



The Blue Coat School

Parent newsletter – December 2017

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Headteacher's message

As Christmas approaches we look back over a packed autumn term where the students have pushed themselves across every aspect of the curriculum and beyond. Many of you will have already seen the individual academic successes of your children in this term's progress reports and it is to their great credit that successes have been sustained throughout a long and demanding term. But it is also our students' great determination to develop themselves outside of the curriculum that makes them stand out as remarkable young people. Be it sport, music or other additional activities it is quite amazing just how much they want to be a part of.

When children naturally push themselves to develop, it is sometimes our role as adults to give them time for them to rest, re-coup and re-group. This focus on students' welfare, is one of the things we have been carefully protecting as part of recent lunch pass trial. In the new year, we hope to refine our arrangements for lunchtime activities that place student welfare at the heart of all of our provision.

Before then, may I wish you and your families a very Happy Christmas. We look forward to welcoming the students back on Monday 9 January 2018.

Mr M A Pennington
Headteacher

General notices

End of Term Arrangements: The Autumn term will end on Thursday 21 December 2017 which will be a short day. Sixth form students may sign out and begin their Christmas holidays at 12.30pm. Years 7-11 students will attend period 4 to be registered and the school day will end at 1.40pm. If you do not wish your son/daughter to leave until 3.30pm please can you contact the school office at office@bluecoatschool.org.uk to let us know.

Quick links

[Term dates](#)

[Online calendar](#)

[Requests for absence](#)

[Expectations](#)

[Examinations](#)

[Key contacts](#)

Key events Spring term 2018

9 January:	A Level Prize-giving
16 – 18 January:	Year 11 mock interviews
17 January:	Year 8 Options' evening
18 January:	Year 9 Parents' evening
23 January:	Sixth form external information evening
30 January:	Year 8 Parents evening
5 – 8 February:	School Show

Details for each of the events is shared via parentmail and the school website.



office@bluecoatschool.org.uk



www.bluecoatschoolliverpool.org.uk



twitter.com/liverpoolbcs

San Sebastian Exchange

A big thank you to the Blue Coat families who hosted the Spanish exchange students from San Sebastian.

The exchange students spent time shadowing our students in lessons and visited some famous Liverpool landmarks during their stay.

Year 12 Visit to Westminster

On Sunday 3 December Mrs Forster and Mr Pearson accompanied a group of our Year 12 Politics students on their visit to the annual Student Politics Conference in Westminster. Students heard from John Bercow, Clive Lewis, Chuka Umunna, Ken Clarke, Jacob Rees-Mogg, Jess Phillips, Anna Soubry, Nick Clegg and Alan Duncan on issues related to Brexit. Each of the politicians fielded questions and shared their hopes and concerns for what Brexit might mean for the U.K. A huge thank you to Mrs Forster for organising what was a very valuable and enjoyable experience for the students.

School Estates Development

Our plans to expand and improve the school site are progressing well and construction will begin in January – you can read more [here](#) in a recent letter to parents.

These works will equip the school with the classroom, corridor and dining capacity it needs to provide top quality education to 180 students in every year group by 2021. With new classrooms, new art studios, new interconnected sixth form facilities and better corridor access, it is an exciting time to be a part of The Blue Coat Community.

Year 11 Careers, Information, Advice and Guidance

Year 11 are focussed on researching their post-16 options and each student will have an advisory meeting with Karen Meagher from Career Connect, an independent advisory service. In January 2018, all of Year 11 will have an employability interview and we look forward to helping them develop new skills awarenesses.

Sunday Times Northwest State Secondary School of the Year 2017

Our students' fantastic [GCSE and A Level outcomes](#) where this year recognised with great praise by The Sunday Times in their November school league tables. We are extremely proud that they have been recognised as among the very best in the country through our highest ever ranking as the 18th best state school in England and our award of Northwest State Secondary School of the Year.

Parent survey feedback

Thanks to all parents who have been able to provide feedback at the recent Year 13 and Year 11 Parents' evenings. Through your feedback we are able to identify which parts of school life are having the most positive impact on the students and which parts we can refine to meet everybody's satisfactions. This term it has been reassuring to hear that the overwhelming majority of parents are extremely positive about students' behaviour and their personal development.

Improvements to student's planners

As part of our work to improve the use of form time for all age groups, we have introduced a variety of termly reflection activities for the students to undertake ahead of one to one discussions with their form tutors. These provide a great opportunity for our very able students to develop new self-evaluation skills across all aspects of their development including their achievement, good student habits, behaviour and personal development.

We do encourage you to look at the pastel coloured pages in your child's planner and talk to your child about their own reflections and what they have gained from talking to their form tutor. If you would like any more information about this, please [contact](#) the relevant key stage leader.



Development team

Earlier this month we welcomed our newest member of the Development Office. Peter Elson will be co-coordinating our Blue Coat: For All project. Supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund our historic Henry Willis organ, built in the late 1870s, will be restored to its former glory. If you would like to find out more about our HLF project please contact the Development Office at development-team@bluecoatschool.org.uk. Thanks to our network of Development Fund donors we have been able to support a growing number of extra-curricular projects. This term approved applications for funding include a series of yoga sessions, to help our Sixth Form students manage their exam stress, and new equipment for popular lunchtime and after school clubs badminton, cricket and fitness.

Our community of Old Blues marked the countdown to Christmas by joining us for our annual Old Blues festive drinks reception. Our guests included a world record traveller with his own Panamanian island and a former Red Arrows pilot! We look forward to working with our new contacts who are keen to support the School and our students.

How do we challenge the students?

Whether your child has joined us for the first time this term, or has simply moved up into the next year of study, I am sure that over this term there have been many new academic challenges for them. Our teachers always ensure that your child has a positive learning experience but at the same time, we like to challenge them to think deeply about what they are learning. We often build 'struggle time' is silently into a lesson, and this is where each student is engaged in activities that really do stretch and challenge them to build new levels of learning resilience

Please do take an opportunity to talk to your child about this 'struggle time' idea over the Christmas period and find out about the ways that they are equipping themselves to be the best learners they can be.

Year 13 Careers, Information, Advice and Guidance

An important feature of CIAG is preparing for an interview. We welcomed numerous visitors to the School on 20-23 November to help Year 13 prepare for their post-18 plans. Every student was scheduled an interview with professionals who put them through their paces, giving them both oral and verbal advice on their strengths and how to improve.

On 21 November Year 13 potential medics and dentists engaged in Mini-Medic interviews with a range of professionals from the health care sector. The interviewers gave up their time to support all of our students and the experiences they had will prove invaluable. It was great to see so many Old Blues and parents supporting the School. Heartfelt thanks go all those who attended and especially to Debbie Kenrick, Liverpool Compact and Dr Alison Waghorn.

Many students are receiving interviews during November and December for highly competitive courses and universities and we wish them well in their ventures.

How are we supporting the diverse needs of our students?

Our learning support department provides our students with a wide range of personal, social or emotional support so that they can fully access all aspects of the school curriculum. Last year, the leaning support team provided [expert support](#) around to about 13% of our student body and helped them develop new personal, social and learning skills.

The team also leads the development of other staff. During this month all teachers and support staff have enjoyed training about ways to identify and spot signs of stress and anxiety in young people and what methods we can best use to support your children. Teaching staff have also received further guidance and training on understanding the barriers to learning that some children face so that we can develop and improve our classroom practice even further.



Year 12 visit to Model United Nations Assembly

On Wednesday 29 November Mr Pearson took four Year 12 Politics students to Liverpool Town Hall to participate in the Model United Nations Assembly. The students were representing Venezuela and were asked to contribute to the drafting of four resolutions to do with the rights of children, nuclear non-proliferation, reform of the UN and renewable energy. In the afternoon they were asked to resolve a crisis in Zimbabwe in order to avert civil war. All the students acquitted themselves very well and were excellent ambassadors for the school.

Student Achievements

Many thanks to those parents of our Year 7 students who have submitted information about their son or daughter's out of school achievements via the school website. We are trialling this new method of collecting achievement information with our Year 7 and will be looking to roll this out to all year groups later in the year.

A few examples of some of the out of school achievements that have been submitted are a student who was one of 15 runners up out of 600 entrants, in a poetry competition run by Alder Hey and a student who has been selected to compete in the World Under 14 fencing championships next year despite only being 12 years of age.

The information will be used by our form tutors in their 1-1 conversations with the students, by Key Stage leaders in their celebratory assemblies and we are also hoping that it will be part of our new rewards system which we will inform you about after Christmas.

School calendar

To help you stay up to date with school events we introduced our [online calendar](#) in September of this school year.

You can use this calendar to look ahead to any month in the school year and to get a little more detail about each event such as the start time and its venue. In the interests of the very best communication, we will also always write to you via parent mail on the run up to key events for your child's year group such as parents evening or options evenings.

You can be fully reassured that we will always notify you if there is a change to the time or date of an event.

Parents' Association

The Parents' Association would like to offer a huge thank you to everyone who supported this year's Christmas Raffle, which raised over £2,000. The student-only draw for a £500 Liverpool ONE voucher was won by a very surprised Year 10 student, and the main prize draw winners have been informed.

The PA would also like to say thank you very much to those parents who have signed up to easyfundraising this term, through easyfundraising.org.uk/bluecoatschool which has helped raise much needed funds (for free!) whilst shopping online.

The next PA meeting is at 7pm on Monday 8 January 2018; new members are always very welcome. The PA can be contacted via parentsassociation@bluecoatschool.org.uk and on Twitter @BluecoatPA

