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Newsletter 4, Week Commencing 13th May 2024

Dear Families,

We're now well into the GCSE and A Level exam season and things are going really well. The feedback from students is that the exams are challenging but they seem to be coping well and hopefully the revision is paying off! We're now less than two weeks away from the end of the summer 1 half term – it's unbelievable how quickly time flies!

Key Highlights from Last Week....

A group of students from Years 9 & 10 took part in an amazing 4-day residential visit to Plas Gywnant in North Wales last week. The students were accompanied by Miss Potts, Mr Banbery and I also made an appearance up in Wales for a couple of days which was fantastic! The students were amazing – so polite, well-mannered and caring - and got so much from the experience. They took part in kayaking, gorge-walking, bouldering, walking, weasling, orienteering, rock climbing on the beach and much more besides. All of this in just 4 days. There was very little mobile phone signal up there in the mountains and so students barely had access to their phones. It was great to see them talking to one another, enjoying the countryside and taking themselves well out of their comfort zones on many occasions. The weather helped enormously! I think it was the first dry week the centre staff have had this year! On Thursday last week for example, we were kayaking in beautiful sunshine with Mount Snowdon in the background – just perfect. A great experience for our students – we will definitely be back with another group of students in the future. Please look out for information.

In other news from last week, thank you to Mr Bhangal who took the Young Enterprise Team to their regional finals on Tuesday. As part of their project, the team set up a website and catalogue to advertise the gardening services that they offer in the local area. They did incredibly well and were victorious in winning the Technology and Innovation Award! The team has been working very hard in preparation for this final, coming in to school on Saturdays and staying late after school. Well done to all and a big thank you to Mr Bhangal for leading on this – a great achievement.

Thank you to Mrs Sahajpal and Mr Edge who took a Year 9 Enterprise team to the regional finals of The Prince's Trust Enterprise challenge at The Priory Club on Thursday last week. The team did very well to qualify for the finals after finishing in the top 6 out of over 100 other teams in the heats. On the day, they finished as one of the runners up in the competition, narrowly missing out on the chance to fund the 'rage room' that they designed for use of students and staff in school to help with their mental wellbeing. Sounds like a great idea!

Our students in Year 10 had a computer science lesson with a difference last week as they were focusing on networking and were treated to a personalised tour of our academy network by Mr Freeman our IT Services Manager. Students gained a hands-on understanding, putting their learning into practice. They asked inquisitive, relevant questions to gain an in-depth understanding of how networks are created, structured, and maintained. A great 'in-house' experience for our students.

Key Reminders and Academy Expectations...

This week is Mental Health Awareness Week for which all students have had assemblies (held last week) and messages and videos to watch during form time across the week. These have been focused on topics such as mental health and wellbeing, mindfulness, talking therapies and staying active in order to manage

your mental health effectively. Mr Greaves and the wellbeing team have also used this as an opportunity to speak to students about how they manage their own mental health and wellbeing and the services we offer in school to ensure that this is an Academy that encourages an open and listening mentality for students and staff alike. This is a great opportunity to remind students that it is the responsibility of all teachers to listen to students concerns, issues and opinions and this was highlighted to students over this week, and last. Key staff from the wellbeing, safeguarding and pastoral staff were signposted as those staff to approach if students have particular concerns. The slide that was shared with all students in both the assembly and during form time is shown below:

How do I access mental health and wellbeing support in the Academy?

- **Mr Greaves**- Vice Principal, responsibility for mental health and wellbeing provision
- **Mrs De Rome**- Associate Assistant Principal- Designated Safeguarding Lead
- **Mrs Manning**- Student Wellbeing Co-Ordinator
- **Mrs Shipley**- Staff Wellbeing Co-Ordinator
- **Mrs Smith**- Mentoring and Student Support Lead
- **Mr Potter**- Head of PSHE
- **Sally Spencer**- Academy Counsellor
- **Jodie Drinkwater**- Academy Nurse
- **Pastoral Support**- Heads of Year, Year Mentors
- **Hub Managers**- Mrs Etches and Mrs Ram

All of your teachers are available to listen. Everyone in the Academy- students and staff- have a safeguarding and wellbeing responsibility. If you are worried about someone else, report it and make people aware!

We encourage all parents to discuss the content of these assemblies with their children and share with them the staff that they are encouraged to speak to about any issues, opinions or views that they have and reassure them that their concerns and worries will be listened to and, where needed, they will be guided to the appropriate support. We recognise that there are various issues well beyond the Academy gates that students want to discuss and our doors are always open to ensure that our student's voices are heard.

Upcoming Events in the Academy Calendar...

Below are some key dates for your diaries (there are no additions this week)

Thursday 16th May – Year 10 Parents' Evening
Friday 24th May – Academy closes for half term Holidays
Monday 3rd June – Academy re-opens at normal time
Thursday 13th June – Year 9 Parents' Evening
Monday 17th June – Staff INSET Day - academy closed to students
Week Commencing 24th June – Year 10 Careers Week
Thursday 27th June – Pride of Leckie Awards Evening
Friday 28th June – Cultural Diversity Day
Tuesday 2nd and Wednesday 3rd July – Year 6-7 Transition Days
Monday 8th July – Academy Sports Day
Week Commencing 8th July – Year 12 Work Experience Week
Friday 19th July – Academy closes for summer holidays

I hope you have a lovely week. We look forward to welcoming parents of Year 10 students to our Parents' Evening this evening. It will be a really positive evening and a chance to celebrate everything that our students do well and highlight any areas where improvements can be made. This is a really important evening with just 12 months to go until the final GSCE and BTEC exams take place! Whether your child is involved in examinations or not, I wish you a very positive and enjoyable week. Thank you as always for your support.

Best wishes

Mr Ludlow
Chief Executive Officer