

TOWNSEND PARENTMAIL NEWSLETTER

Date 19th December 2019

WORSHIP AT TOWNSEND

The Value for this half term is WISDOM: 'Do not forsake wisdom, and she will protect you; love her, and she will watch over you. The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding.' Proverbs 4:6-7 The values will be shared in daily worship sessions and students will have the opportunity to reflect on their meanings with a particular reference to how we lead our everyday lives.

HEADTEACHERS CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Thank you for your continued support over what has been a long and tiring term. Congratulations to our Year 7 students for reaching the end and to Year 11 and 13 students for overcoming the challenges of the many trial public examinations. Well done to our new staff for their contribution and for the teaching and care they have given to the young people they see on a regular basis.

We are a diverse school and as such fully appreciate that not all our families will have a brilliant Christmas. Not all children will receive a bundle of presents or an overflowing Christmas lunch. To those in particular - we will be thinking of you and send love and prayers in the hope that 2020 may be better.

To our whole school community - have a safe and happy Christmas and good fortune and good health for 2020.

A Wellbeloved. Headteacher

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Tuesday 7th January 2020 – School Returns at 8.45am

Please note that when school reopens on January 7th this is **week 2** on students' timetables

9th January 2020 – Year 9 Parent/Carer Consultation Evening 5-8pm

16th January 2020 – Sixth Form Consultation Evening 5-8pm

30th January 2020 7pm - Year 11 Study and Support Evening for students and parents/carers

PARENT/CARER COFFEE MORNING

The next Parent/Carer Coffee Morning will be on Tuesday 14th January at 10am.

This will give us a chance to catch up after the Christmas holidays and look forward to the year ahead. All Parents/Carers are welcome and it is always lovely to see so many 'regulars'. Merry Christmas!

CREATIVE AND PERFORMING ARTS DISPLAY

On Thursday 26th March, Townsend will be hosting their biannual Creative and Performing Arts Display at the Alban Arena from 7pm.

Over the past week we have had hundreds of students involved in the auditions to show off their talents in music, art, drama, gymnastics, dance and poetry in this years' creative and performing arts display. As well as individual performances there will be displays from whole class dances students will be learning in lessons, short acts from the drama club, songs from the choir, displays from the school's advanced gymnastics club, and an exciting sneak peek of what is to come in this years' school show.

If any individuals missed auditions but still want to be involved, they need to see Miss Pennifold in the first week back after Christmas.

We thank you for supporting your children in their rehearsals and involvement leading up to the show. We are also seeking support for your child and the school by attending the special event and bringing along family and friends to watch the fantastic performances on a big stage at the Alban Arena.

Tickets will go on sale in February, £6 per adult, £4 per child; more information will be given out closer to the time.

CAREERS ADVICE AND GUIDANCE AT TOWNSEND

This term has seen many opportunities for pupils to look ahead at their future in order to make more informed decisions when the time arises. The Careers Pathways area in the Discovery Centre and the Sixth Form Block have been updated with relevant information for a range of different Universities and Colleges for pupils to read, as well as new books and leaflets on a range of careers to encourage our pupils to research careers in their interest areas. We have continued to have guest speakers in to talk to pupils. Examples include the RAF and a liver surgeon. Year 8 have completed a Careers module in Learning for Life lessons and Year 11 have received information on life in the Sixth Form including a parents evening and a lunchtime Sixth Form fair run by the Sixth Form Students.

Throughout the curriculum, teachers have been encouraging pupils to develop their soft skills that will prepare them for life outside of school. These are skills such as communication, empathy, teamwork, public speaking, presentation skills and leadership. Some lessons have also given pupils the opportunity to research different careers that they may be unfamiliar with in the hope that it may broaden their understanding on the range of opportunities available to them.

Next half term this work will continue. Year 7 will be logging in to their START profiles, an online programme used to match up careers with pupil's specific needs and interests. Year 8 will be focussing on their options process with input from teachers and outside agencies, Year 9 and 10 will continue to have access to the outside speaker talks and Year 11 will be continuing to look at next steps after their GCSE's. All pupils will be taking part in our first 'Preparation for Life' drop down day on Thursday 19th March where there will be a real focus on enterprise and skill development.

Each month we are emailed a copy of the Study and Careers Magazine which you also have access to if you sign up online for free. The link for the December edition is <https://issuu.com/studycareers/docs/december2019magaziness>. It offers a range of information on careers and revision techniques for students.

Finally, if you are interested in coming in to talk to a group of pupils about careers please feel free to contact Mr Armitage as we are always looking for new speakers from different careers. Thank you.

SCHOOL PRODUCTION - BEAUTY & THE BEAST

Monday's sign up for auditions were a great success with over 70 students signing up to be in the cast and crew for the show, if your child missed sign up they can still come and add their names to the lists in the drama department. The auditions for the show are on Monday 13th January 2020 at 3:30-5:00pm in the Hall, audition packs have been given out during the sign up session for students to practise over

Christmas. Auditions are open to students in years 7-10 & 12-13 and if they haven't got an audition pack they can still come and collect one from Drama. Please can parents ensure that signed up students attend audition, the show is a wonderful opportunity for your child to be creative and show dedication to a production with roles including on stage, backstage and technical. The first rehearsal is scheduled for Thursday 16th January in the Discovery Centre for a full cast read through of the play. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Mrs Coates.
Mrs Coates, Head of Drama

YEAR 7 & 8

YEAR 7 DIRECTOR OF LEARNING MESSAGE

Well done to the Year 7s for getting through to the end of an exhausting term! The transition from primary school to secondary is always a challenge, and coupled with the significant journey that some of our students have to travel, I think that they have done remarkably well!

It has been great to see the pupils progressing well in lessons, but also adding to the wider community by getting involved positively through school events such as; the Christmas Concert, the Cathedral Services, the school choir, school football, basketball, x-country, the inter-form swimming gala, various ambassador roles, form roles, year group collective worship, music and drama, and the great litter pick to name but a few! Can I take this opportunity to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! I look forward to seeing the students back in school on Tuesday 7th January.

Mr Still - Director of Learning for Year 7

YEAR 8

Dear Parents, Carers and families,

As we end our first term in Year 8, I would like to congratulate all students for a successful start. We have welcomed new students this term and have been immensely proud of how everyone has come together to make them feel welcome and part of the Townsend community. I would like to thank you, on behalf of the Year 8 team, for your continued support and wish you a restful Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Miss Gordon – Director of Learning for Year 8

YEAR 8 GEOGRAPHY TRIP

A reminder to please return the reply slips for the year 8 geography trip on 21st January to St Albans city centre. Reply slips should be returned to the school office. All students are expected to attend - there is no cost. We cannot take students without the reply slip, so if we do not have the reply slip your child will have to remain in school and will miss out on this trip. Spare letters are available from your child's form tutor or geography teacher.

With thanks and Merry Christmas to you all,
Mrs Buckland, Head of Geography

YEAR 9, 10 & 11

YEAR 9

Congratulations to all Year 9 students on completing their first term of GCSE study. This term has been a very exciting and important time for them as they have started to work on chosen subjects in greater depth. We look forward to seeing you all at the **Year 9 Parent/Carer Consultation Evening on Thursday 9th January**

where you will be able to discuss your child's progress and find out how you can further support your child with their studies. On behalf of all of us in the Year 9 team we would like to thank parents and carers for your continued support. We would like to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.
Miss Scott and the Year 9 Tutor Team.

YEAR 10 NEW VIEWS

Students should now use the Christmas Holidays to write their first drafts. Submission date for first drafts is **Wednesday 26th February 2020**. For all other dates see the original letter with date timeline. Should your child need another letter, they can obtain one from Mrs Coates.
Mrs Coates – Head of Drama

YEAR 10 HISTORY

Please note year 10 students have a trip planned on Tuesday 11th February to see the play 'The Inquisition of Queen Elizabeth I' followed by a morning workshop booked in school on Friday 14th February. Letters have already been issued to pupils. Please return the reply slip and contribution as per the deadlines and payment schedule to the school office. If you have any queries, please contact your child's History teacher. Merry Christmas!
Mrs Bailey, Head of History

YEAR 11

Year 11 students will be bringing home their grade sheets today which include their Target Grade, Trial Examination Grade and Predicted grade from subject teachers. Please spend time going through these grade sheets including a discussion about what now needs to happen with regards to attitude focus on study with your children over the Christmas holiday, so that the students return in January determined and equipped for 6 months or really hard graft.

There is an additional Parent/Carer/Student Study Support evening for Year 11 on Thursday 30th January from 7:00-8:30pm. This is an important opportunity for you to receive information on how you can support your child over the next five - seven months whilst the intensity of their studies increase. More details of the arrangements for this will be issued in January.

The Christmas holidays lasts for 19 days this year. I appreciate the past three weeks have been particularly stressful for the students and they do need to have a relaxing break, it is important that they do spend a small amount of time on each subject so that they are keeping up with their studies.

Finally, I wish you all a very merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!
Mr Armitage – Director of Learning for Year 11

YEAR 11 NATIONAL CITIZEN SERVICE (NCS)

Year 11 pupils have been offered a fantastic opportunity to experience a summer like no other. The NCS is a voluntary personal and social development programme for 15–17 year olds in [England](#) and [Northern Ireland](#), funded largely by money from the [UK Government](#). It allows pupils to develop a range of valuable life skills in a fun and interactive environment. Pupils will have the opportunity to spend time away from home meeting new people whilst taking part in a range of activities designed to engage, empower and unite young people whilst instilling confidence to take their

next steps in life. The cost of this experience is £50 per pupils. However, if you book by 31/12 then the cost is reduced to £30 per pupil. This experience is run by the NCS Trust and although we as a school promote it, we do not have any input in the running or organisation of the activities. You can find all of the information on the website www.wearencs.com

YEAR 10 WORK EXPERIENCE

Enjoy your Christmas holidays, and please find some time to check that your son or daughter is making progress with Work Experience. Many students have not yet submitted their choices from the database, and should do so soon, as places are being allocated now. If you prefer a private placement, remember that a special application form is required (copies still available from the school office) and must be returned, completed, to the office.

There is no deadline for applications from the database, but private placement forms should be received by the end of January.

Margaret Wood Work Experience Co-ordinator

YEAR 10

As another term draws to a close and studies become more intense, year 10 students seem to be picking up the work pace and seeing the importance of their studies as they see older years working hard for trial examinations. In real terms our year group have 1 year and a term left before their own GCSE examinations. I would like to draw your attention to the booklet we gave out on Parents/Carers Consultation Evening which contains valuable information on how to support your child through this school period, sources of support and subject information. I would like to wish all parents, carers and students in year 10 a very merry Christmas and peaceful new year and look forward to seeing all students back in 2020 with clear aspirations of what they would like to achieve.

Miss Reynolds – Director of Learning for Year 10

SIXTH FORM

Sixth Form - a huge well done to the sixth form community this term. Year 13 - for completion of your trial examinations, a lot of you have also completed your UCAS applications and been working incredibly hard. Year 12 - for settling into sixth form life quickly, with many of you working very hard in and out of lessons. We have also raised money for MacMillan Coffee morning, Children in Need and more recently completed the reverse advent calendar for Open Door. Not to mention pop-up peers and mentoring programmes running. Well done to you all - take a well-earned rest over Christmas and come back in January ready to prepare for A Level exams. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Miss Gibbons – Director of Learning for Sixth Form

STUDENT WELLBEING

10 tips to nurture your child's wellbeing and increase resiliency. Please talk about each one with your child

1. Share

Don't keep things bottled up. Talking about your feelings with friends, family or your teachers is not a sign of weakness but of taking charge of your own wellbeing.

2. Balance studying with other activities

Follow your passions and keep up your hobbies. You need a break from your studies.

3. Accept who you are

You are unique, don't compare yourself to other people. Each person is on a different journey and following their own path.

4. Give to others

Helping others makes you feel better about yourself, even something as small as a smile, a thank you or a kind word.

5. Get active

Regular exercise can boost your self-esteem, help you concentrate and improve your sleep. Walk, cycle, dance or try something completely new. It's a great way to make new friends too.

6. Eat healthily

There are strong links between what we eat and how we feel. Eat regular meals and make sure you get some fruit and veg in every day.

7. Unplug

Switch off phones and social media for a short time each day. A change of scene is good for mental health. Go for a walk by the lake, watch the ducks, sit, think and breathe.

8. Sleep well

Sleep is important to your physical and mental health. Sleep improves memory and concentration, reduces stress and anxiety.

A reminder to parents/carers over this period that although we are on a break too from school, there are still routes to access support for you and your children.

Kooth <https://www.kooth.com/>

Childline <https://www.childline.org.uk/>

Healthy Young Minds in Herts <https://www.healthyyoungmindsinherts.org.uk/>

HPFT Single Point of Access (SPA) -referrals for mental health 03007770707 (8am-7pm)

Health for Teens <http://www.healthforteens.co.uk>

COMMUNITY NEWS

Please note that although we are very happy to pass on information these are not Townsend sponsored or organised events.

DSPL7 are running some courses for Parents and Carers in the New Year. You need to email admin@dspl7.org.uk to book your place.

'A Day in the Life of a Child with SEND at School' on Tuesday 4th February, 7-8.30pm at The Hub, Fleetville Junior School.

Zones of Regulation Course on Wednesday 26th February, 7-8.30pm at The Hub, Fleetville Junior School.

PARENTS/CARERS UPCOMING LOCAL EVENING TALKS

The following evening talk on Understanding Adolescence - Positive Strategies for Parents will be on 15 Jan 2020 from 7.15pm-9.15pm at The SandPit Theatre. Click the following link to book your place now

<http://www.keystoneworkshops.co.uk/events/anxiety-in-children-positive-strategies-for-parents/>. Please check out attached flyers for further information on this talk as well as another one in February 2020.