

Hospital and Outreach Education

Parents Newsletter Autumn 2016



Welcome to our first newsletter of this academic year. This term always feels long particularly with the dark and cold nights. We are delighted with the positive start to the academic year made by our students and it is a great pleasure for me to go round the classrooms, to listen to staff, parents and pupils talk about their learning. Your child's education is a real team effort, and we appreciate your support in all that we do – we couldn't do it without you!

I hope you find the newsletter useful. If you have anything that you would like included in the future, please do let me know.

Finally, let me be the first to wish you a very Happy Christmas and a healthy New Year.

Kind regards

Cath (Head)

Hospital and Outreach Education: Management Committee

Unlike a school who have a Governing Body who are responsible for the running of the school, a pupil referral unit like HOE has a 'Management Committee'. They function exactly like a Governing Body, and meet 3 times a year to challenge and steer the provision. There are also an additional 3 meetings a year for sub committees for finance and resources, and learning and curriculum. You can find out more about them in the Management Committee section on the HOE website (www.nhoe.org.uk).

We have a new member of the committee, Lisa McGarrity. Lisa is a member of the Independent Advice and Support Service and used to be a teacher. Her skills and experience will be of a huge help to us moving forward. Lisa will be taking over as the chairperson of the sub committee for Learning and Curriculum.

Our current chair of the Management Committee is **Frances Jones** and can be reached through our Delapre office.

Outcomes from last year's pupils

We like to let you know how the pupils we supported last year got on in their external examinations. In the last academic year, we supported 32 pupils who were taking GCSE exams and the pupils had been with us for varying lengths of time: all pupils got at least one external qualification. 57% of the cohort got at least 5 GCSEs A* - G, all included Maths & English (increase of 9% from last year) and 25% of pupils gained 5 or more GCSEs A* - C (increase of 4%) and 22% of those included Maths & English (increase of 4%).

73% of pupils returned to school successfully. 90% of our leavers are in employment, further education or training (decrease of 4%).

We are very proud of all of our pupils, regardless of their external examination results. Many of them have overcome really significant barriers to even be able to attend their lessons let alone take their exams!

Some of the ex-students are coming back to talk to our current cohort so they can ask them questions and find out what helped them, and what it is really like to attend college, 6th form or undertake an apprenticeship.

Values Based Education

This year, we are running a 'Values Based' curriculum. Each month we have a 'value of the month' and all teachers use opportunities within their subjects to talk about the value, what it means and how we might demonstrate it. All the values which we are looking at were decided on in consultation with the staff and our pupils from last year. Check out the lovely displays produced at the centres, or follow us on Twitter (@nhoelearning) to see them.

Please bear with us on the Twitter – we are just learning to 'Tweet'!

Curriculum information for pupils at bases

Maths

All students have been working their way through the topics in number and embedding their basic skills in order to have a secure foundation to move forward. Some are preparing for a test on number and will be taking their functional skills level 1 paper. The next topic will be Statistics.

English

At present we are studying 'A Christmas Carol' by Charles Dickens. We are analysing the text, looking at contextual information about a Victorian Christmas and completing all of the reading of the text. Students have created Victorian Christmas cards with key quotations, analysed specific extracts and looked at the significance of context and Dickens' attitude towards the poor. They have also looked at the format of an examination question (Literature) and descriptive writing techniques for the Language GCSE.

Science

We have completed the Biology unit of work as part of their Science GCSE. Students are now working on their ISA coursework which contributes 25% to their GCSE grade. Students have worked hard on their work and should be proud of the effort that they have been contributing!

IT

In ICT, the students have been learning how to stay safe online. They have investigated using secure passwords, how to use social media safely, cyberbullying and its impact and one of the biggest current issues as widely reported in our National media: Sexting. ***I will be holding a Parent Time session in each of our bases in February 2017 on these topics and more. Invitations will be issued nearer the time via our Family liaison workers.***

The students have also been learning about email etiquette and how to search the internet effectively. I have introduced the students to GCSE Pod which is an award winning platform for revision using audio podcasts. The students were all very receptive to the wonderful resources provided and I would kindly ask Parents/Guardians to encourage them to use it regularly for all their GCSE subjects.

Next we are taking a closer look at what goes in inside a computer. The students will learn about the component parts and peripherals to gain a better understanding of what technology does and how rapidly it is developing. They will investigate emerging trends in technology such as robotics and wearable devices.

Preparation for Working Life

In P4WL the students have been studying about applying for jobs and courses. They have compiled a basic CV, filled in application forms and written covering letters. The students enjoyed learning about body language and non-verbal communication.

Soon the students will have a mock interview based on a job they have researched in Careers lessons. This experience teaches them relevant and necessary skills for life.

Our next topic is all about staying safe both personally and in the world of work. We will be visiting the National Safety Centre in Milton Keynes in the new year. Dates are yet to be confirmed. Watch this space for more information!

Careers

Students have explored the www.careercompanion.co.uk website and have spent time exploring and researching career options. They have begun producing reports on possible career choices. This term students will select a work experience placement of their choice for work experience week beginning 6th February 2017. Tours to the local colleges will be arranged to take place early December or during January 2017 (Northampton College, Booth Lane, Moulton College and Tresham Kettering).

Personal, Social and Health Education

In PSHE at the moment we have been working on relationships we have in our lives, the positive impact they have and support available for if relationships hit a period of crisis. We have also worked on the value of the month (honesty) with students producing some great acrostic poems for a display. Most recently we covered anti-bullying week, with each student planning and producing a comic strip to highlight a form of bullying. This has formed a display in the classroom. Depending on attendance, and the school nurse being able to visit, I am hoping to complete the AQA award in Sex and Relationships by Christmas or early in the New Year.

Food Technology

In Food technology we have covered the theory of safe working in the kitchen, food hygiene rules and the Eatwell Plate. In practical sessions we will now be concentrating on producing seasonal cakes and other baking in preparation for our coffee morning at the end of term. All students who attend regularly should complete the Sainsbury 1* Chef Award by the end of term.

Religious Education

In RE, have just completed a unit on Religious attitudes to Crime and Punishment, and will be looking next at Rich and Poor in British Society.

Art and Design

Students are busy preparing their coursework for the exams, researching different artists and undertaking a piece of art work in the style of that artist. There are already some amazing pieces which is very exciting! After Christmas, we will be starting to prepare for the exam pieces as art exams take place early, around the middle of April.

Digital Resilience

We are all aware that no matter how much we read or try to keep up, our young people are always one step ahead of us when it come to their knowledge of the Internet and the latest social networking sites and apps. I have enclosed a copy of Vodafone’s latest magazine for parents which is well worth a read. Back copies which cover other topics can be found in the Parents Section on our website (www.nhoe.org.uk)

Other useful information:

Net-aware app – this is an app created by the NSPCC and tells us all about the latest social networking sites, how they work and what are the potential dangers. You can find out more at <https://www.net-aware.org.uk> or go to the Google or iTunes store. It is free and well worth having!

Hollie Guard App – this app turns a smartphone into an advanced personal safety device at the touch of a button. His then automatically send your location and audio or video evidence to your designated contacts. It also sends a text to say you have arrived safely at your destination. For more information, check out <http://holliegazzard.org/hollie-guard>. Again, this can be downloaded from the Google or iTunes store.

Careers Companion

Careers Companion is our brand new careers website which we have had commissioned especially for our pupils in years 7 and above. **The address is www.careercompanion.co.uk** . This will take you through to the home page for careercompanion. If you go to the bottom of the page, and click on ‘Login’ you can then enter the details below:

User name and password is careersnorthants. This is the same for yourselves and the students.

This will take you through to our home page. There is information on there for yourselves in the parents section, but you can also look in the age group for your child. There are links there to various national sites and lots of videos about different careers that may help and give your child some ideas. It has local information on it, so if you click on the apprenticeships section, you will see all the current vacancies for apprentices in Northamptonshire listed there.

It is worth getting your child to do the ‘Buzz personality test’ you can find in the year 7 area (if they haven’t already) – it gives some direction to where your child might want to start looking.

New GCSEs unravelled

Which subjects are affected?

Due to the number of different GCSEs that are being updated, not all subjects will be moving to the new 1-9 system at the same time. It is quite possible that your child will have a mix of letter and number grades when they receive their targets this year. This is the same nationally and your child will not be disadvantaged in any way by this. In 2017, the numerical grades will be given for Maths, English Language, and English Literature.

What is considered a 'good' pass?

To align the UK with the best education systems in the world the government has raised expectations of achievement and will now consider a 'good pass' at GCSE to be a grade 5. You will see from the OFQUAL leaflet included that this inevitably means a smaller percentage of students are expected to gain this standard than gained a C grade in the past. *Please see enclosed leaflet for more information.*

Parent Time Meetings

We are continuing to hold our parent time meetings this term and the first one has already taken place. If you would like to know more about these, please contact your core teacher in the first instance.

If there are any topics you would particularly like covered or discussed, then please let me know.

Christmas Coffee Mornings and Enterprise Sales – Save the date!

Our traditional Christmas coffee morning will take place on **Tuesday, 20th December 2016, 10am – 12 midday**. Please bring your money and be prepared to be tempted by the tombola, the raffle and other home made goods that the pupils have produced as part of their enterprise work.

All the family are welcome, especially grandparents! The more the merrier!



End of term skating trip – Beckworth Emporium

We are arranging to take our pupils to have a go at ice skating and to have their lunch at Beckworth Emporium on Wednesday 14th December. Permission letters will be going out shortly.

For more information, check out their website on
<http://www.beckworthemporium.com/ice-skating/>

New term start date

The centres will close at 12 midday on Tuesday 20th and reopen for teaching on Wednesday, 4th January 2017

All of the staff and Management Committee from HOE wish you and your family a happy and healthy Christmas break and every good wish for 2017.