

Newsletter 27 September 2024

Dear Parents/ Carers

The end of this week marks the half-way point to October half term, and the time is flying by already. It's been quite a packed week, with the Trust Secondary Leaders' conference on Tuesday at Cottenham Village College, the Parent Advisory Council meeting on Wednesday night, the Trust Sixth Form Strategy group meeting on Thursday morning and the Year 11 Information event on Thursday evening (thank you to everyone who attended, and your positive feedback). Finally, the brilliant MacMillan coffee morning on Friday, organised by our students was an amazing success – we just need to work off all those cakes now!

The next few weeks include some very important dates in the St Ivo calendar: Thursday 3 October (6pm to 8pm) is our Year 6 Open Evening, and Thursday 10 October 2024 is our Sixth Form Open Evening (6pm to 8pm). Please pop along to find out more about our school and post-16 provision.

There's quite a range of information in this week's newsletter, but a parent I talked to the other day asked for more information about how we are developing education in the school, and for that to be included in the newsletter, so that's where we'll begin this week.

Student packs and mini whiteboards

You may have noticed your child has a pack of new equipment provided by the school. This supports our focus on participation in lessons and responsive teaching. Put simply, when the teacher asks a sample of students a series of questions (using hands-up, or cold call) to gauge understanding, they only get information on what has been understood from the small number of students who answer. What we really want is to know is if *all* our students have understood. This is where the mini whiteboards become very useful, because we can check the understanding of everyone.

Teachers, as part of our continuing professional development programme, have been carefully considering how they can craft 'hinge questions' which tell them whether students have understood the content or the concepts that have been taught in lessons. They are also developing ways to format their hinge questions to enable shorter answers on the mini whiteboards. If the hinge question reveals a gap or misconception, then the teacher can respond to it in the moment, which is what responsive teaching is all about.

Local Governance Committee (LGC) opportunity

The LGC plays a significant role in guiding, supporting and challenging the work of our school for the community of St Ives, so our community LGC members play a very

important role in ensuring the school remains one of the most important institutions for the town.

Since Frank Newton stepped down from our LGC after years' of dedicated service, there has been a vacancy for a community member on our committee. Under the committee's terms, this place cannot be filled by a parent or carer; however, if there is anyone you know who you think the school should approach in our local community, we'd love to hear from them (or you). Please forward any suggestions to Donna Hartley.

Sale of Price & Buckland uniform

The remaining Price & Buckland branded uniform and PE kit has now arrived in school. We will be making this available to Year 8 to 11 families to purchase. On Monday 30 September, items will go on sale through My Child At School (MCAS) under "school shop" then "uniform" and "PE kit". Unfortunately, we will not be able to process any purchases that are not ordered through MCAS. Therefore, we ask that your child does not bring any cash into school.

Quantities of items are limited; we only have what you will see on MCAS available. Once Price & Buckland items are gone, further uniform orders will be through Chroma and therefore in the new style. **We would encourage you to purchase as soon as possible.** When you have ordered items, please ask your child to come to **P26** (the green portacabin near geography) at **break time**. Collections from P26 will be possible from Tuesday 1 October to Friday 11 October.

Blazers are sold regardless of house colour – your child may be given any colour when collecting your order, this is based on the stock we have available.

Please note that Price & Buckland items are being made available to families at cost price – we are not making any profit through their sale.

PAC meeting

The Parent Advisory Council (PAC) met for its third meeting on Wednesday this week to discuss the school's sixth form provision, the updated behaviour policy and the use of the term 'scholar'. The minutes from the meeting will be circulated once everyone has had chance to review them. The minutes will be published in due course.

Just a reminder that the PAC can be reached through the pac@astreastivo.org email address.

Changes to pastoral staff

Mrs Emmins, Pastoral Support Officer for Year 8, leaves St Ivo today and I'm sure Year 8 families will join me in thanking her for everything she has done for our students.

I am delighted to share that Mrs Scott, one of our teaching assistants, has been promoted to Pastoral Support Officer for Year 8. Mrs Scott will start on Monday in her new position, working with Head of Year Mr Smith.

Hello Yellow

St Ivo Academy are pleased to be raising mental health awareness for World Mental Health Day. We are raising funds for YoungMinds “Hello Yellow” on Thursday 10 October 2024. We are turning the school yellow!

Students are welcome to accessorise their uniform with any of the following yellow items:

- Socks
- Scarves
- Hair accessories (not hair dye) – scrunchies, ribbons, bows.
- Hats
- Handkerchief (could be placed in the blazer pocket)
- Yellow framed sunglasses
- Yellow flower/ badges

We will be running a cake stall for students to buy a cake or two! So, remember to bring some loose change.

A donation of £1 for all students participating is suggested. Cash can be brought in on the day. We do have a justgiving page set up www.justgiving.com/page/st-ivo-academy-172675006821 – there is a minimum donation of £2 if you choose to donate in this way.

Your donation impact

£2

could help one young person reach YoungMinds online resources and information.

£30

could allow us to answer a call from a parent or carer to our Parents Helpline.

£219

could train one of our Parents Helpline Advisors to be able to provide information and support to parents and carers to help them support a young person in their life.

There are days when all of us struggle with how we are feeling. Things can get tough, and it can be difficult knowing how to cope. For so many young people, when this happens, they don't always get the help they need, when they need it. They don't know where to turn, who to talk to, or even if anyone else feels the same.

No young person should feel alone with their mental health. But together, we can change this.

Finally, YoungMinds have resources for parents and carers to find help and advice, if you're ever concerned about a child or young person – you can find this on their website: www.youngminds.org.uk/parent.

Year 11 update

It was great to see so many Year 11 families at our information evening yesterday. Please see below link to the presentation used.

Remember: attitude, not aptitude, determines altitude.

<https://www.astreastivo.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/St-Ivo-Year-11-Information-Evening-Sept-2024.pdf>

Year 11 Mocks begin on Monday 4th November. All students will receive individual timetables, but the mock topics are all included, with links to revision resources, here:

<https://www.astreastivo.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/2024-Autumn-Mock-Y11-Revision-Topics-Autumn.pdf>

Exam Invigilators – job opportunity

Would flexible, part-time hours during term-time suit your way of life? Perhaps you would like work to fit around your children, or to ease you into retirement?

We are recruiting for invigilators to work ad hoc throughout the school year, supporting our students in exams and assessments.

The job entails creating a positive environment in which students can achieve their best, great attention to detail and the ability to maintain a silent space for students to complete exams, sometimes over several hours.

If you would like to apply, please see our job

advert here: <https://mynewterm.com/jobs/137305/EDV-2024-SIA-63270>

Mrs Abraham, our exams manager, is available for an informal conversation should you wish to ask any questions.

Year 7 update: homework, Sparx & Bromcom

It is pleasing to see the majority of our new Year 7 students up and running with access to Bromcom Student Portal and Sparx learning platforms for their homework.

We are still working through some issues with families not being able to access our platforms and as such we have taken the decision to pause homework detentions for Year 7 **until Monday 14 October**, to allow students some additional time to get used to our systems.

We are also planning to spend a future Year 7 personal development lesson in the IT rooms so we can support any remaining issues. This will be communicated to your child in due course with the exception of 7T/Pd2 (PD) and 7S/Fr1 (French) who have already done this with Mr Porter.

As previously circulated, students need to use the following details to access Bromcom Student Portal (www.bromcomvle.com)

1. Use the Microsoft Login option
2. Enter the student Astrea e-mail address: 24joeblo@astreastivo.org
3. This is made up of 24 + first three letters of first name and first three letters of surname, as in the Joe Bloggs example above.
4. Password is the student's date of birth in an eight-digit format.

These details should also work via the Microsoft option for the Sparx platforms.

Staggered lunchtimes

We are planning to continue with the current early Year 7 lunch time (12:00 – 12:45pm) for the remainder of this half-term to give Year 7 students, and the new catering team, additional time to settle in. After October half term, Years 11 and 13 start their mock exams, so will swap to the earlier lunch and Year 7 will swap to the later time. Only after the mock exams have finished will we consider moving all students on to the single lunch.

Singing

It was fantastic to have all our Year 7s singing as part of our choir programme for the first time this week. This will continue to take place for one half the year group on Wednesdays, and the other on Thursdays, during AM tutor time. We are very much looking forward to seeing how they progress.

Celebration

This half-term to date, Year 7 have collectively earned a phenomenal 6,320 house points and 218 golden tickets, which is a fantastic achievement. We look forward to celebrating these successes during our Friday AM tutorial.

AM Arrival

We would like to take this opportunity to remind families that students must be in their form lines at morning welcome by 8:30am at the latest. The first bell rings at 8:25am to signal to students to move to their lines.

In the event of inclement weather, when morning welcome does not take place, students should go straight to their form rooms. If morning welcome is cancelled on an assembly day students should also go to form rooms first to be registered prior to their assembly.

Yours faithfully

Tony Meneagh
Principal