

Newsletter 13 December 2024

Dear Parents/ Carers

I had the pleasure of speaking to our Year 11, 12 and 13 students in assembly today and showing them our vision for the sixth form. Year 11 students also heard from current sixth formers about what is *really* like to be a post-16 student at St Ivo.





During the assemblies, it was great to reiterate and introduce the following:

- We are going to significantly refurbish the sixth form centre; the new spaces will offer the benefits of a more 'university like' feel whilst also offering the continuity and safety of a familiar site, familiar staff and familiar opportunities.
- The updated facility will offer Year 12 and 13 students the opportunity to learn, study, relax, and access career support on a par with any sixth form in the county, whilst remaining close to home.
- We have adapted our approach this year to enabling preferred subject combinations by not creating option blocks until students have had the chance to tell us about the subjects they would like to study together.
- We have extended the number of option blocks from four to five to spread out subjects more – there are far more options available if you are choosing three subjects from five lists rather than four.
- We have promised that students choosing to join us (first or second preference) will be guaranteed to study the subjects they select; a significant investment by the school in the learning opportunities for our oldest students.
- We are sensitive to that fact that some students could narrowly miss out on the entry requirements, so a margin of error is allowed every year and those students will still be able to join us

We are exceptionally lucky to be part of a trust who is committed to investing in sixth form provision; if we were a standalone school, or still under local authority control, it is unlikely that we would be able to draw on such financial support so rapidly – it would have taken years of saving, if possible at all.

This is a really exciting time for our sixth form as it represents a huge investment in the future of the St Ivo sixth form offer to ensure that the town has a sixth form that meets the needs of its students today and into the future.

Here is the assembly PowerPoint, and links to the initial concept visuals and plans:

- Assembly PowerPoint: <https://www.astreastivo.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Sixth-Form-Update-Assembly.pdf>
- Floor plans: <https://www.astreastivo.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/St-Ivo-Sketch-Plans.pdf>
- Concept visuals for the new common room and café: <https://www.astreastivo.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/St-Ivo-Spatial-Concepts.pdf>

As I have said to students and staff, this is continuing dialogue and we welcome involvement and feedback from students, staff and the community on this exciting development.

Extra-curricular

This week has seen two theatre trips take place: the English department took Year 10 and 11 students to see A Christmas Carol in Cambridge on Tuesday, and the dance department took students from across Years 8 to 11 to see Matthew Bourne's Swan Lake in London yesterday. Thank you to the staff who ran and facilitated these trips to give additional opportunities to our students.

Art success!

Well done to Dan in the sixth form whose art work has been shortlisted for national recognition and features in the Hunts Post this week <https://www.huntspost.co.uk/news/24781955.five-huntingdonshire-students-national-art-competition/>

Christmas events

Festive events have also taken place with Christmas dinner served in the canteen on Wednesday and Christmas Jumper Day yesterday.



‘Scholar’ update

Having listened to the PAC feedback and that from other parents and carers, and after getting clarity from our Trust’s leadership, I would like to review our trial of the use of the word ‘scholar’ in our school. I have discussed the following points with the PAC, and we are happy to proceed with the following shared understanding:

- The leadership of the Trust does not direct its schools to use a specific word to describe their learners.
- The St Ivo Academy will use the word ‘student’ to refer to our young people in school.
- Trust documentation uses the word ‘scholar’ for consistency, inline with the Trust and school’s value of scholarship.

- The St Ivo Academy will endeavour to change its documentation to use the word 'student' as and when documentation needs updating. If an instance of 'scholar' is missed, we will update as soon as possible after we are made aware; any accidental failure to update should not be considered to be disrespecting the PAC and community opinions on this matter.
- If individual staff wish to use the word 'scholar' in their teaching or presentations/ assemblies in relation to the joint school/ Trust value of scholarship they should have the agency to do so; however, we reiterate that the default school description is 'student'.

Staff and form tutor changes

At the end of term we say farewell to Mr Pearson, one of our cover supervisors. In January we are welcoming Mrs Robinson as cover manager, Mr Francis as teacher of performing arts and Miss Tweed as a teaching assistant. Mrs Ash, science teacher, is also returning from maternity leave, and Mr Daly, Vice Principal, returns from his secondment to Ernulf.

From January the following tutor group changes will take effect:

- 8ERN/DFR become 8HCR/DFR with Mrs Carter in L17 on Tuesdays to Friday (staying with Mr Farr on Mondays, but in L17).
- 8ASR/HCR become 8ASR/MAH with Mrs Ash on Thursdays and Fridays in S2 (Mrs Slatter continuing on Monday to Wednesday).
- 13AHS will transfer to Mr Francis, in P24.
- Following the Year 11 mocks, there will be changes to the intervention groups. These changes have been made in response to mock results and classwork over time.

Please also ask your child to check their timetable for any changes from January, particularly in science, English and drama. Any changes will be visible from Friday 20 December.

End of term

This newsletter will be the last one for this calendar year. Just a reminder that the school breaks up at the normal time of 3.00pm on Thursday 19 December 2024 as Friday is a disaggregated training day for staff. We open to students at 8.30am on Tuesday 7 January 2025.

I wish everyone a very merry Christmas, and happy New Year!

Yours faithfully

Tony Meneagh
Principal

Key Stage 3 and Year 11 mock revision

Our focus this term has been on building fluency through a variety of means. Students have been shown two presentations in tutor time this week to show them how to revise. Please do take the time to look through these materials so that you can support your children in the run up to their assessments and exams. Key stage 3 assessments start on 9 January 2025. Subject teachers will advise each class about the date of their assessment and will be running revision lessons to aid with preparation. There is an updated section on the website with access to all of our knowledge organiser by year group: <https://www.astreastivo.org/knowledge-organisers/>

The following videos have been shown in form time to help support revision:

Year 11 mocks start on 27 January 2025. More information will follow after the holiday but many students will be starting the process of revision and preparation. We advise little and often with regard to study and it is important to allow for rest and recuperation too.

Journeys to and from school

We ask that parents and carers please avoid using the school roundabout off High Leys during the busy periods before and after school. Please also avoid dropping off at the top of Green Leys, as this causes congestion and some danger to crossing students. Instead, the One Leisure car park can be used and has more space. Please drive cautiously and be considerate to others, including the many children walking or cycling to and from school.

Careers News

Careers & Aspirations Fair 16 January 2025 (Years 8-13)

We now have over 30 organisations signed up for the Careers & Aspirations Fair on 16 January including NHS, Marshall Aerospace, Breheny, Price Bailey, Acushnet, ARU, Lincoln University, Cambridge Regional College to name a few..... this promises to be a great event for students from Years 8-13.

Shaping Futures (Year 10)

This is our new approach to experiencing the workplace for Year 10s. We have some exciting 'mock' vacancies to advertise from a broad range of employers locally and nationally. We are still looking for business to participate in this so please get in touch if you are in a position to help out.

This alternative to work experience has been highlighted as a positive case study by the Gatsby Charitable Foundation: https://www.linkedin.com/posts/catherine-carruthers-131930162_wemadeitmeaningful-activity-7264323868385853441-RJ-M?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop

Post 16 Applications (Year 11)

Please encourage Year 11s to complete their post 16 applications using MyChoice16. Application drop-in on Wednesday and Thursday lunchtimes until Christmas to support with this along with 1-1 Careers Guidance Meetings – just email me or ask your child to pop in and see me.

Helen Parks – Careers Leader and Adviser – helen.parks@astreastivo.org

Coping at Christmas

COPING AT CHRISTMAS

The Added Pressures of Christmas can be Tough, but it's Important to know there's always Someone you can Talk to...



Call 111 & select option 2 to speak to the NHS Mental Health Crisis Response Service 24/7

Nhs.uk/mental-health



Under 35s can Call 0800 068 4141, Text: 88247 or Email: pat@papyrus-uk.org 24/7

Papyrus-uk.org



Call 116 123 to talk to Samaritans, or email: jo@samaritans.org for a reply within 24 hours

Samaritans.org



Call MIND's Mental Health Helpline 9am to 6pm, Monday to Friday on 0300 102 1234

Mind.org.uk



Text "SHOUT" to 85258 to contact the Shout Crisis Text Line, or text "YM" if you're under 19

Giveusashout.org



Mental Health Forum & Chat for Men from 5pm - midnight every day Call or Whatsapp 0800 585858

Thecalmzone.net

ChristmasCountdown.uk