

15th March 2024

Dear Families

Year 10 and Sixth Form vocational learners have worked really hard in their PPEs this week to demonstrate everything they have been learning. I have been very impressed by their commitment. I have had many visits from children this week asking for extra revision cards to help them with their studies!

Year 11 Drama students have been working hard to prepare for their examination performance which took place on Wednesday evening. Congratulations to all involved. Year 12 students visited Cambridge University on Tuesday and enjoyed the experience despite the rain. Yesterday we celebrated National Pi day which involved thinking about mathematics equations and eating a variety of pies on sale from the canteen! There were lots of examples of people wearing mathematical clothing too! We have visited St Bernadettes and St Thomas Aquinas as part of our British Science Week this week, pupils had fun and our Year 9 helpers were amazing. A big thank you to them all. We are looking forward to our final two visits next week. In Science we have been talking about this year's theme which is "Time" and how it affects us in our everyday lives and in lessons, pupils have been designing and making posters for the British Science Week poster competition. We look forward to seeing the complete posters.

On Wednesday evening, four Year 8 pupils competed against several other Milton Keynes Schools in the MK Maths Challenge. This is a 2-hour competition that encourages pupils to demonstrate high levels of teamwork and critical thinking. Yanna, Omali, Marcel and Karol were excellent representatives on the evening and came in fourth place. Well done!

Our student council have been very active this week in showing their appreciation to staff. Year 7 went to see the Cover Supervisor team to express their gratitude for their hard work with our students. Each form signed thank you cards with lovely messages of appreciation in them. Students also served the staff mini cakes and made a small speech about their importance to our school and their learning. Students were very happy to spread some joy and the staff were even happier to see their work being acknowledged by pupils. Year 8 visited the Faculty Administration team on Wednesday morning and the Reception and General Office teams on Thursday in yet more 'student council surprises'! They read a speech in gratitude for the hard work of the staff behind the scenes and acknowledged that the school would absolutely cease to function without them. The students were very happy to give the staff cards and cakes and they were very well received. Such a lovely thing for them to do.

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In this week's sporting fixtures our Year 7 boys' football team played Lord Grey, winning 4 – 2. Our Year 8 boys' rugby team won all four of their games, they remain undefeated. Our Year 7 girls' netball team played in a tournament at Watling Academy, although they didn't win on this occasion they all tried really hard.

Well done to Dylan Anderson who passed his grade 3 violin.

Next week we will be continuing our mathematical celebrations with Maths Week and a range of activities and competitions will be on offer throughout the week. On Tuesday we have our Music Live Lounge with a range of students from Year 7 to 13 performing at 6pm. Tickets are available at £2 each on WisePay or from Mrs Digby in B101. Year 10 students will be visiting Oxford Brookes University on Wednesday and Thursday. On Wednesday children are welcome to attend a Chapel Liturgy to mark the World Day for Social Justice. Also on Wednesday, Year 12 & 13 Gold Duke of Edinburgh students are off on their practice expedition. On Thursday evening we have mentoring appointments for Year 13, Year 12 Vocational learners and Year 9 students. These continue on Monday 25th March. Please sign up for appointments on school cloud.

You may have recently seen some guidance from the Government on mobile phones in school. Our policy does not need to change and continues to be that phones should be turned off and kept in bags throughout the entire school day. They may not be used on site under any circumstances. If they are used, then they will be confiscated until the end of the school day. We prefer this approach rather than banning them entirely because we are aware that many of our children travel long distances to school and it can be reassuring for families if they have access to a phone. I also do not want to waste time and resources by collecting in all phones at the start of the day and then returning them at the end of the day as suggested in the guidance. With nearly 2000 children on site, this would be a logistical nightmare! We will continue to monitor the situation and to educate children that they must not use phones during the school day at all. I welcome any comments or feedback on the approach we continue to take.

We have noticed a significant increase in the use of the medical room by students during lesson time for non-emergency reasons. While our priority is to provide necessary medical assistance to students in need, the repeated and unnecessary visits to the medical room are disrupting the learning environment and affecting both the academic progress and wellbeing of all students.

We kindly request your support in ensuring that your child only visits the medical room when absolutely necessary. If your child is feeling unwell or requires medical attention, please encourage them to visit the medical room during designated break times. It is important for students to understand the difference between genuine medical emergencies and minor discomforts that can be addressed at a more appropriate time. We appreciate your ongoing support with this matter.

This week we shine our community spotlight on a local Community Interest Company (CIC), Reuse. Reuse works to support the community by selling reusable items including furniture, clothing, tools and many other items from its warehouse in Kiln Farm. Recently the organisation has started selling white goods for just £50, including fridge freezers, ovens and dishwashers. The items are fully refurbished, cleaned and come with a 30 day guarantee and many have come from companies where they have

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rarely been used at all. You can find out more including how to donate goods on their website: <https://reusemk.org/>.

Finally, On Tuesday, Tom Molloy, Director of the Tommy Flowers SCITT (Milton Keynes' Initial Teacher Training provider, based at St. Paul's), attended an 'Education Champions' reception at No. 10 Downing Street with the Schools Minister, Damian Hinds, MP, to celebrate the work the Tommy Flowers SCITT does to train excellent teachers for the city and to recognise their Outstanding Ofsted report last year, where the provision was described as "second to none". Tom spoke about the need to train more teachers for our ever-expanding city, the work the SCITT are doing to launch a teaching apprenticeship and called for financial reform to enable even more people to access teacher training. If you are interested in the work of the Tommy Flowers SCITT or know someone who would like to train to become a teacher, please visit <https://tommyflowersscitt.co.uk/>.

I hope that you have a lovely weekend.

Yours sincerely



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