

Monday 17 December 2018

Dear Parents and Carers

The Christmas Holidays will soon be upon us so I would like to take this opportunity to update you on some of the key highlights from the Autumn Term and look ahead to the Spring Term.

Academic success

As you may know by now we celebrated our best ever GCSE results this summer and when the revised Progress 8 score is published in January we are expecting ours to be +0.32 – in other words our pupils on average each achieved a third of a grade higher than expected across all their subjects. Coupled with the 100% success rate in Triple Science and huge improvements in RE, DT and Maths results we were delighted with the pupils' outcomes and are looking forward to our current Year 11 pupils achieving even better.

Pupils across all year groups have just finished sitting the first round of PPE (pre-public examinations) and will be receiving their grades and feedback on how to improve before we break for Christmas. These internal examinations are an important part of our efforts to ensure that all pupils are pushed to achieve their very best academically and make excellent progress whatever their starting point.

Bosco Times

Our pupils have been busy this term as you will see from the pages of the Bosco Times. The latest edition is out now and I do urge you to read it and share with your friends and family. Among the highlights in this edition are the numerous extra-curricular and sporting clubs that our pupils, have been involved in this term such as the gardening, cooking and judo clubs. There is also news of our efforts to increase awareness of Christians persecuted around the world on Red Wednesday as well as the fantastic efforts of our pupils to raise enough money to send 13 Christmas parcels to families in war-torn Syria. Closer to home our children also collected 15 boxes of food items and donated these to the foodbank at St Mark's Church in Clapham Junction.

Pupils and staff have been getting ready for the festive season ahead by taking part in the annual Carols in the Square event in Battersea, our wonderful Christmas Concert, this year held at St Mary's C of E Church on Battersea Church Road and our PTA Christmas party.

Spiritual life

In October we were delighted to be able to join in the celebrations of 125 years of the Sacred Heart parish church and hosted a wonderful reception for all the parishioners afterwards. We continue to be blessed with the presence of our Salesian Chaplain Fr Saju and have been able to hold regular liturgies throughout the term. Our Sixth Form RE students have been busy going out to the local

community to teach some of the children in Year 6 at Sacred Heart about Philosophy. We are proud to be part of the wider Salesian mission in Battersea.

On Friday 1 February 2019 we will be celebrating the Feast of St John Bosco in school with a mass for the whole school followed by trips and activities for pupils in Years 7-10. You will be receiving information from your child's tutor early in the new term about what their tutor group will be doing on the day. There is likely to be a small charge for these activities – please ensure that you are signed up to ParentMail so that you can pay in advance.

Devereux Base

At the end of October we opened the doors to our new Devereux resource base provision for children with ASD and additional mental health needs. The base, in keeping with our RUAH (Respect, Understanding, Affection and Humour) ethos, will provide an opportunity for pupils, who might not otherwise have the opportunity, to attend a mainstream school and receive a first-class education here at St John Bosco College. The base, named after Sean Devereux, a former Salesian pupil and teacher who was killed while working for UNICEF in Somalia, will be officially opened in January by Sean's mother.

Dates for your diary

Monday 7 January	Spring Term starts
Tuesday 15 January	Year 9 Options Evening
Thursday 17 January	Year 10 and Year 11 Parents' Evening
Thursday 24 January	Sixth Form Subject Fair/Year 9 Parents' Evening
Friday 1 February	Feast of St John Bosco celebration – early finish 1.20 pm
Thursday 7 February	Year 7 Parents' Evening
Monday 18 February	Half-term

Parents, Teachers and Friends Association (PTFA)

The recent PTFA Christmas party on 7 December was a great success. Thank you to the parents who helped to set up the event, staff the bar and all those who came to enjoy the fun. All parents of pupils currently at the school are automatically members of PTFA so everyone is welcome to be actively involved in the various events that the PTFA organise. Please contact Ms Addai at the school to find out how you can become involved. The next committee meeting is on Thursday 24 January at 6.45 pm. All parents are warmly invited to come to that meeting.

Staffing update

I am delighted to let you know that both Ms Thomson and Ms Clansey who are currently on maternity leave have had healthy baby girls. I am sure that you will join me in sending them our congratulations. At Christmas sadly we will bid farewell to Mr Polyviou, our Head of Sixth Form. He will leave with our thanks and best wishes for the contribution that he has made at St John Bosco College over three years.

School uniform

From January we will have a new uniform supplier – School Uniforms Direct. We are grateful to our previous supplier Valentino's, but have made the change to make it more convenient for parents to purchase uniform at any time of the week as SUD have branches in both Fulham and Mitcham.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind parents of our high expectations around school uniform and pupils' appearance generally. If your son/daughter is hoping to get a piercing over the holidays please bear in mind that these are not permitted in school and they would be expected to remove them on their return to school in January. Similarly please discourage your son/daughter from getting an extreme hair cut over the holidays as these are similarly not permitted.

On a similar theme – please remind your son/daughter that how they look and behave when they are travelling to and from school reflects on the whole school community. We have high expectations of our pupils' behaviour in school and these extend to their conduct and appearance in public too. The overwhelming majority of our pupils are fantastic ambassadors for the school when they are out in the community. The small minority of pupils that sometimes bring the school into disrepute because of poor behaviour in uniform face serious sanctions for doing so.

FREE 'Magic Breakfast' for ALL Children!

We are very happy to invite all our pupils to our fantastic new free breakfast provision that will start at St John Bosco College on 7 January. A delicious, healthy breakfast will be available every day, offering every pupil a great start to the day. Research has shown that children who have a healthy breakfast achieve more at school so please make sure your child does not miss out the 'most important meal of the day'. We will be serving warm bagels with butter to all children free of charge every day from 8.00 am. Please note we will stop serving breakfast at 8.30 am so please make sure your child is in school before that time! It is open to all our pupils and it is totally free! You don't need to register your child - they can just turn up on the day.

Christmas Holidays

We break up for Christmas at **12.00 pm** on **Friday 21 December**. Whilst we still expect our pupils, particularly those with GCSE and A Level exams coming up, to keep their minds active and focused on learning with some revision over the holidays it is important that they also have plenty of rest and time to relax in their families over Christmas.

The new term begins for pupils on **Monday 7 January** with a **normal start time of 8.35 am**. I would like to take this opportunity to wish you, and your families, a very merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Yours faithfully



Mr Paul Dunne
Headteacher