



December 2019

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s)

It is always a great pleasure at the end of a long term to reflect back on the achievements of the last 14 weeks. I am so proud of the community we are shaping together and this year, our focus is on ensuring our community spirit and motto: work hard be kind is at the centre of all that we do.

Our students have been setting themselves targets related to our five attitudes to learning: willing to learn, resilience, determined, reflective and self-motivated. Through this we have seen students use and demonstrate these attitudes in their lessons. Our future focus is to deepen their understanding of how these attitudes form part of their character rather than something they just do in school.

Our assemblies often incorporate these themes and it was lovely to see so many students support our reverse advent calendar which saw many donations go to our local food bank for people who need support, particularly at this time of year.

Continuing with the community theme, it is great to have had such a positive response from you as parents/carers to our request for a group of parent ambassadors. Miss Britten will be leading this group and plans to have joint meetings with the student council to develop some key areas in school such as reading and attitude to learning. It is fantastic to have so much support and willingness to work together.

Another exciting area of development is a large project involving the school and local community. For a number of years, many of us have been keen to improve the safety outside of school and there has been much discussion about having a road crossing closer to the school entrance. We are very fortunate to have the support of our local councillor who is initiating some meetings to create a fundraising group to work together to make this a reality. This group will comprise of representatives from the school, council and local area. We anticipate that this will be long-term project. In the meantime we continue to request that parents/carers are considerate of the safety of all students and do not drop off or pick up students close to the front of school unless using a designated parking bay. We are still having to contact parents directly for parking on the yellow zig-zags or stopping dangerously in the road.

The spring term will see that start of some significant changes: all parents/carers will have received a letter about our new detention system and all students have had this explained during assemblies. As explained in the letter, this has been re-designed to give a stronger impact for students in understanding the consequences of their behaviours.

All teaching staff have been spending a great deal of time on curriculum planning as part of the long-term project throughout the whole trust on the 'knowledge led curriculum'. This is an area that all secondary schools are working on. Nationally, the focus is to ensure that all students experience the National Curriculum at the appropriate time and for an increasing number of students to follow an EBacc pathway at GCSE. The details of this are being worked on by the trust and in the spring term, we will communicate further about how this will affect NFS. Please be assured that during all times of change our priority always remains for the decisions we make to be in the best interest of our students.

No matter what your beliefs, Christmas is often a time for rest and catching up with family and friends. I hope that all of our students and families enjoy the holiday and I wish you all a peaceful and joyful break.

Kind regards

Mrs Jenny Brown

Art Trip to London



The GCSE London Art trip at the end of September was a big success, we managed to cram a lot into our two day visit.

We started off at the National Portrait Gallery where students were inspired by portraits from all eras. The BP Award was on so students also got to see work by contemporary and amateur artists, some of which has inspired their coursework. Students were impressed with the Tate with

some amazing installations and also got some free time in Covent Garden, shopping and watching the street performers.

On the second day students visited the Photographers gallery, the Royal Academy of Arts and the Victoria and Albert Museum. One of the highlights was the trip to Wonderlab at the Science Museum where students had lots of fun exploring science interactively and seeing the connections between Art and Science. The floods due to the rain meant a delayed return but our students did us proud, keeping up morale by singing on the coach!

Where will we go to next? Watch this space!

GCSE PE Goes Cycling

The PE department has recently taken the year 10 and 11 GCSE groups to the Derby Velodrome to take part in track cycling. The students got the opportunity to ride a fixed gear bicycle on an Olympic standard cycling track. The students used this opportunity to further enhance their practical grades, just waiting on the video evidence to view their results.



Heritage Learning Day

This half term, 15 of our Year 9 students had the opportunity to experience a Heritage Learning Day. Working alongside UNESCO, as part of Nottingham's status as City of Literature, the event had a unique focus to merge the disciplines of English Literature and History through 'discovery'. Students had the opportunity to connect, collaborate and learn hands-on creative techniques and skills through writing and illustration by interpreting stories told through places, buildings, objects, artefacts and manuscripts all with a focus on Nottingham's literary and cultural heritage.

As part of the day our students engaged with the history of William Booth and the Salvation Army through a unique board game designed by a student from Nottingham University; developed their knowledge of DH Lawrence through various artefacts and interactive experiences; explored the women of Chatsworth and even recreated the killing of King Richard III. The students really enjoyed this creative experience.

Sixth Form Success



The sixth form has had a successful first term. Students have made the transition from GCSE to A level learning very quickly, making use of the study areas and the chance to manage their own learning more independently. The committee has helped to organise the common room as well as environmental groups in the main school, while external speakers have included Nottingham University, Gold Duke of Edinburgh and careers presentations. Many of the students are volunteering in one form or another, from helping out in main school lessons to volunteering in local charity shops or schools.

We are well underway with the interviews for next year, both with current NFS students and applicants from other schools, both locally and further afield. If you are considering applying for a place to start with us in September of 2020, please see the website for details and to complete the application form.

The next event on the calendar is the Year 12 Parents' Evening on Wednesday 8th January. This will run from 3.45 pm to 6.30 pm. If you are the parent of a year 12 student, do please ensure that your son or daughter has made appointments with their teachers.

China Trip Open Evening

On Thursday 16th January there will be an information evening on the forthcoming exchange visit to our sister school in China. This is the second time we have organised this trip, with the first trip during the Easter 2019 holidays being a great success. Students from China visited us later in the year. Please see the school website for further details.



NFS Netball



Well done to the Year 10 Netball Team who have come such a long way to well-earned success in the first round of the Central Venue League. Brilliant individual performances and a great team effort to beat Trinity, East Leake, NUSA and Becket.

NFS Sixth Form had their first ever sports fixture, in November. Whilst it was a friendly, the girls dusted-off their white socks and donned the royal blue kit for a great team performance in the face of some unusual scenarios. Well done to all of the dream team for their commitment,

superior skill and impeccable sportsmanship.



Year 8/9 Girls Football

The Year 8/9 Girls football team took part in the City Tournament at Harvey Haddon Stadium this term. They had two wins, one draw and two loses, with the highlight being a 9-3 win over Bulwell Academy, reaching the semi-finals.

PSHCE

All years learned about Remembrance Day this term in their PSHCE lessons. Each year did a different activity such as redesigning poppies, creating posters and writing poems. In all the lessons students considered the things they were thankful for and showed respect for those who had sacrificed their lives in battles, but also for those people that were killed in terrorist attacks. One particular poem written by one of our Year 7s stood out:

***In the trenches of the war
Men mourn their fallen comrades
Who were shot and stabbed and robbed of their land
Officers sit in ripped uniforms waiting to blow the whistle
To go over the top
To be shot into the sand and rubble
by Imaad Khan***

Online Safety Update

NFS takes its responsibilities for our students' lives online very seriously and we will be using the newsletter to inform parent/carers of any new technologies and give advice to help keep students safe online.

New apps and updates to be aware of:

Yubo - a new dating app for U18's

Sayat.me - similar to ask.fm - people can comment on you personally and remain anonymous.

YouTube - have announced plans to add new settings to its kids app, including giving parents the option to hand-pick every individual video and channels they are happy for their children to see.

Snapchat - have launched a group video chat feature this month, allowing up to 16 people to join one video chat at one time.

Instagram - now lets users share multiple photos and videos on their stories.

Instagram - has also launched a 'focus' filter to the story mode which blurs the background when taking a portrait or selfie, making photos look more professional.

Spotify - have introduced a 'data saver' feature for their free users, which optimises the listening experience using less mobile data.

Facebook Messenger - is planning to implement a new feature that will allow users to unsend messages. Watch this space!

20 terms to assess what harms and risks that your children are exposed to whilst online

These terms are useful when discussing with your children what happens when they go online and to facilitate how they can keep themselves safe.

1. Age restrictions
2. Digital footprint (content put online and what happens to it)
3. Cookies
4. Youth produced imagery (children taking inappropriate images of themselves/others and then distributing it)
5. Disinformation, hoaxes
6. Fake websites and scam emails
7. Fraud
8. Password phishing
9. Farming of personal data
10. Persuasion designs of apps and games
11. Search engines
12. Abuse
13. Challenges
14. Content that incites mob mentality
15. Fake profiles
16. Grooming
17. Live streaming
18. Pornography
19. Self image
20. Reputational damage - affect on future prospects

Please make sure you use online safety websites that can support you if you are unsure of the above dangers children are exposed to.

How to evaluate online content

Following new Department for Education guidance, schools and parents need to teach children how to evaluate what they see online. Can they trust what they are seeing? We have to embrace the internet and it is our responsibility to teach them how to remain safe. Questions that could be asked include

- Is this website/URL/email fake? How can I tell?
- What does this cookie do and what information am I sharing?
- Is this person who they say they are?
- Why does someone want me to see this?
- Why does someone want me to send this?
- Why would someone want me to believe this?
- Why does this person want my personal information?
- What's behind this post?
- Is this too good to be true?
- Is this fact or opinion?

New data management system

In January we will be moving over to a new data management system. This affects all of our data storage and every electronic system that we have in school. All parents/carers will receive a letter with more detail about this. Whilst we will endeavour to make this transition as smooth as possible, please do bear with us if there are any small glitches. We politely request that all parents download the new app: My Child At School as this will be used to send information and messages.

Jewellery

Students may wear a watch (no apple devices) and a plain pair of gold/silver (no jewels) stud earrings but no other jewellery is permitted due to health and safety issues and liability in case of loss. Therefore, if students wish to have any part of their body pierced they must arrange this at the beginning of the summer holidays so that the wound has sufficient time to heal. Plasters may not be worn to cover body jewellery. If students disregard this they will be isolated from other students until they comply with the regulation.

Uniform Ordering Over Christmas

When ordering any uniform over the Christmas period please note the following Just School Wear Arnold Shop opening hours and collection dates. This information can also be found on our website www.nottinghamfreschool.co.uk

The store will close on Saturday 14 December at 3.30pm and will open on;

Saturday 28 December 2019 - 10am to 3pm,

Thursday 2 January 2020 - 10am to 3pm

Saturday 4 January 2020 - 10am to 3pm.

Normal hours will resume the week commencing Monday 6 January 2020.

Orders received by Sunday 8 December 2019 will be delivered into store for collection on Saturday 28 December.

Orders received Monday 9 December to Friday 20 December 2019 will be in store the week commencing Monday 6 January 2020.

Orders received Saturday 21 December 2019 to Sunday 5 January 2020 will be in store week the commencing Monday 13 January 2020.

Please await your text/telephone call before collecting your order

STAR Reading Tests and Accelerated Reader

Reading for pleasure is the single most important thing that will make a child successful in life.

UNESCO, 2011

All students take the STAR reading test three or four times a year so we can monitor their progress with reading and find out their reading age. The next test will take place at the start of next term. Students will record their reading age in the Reading Log section of their planners. We encourage parent/carers to discuss this with students and encourage them to read to improve it where necessary.

All students in Year 7 follow the Accelerated Reader scheme where they choose an appropriate level book and take a quiz on that book when they have finished it. This is to start all of our students off on the right

track when it comes to reading at secondary school. In Years 8 and 9 those whose reading age is below their chronological age are placed on the Accelerated Reader Scheme and have a one to one session every week to discuss their reading progress.

All students are expected to read for 30 minutes every day as part of their homework. 15 minutes of this is timetabled in DEAR (Drop Everything And Read) which takes place at the start of one lesson every day. The additional time students are expected to do outside of this at home and should record this in the reading log in their planner. GCSE exams have a reading age of 15 years so it is important that every student who is not at their current age works towards this.

We ask all parents/carers to encourage their children to read over the holidays; books from school, books they have at home or visit your local library.

Overdue Library Books

We currently have 117 books that have been overdue for four or more weeks, the value of which is over £814. Parent(s)/Carer(s) of these students will have had an email or letter requesting the return of these books. We ask that the book is returned, but if it cannot be found then a replacement is purchased or the value of the book is paid to the school office.

Whilst we do not issue fines for overdue books, students are regularly reminded that they have an overdue book through their school email account and by their tutor. We would ask all parents/carers to encourage students to return or renew their book when they receive the first email. Replacing these books would take away from purchasing new books for all our students.

Dates for your Diary

Monday 6 January 2020 – Back to school. School will finish at the earlier time of 3.35pm

Tuesday 7 January 2020 – Normal school timings – 8.20am – 4.40pm

Wednesday 8 January 2020 – Year 12 Parents' Evening. School will finish at the earlier time of 2.50pm

Thursday 16 January 2020 – China Trip Meeting 6pm

Monday 20 January 2020 – Year 9 Assessments

Wednesday 29 January – Year 10 Aspiration Trip to Peterhouse College, Cambridge

Monday 3 February 2020 - Year 11 Assessments (English, maths & science)

Wednesday 12 February 2020 – Tutor Review Day. Students are not in school except for a prearranged meeting with their parents and tutor.

Wednesday 26 February 2020 – Year 8 & 9 Vaccinations

Monday 2 March 2020 – Year 11 Assessments (All Subjects)

Monday 16 March 2020 – Year 11 group photo

Tuesday 17 March 2020 – Year 8 Parents' Evening. School will finish at the earlier time of 2.15pm

Wednesday 18 March 2020 – Year 7 Walesby Trip

Monday 23 March 2020 – Duke of Edinburgh Information Evening for Parents

Thursday 2 April 2020 – Year 9 Parents' Evening. School will finish at the earlier time of 2.15pm