

Newsletter 27 March 2024

Dear Parent/ Carer

This has been an amazing term, with so many highlights. Thank you to everyone who has emailed in thanking individual staff members for going the extra mile to offer such a wide variety of trips and extra-curricular activities, and the great experiences their children have had – even the praise we've received for letting our hair down for the comic relief video; these positives messages really mean a lot to our staff, your appreciation is gratefully received.

Thursday 28 March 2024 is the last day of school for this term, as the 29 March is Good Friday; there is no early closure on Thursday. We open again for the summer term on Monday 15 April 2024 for all students.

You will have noticed that the format of this week's newsletter is different. We are moving away from the 'Sway' format following feedback from parents. After half term, we will return to a full newsletter with all the usual updates (house points, rewards etc).

The remainder of this week's newsletter includes a link to a video giving more details about the new Parent Advisory Council (the "PAC"), notes from the parent engagement event, brief update to of the Year 9 into 10 preferences process, staffing and group updates, and a brief update on the new school uniform.

PAC video link

The following video hopes to provide more information about the PAC, its purpose and how it will operate: https://youtu.be/JqgtYq-Z_1M?si=TNHeSeovsbjq96Lt

If you are interested in putting yourself forward for the PAC, please complete the [PAC Application Form](#)

Parent engagement event

Thank you to the parents/ carers who attended Monday's parent engagement event. It was great to see everyone before the Easter break, to be able to feed back to you our next steps following the parent survey, and to listen to other thoughts on what you want to see next. A copy of the initial presentation can be found [here](#).

One of the themes from parents/ carers in a couple of surveys has been a request to move away from using Microsoft Sway for the newsletter to an easier format to aid searching. I would be interested to know whether this newsletter, built as a single page on our website, helps with this request.

Year 9 into 10 preferences updates

Thank you very much to everyone who has submitted preferences; these are now being collated and reviewed for each student. As Dr Craig explained during the recent

curriculum evening, this occurs in the context of forecast staffing availability for 2024-2025. A further update will follow during the early part of the summer term after the Easter holiday period.

Staffing, timetable and group changes

Mrs Fisher in the Science team leaves us at the end of this week, and Mrs Dearnley leaves the pastoral team on 15 April 2024. I'm sure you'll join me in thanking them both for their many years of service to the school community.

There will be changes to the science timetable due to Mrs Fisher leaving, primarily to ensure that exam groups have the specialist teaching they need for physics. Changes will be visible on Bromcom from Friday 29 March 2024.

In order to best support students in the last few weeks until GCSE exams, we are also making changes to Year 11 tutor groups. These will be visible on Bromcom by the end of the first week of the Easter break. As part of this, Miss Campbell will return to her Year 8 tutor group full time and Mrs Seekings will take over as form tutor to the current 10Mt, allowing Mrs McCartney to join the Year 11 tutor team.

Uniform consultation

Listening to parents and carers, I acknowledge that for some, the move to normal ties rather than clip-on ties has caused some worry. We have discussed this with our future supplier, and the school will be able to purchase some clip-ons separately for parents/carers to obtain from us. When we get nearer to point of launch, we will provide more details on how this will work in practice.

We are also still reviewing the provision of long-sleeved sports tops for girls who wish to have their arms covered. However, because this isn't currently a standard item, the sourcing of it is taking longer and proving more problematic.

Yours faithfully

Tony Meneagh

Interim Principal

Upcoming diary dates

Friday 29 March to Sunday 14 April: Easter break.

Monday 15 April: Year 12 mocks begin.

Monday 22 April: Year 11 GCSE Art exams begin.

Cyberbullying information

Child on child abuse – online

The digital world is constantly evolving with new social media platforms, apps, and devices, and children and teens are often the first to use them. The more digital platforms that a child uses, the more opportunities there are for being exposed to potential cyberbullying.

What is cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is when an individual or group of people use technology to deliberately and repeatedly upset someone else. Cyberbullying can take a range of forms, from public statuses, posts, or images to private messages or group chats. Cyberbullying includes sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or mean content about someone else. It can also take the form of excluding someone, whether this is stopping them from joining a game or chat, or hiding them from being able to see stories or posts.

The online world can be a great place for discussion and sharing different opinions which can sometimes lead to disagreements, however cyberbullying is different as it is a behaviour that specifically aims to hurt.

Parents who want to protect their children from cyberbullying, harmful digital behaviour, and exposure to adult content can use parental control and monitoring software to help them set up systems that are less invasive to their children.

More information and advice for parents can be found here:

[How to Prevent Cyberbullying : A Guide for Parents, Caregivers, and Youth \(stopbullying.gov\)](https://www.stopbullying.gov/)

Year 11 Science Revision!

Biology Topic Title	Latest RAG	Biology Specification
B1b Plant and animal cells	Green	Recall and identify the parts of plant and animal cells. Describe why they are classified as being eukaryotic.
B1b Plant and animal cells	Amber	Describe the functions of the sub-cellular structures commonly found in eukaryotic cells (nucleus, cell membrane, cell wall, chloroplasts, mitochondria and ribosomes).
B1d Inside bacteria		Identify and describe the functions of common parts of bacteria. Describe why bacteria are classified as being prokaryotic.
B1d Inside bacteria		Compare eukaryotic and prokaryotic cells.
B1b Plant and animal cells		Make good microscope drawings.

This week, Year 11 science students should be coming home with a printed version of the specification sheets available in the revision centre. These list all the points that the exam board (Edexcel) is expecting to be learnt and can be very useful for revision: tick them off, colour code them, be tested on them or make a keyword list for example.

Last week was the final set of daily challenges and thank you to those who have completed the feedback survey. Here's the link again if you would like to help us improve them: <https://forms.office.com/e/xuAD8nMBwq>

All challenges and many other resources are available on the science SharePoint revision site, accessible by students: <https://astreaacademytrust.sharepoint.com/sites/stivo-sciencehub/SitePages/Science-Revision-Centre.aspx>