recently, students have completed their AP1 assessments. As a social science teacher especially, I have enjoyed reading their detailed and thoughtful answers. This year group have a significant amount of potential that I am certain will bear the fruit of success in future years. It is vital, however, that students are in lessons so that they do not miss out on key sequences of learning. I am, nevertheless, thankful for all the parental support that I and Ms Fallon have received this term. The days might be getting darker as we approach the Christmas holidays; and yet we look forward to a brighter 2024 where Year 9 begin to choose their GCSE options and take their first steps as they consider their future pathways.

David Knott

Head of Year 9

From the Chaplain

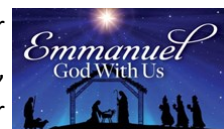
For a child is born to us, a son is given to us. The government will rest on his shoulders.

And he will be called: Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

– Isaiah 9:6

As November draws to a close, we end a month that has a particular feeling of remembering. As we move into December we can bring the theme of remembering into this month too as part of the characteristics of the season of Advent. Last year Advent Sunday was the earliest it could possibly be (27th November) but this year, on 3rd December, it is the latest it can be as it is always the fourth Sunday before Christmas. But what do we mean by Advent and why is it important?

Advent is actually the start of the church's calendar and it is a start which prepares us for Christmas. When we think of preparation for Christmas we probably think it means things like; shopping for presents, decorating a tree, sending cards, partying with friends and/or work colleagues, buying nice food, getting the house cleaned and sorted for special guests etc. But for Christians, there is a lot more to it than just that - as important as those things might be.



Advent is also about God entering our world as one of us in the form of baby Jesus. As such Advent is about expectant waiting, hopeful anticipation and joyful preparation. It is about waiting for God to come into our hearts and minds at all times and in all circumstances; the good times and the difficult moments, and for us to realise that God understands what it is like to live the human life. Furthermore, Advent reminds us all that God's promise to us is that Jesus will return again and that we should try to get our own lives in order, but that there is also joy in these things, too.

During Advent we can take time to reflect on our own lives, a time to prepare to welcome that special guest I



mentioned in my first paragraph - Jesus. And if we try to live our lives in the model of Jesus then there is the prospect of having a life well-lived. Not a life devoid of any trouble or problems, but a life where you give of yourself completely to the cause of peace, love, justice, joy and hope.

So Advent is not just about shopping, stressing, planning and buying. It is about expecting, waiting, hoping and praying. There is a phrase that is sometimes said that, if you are sick of Christmas by December 25th then you have not done Advent correctly! So, as part of Advent this year why not do something a little different? Volunteer at a charity shop, hospital or soup kitchen, spend some extra time in prayer, spend more quality time with your family, make peace with someone you have fallen out with, call that person who has been on your mind recently, speak kindly to strangers, maybe even go to church. But perhaps most of all, share some hope with those who need it most whilst we wait for the special guest, Jesus Christ.

Prayer:

Dear God,

Thank You for sending Jesus into the world. Please help me to prepare my life in order for Jesus to be seen in me. Thank You that You promise to return to us. Please help us to be ready. Amen.



Rev. Tim Davis; School Chaplain

Academic Calendar - 2023/2024

School Holiday					Bank Holiday					Pupil Day					Training Day										
September 2023					October 2023					November 2023					December 2023										
Mon		4	11	18	25	Mon		2	9	16	23	30	Mon			6	13	20	27	Mon		4	11	18	25
Tue		5	12	19	26	Tue		3	10	17	24	31	Tue			7	14	21	28	Tue		5	12	19	26
Wed		6	13	20	27	Wed		4	11	18	25		Wed		1	8	15	22	29	Wed		6	13	20	27
Thu		7	14	21	28	Thu		5	12	19	26		Thu		2	9	16	23	30	Thu		7	14	21	28
Fri	1	8	15	22	29	Fri		6	13	20	27		Fri		3	10	17	24		Fri	1	8	15	22	29
Sat	2	9	16	23	30	Sat		7	14	21	28		Sat		4	11	18	25		Sat	2	9	16	23	30
Sun	3	10	17	24		Sun	1	8	15	22	29		Sun		5	12	19	26		Sun	3	10	17	24	31
January 2024					February 2024					March 2024					April 2024										
Mon	1	8	15	22	29	Mon		5	12	19	26		Mon		4	11	18	25		Mon	1	8	15	22	29
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Sun	7	14	21	28		Sun	4	11	18	25			Sun	3	10	17	24	31		Sun	7	14	21	28	
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The Rock Project

School of Rock & Pop
Milton Keynes



- LESSONS IN: GUITAR, BASS, DRUMS AND VOCALS
- SESSIONS RUN AFTER SCHOOL
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Student: "I love coming to The Rock Project each week. The teaching is really good and the teachers interact with you no matter what level you are. Some in our group are beginners and some are advanced, but that's fine as you are given pieces that suit your ability."



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1. GUITARISTS, BASSISTS, DRUMMERS AND VOCALISTS ALL SEPERATE INTO DIFFERENT CLASSROOMS



2. EVERYONE LEARNS TO PLAY THE SAME SONG



3. THE SESSION ENDS WITH A GROUP PERFORMANCE

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JUNIORS (7-11 YEARS OLD): 5:15PM-6:45PM

SENIORS (12 - 18 YEARS OLD): 7:00PM - 8:30PM

SESSION ON THURSDAYS AT:

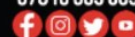
THE VALE ACADEMY, WILBURY DR,
DUNSTABLE LU5 4QP

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The Rock Project
School of Rock & Pop

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1. EMAIL US AT MK@THEROCKPROJECT.COM STATING YOU WANT TO CLAIM YOUR 4 SESSIONS AND QUOTE VOUCHER CODE XMASROCK23 YOU CAN ALSO CALL US ON 078 16669659

2. WE WILL THEN EMAIL BACK AND ARRANGE THE DATES OF YOUR 4 SESSIONS

T&Cs

1 VOUCHER CAN BE CLAIMED PER PERSON
THE 4 SESSIONS CAN BE SHARED AMONGST SIBLINGS. NOT 4 SESSIONS EACH
THE 4 SESSIONS MUST BE USED BY MAY 2024



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Francine Compton and Paulina Bera
from the Youth and Community Team
will be running the session

