



MURRAY PARK NEWSLETTER

MESSAGE FROM THE HEADTEACHER

A warm welcome to our first newsletter of the 2016-2017 school year. I hope that you and your family have had a good Summer break. The students have returned with great enthusiasm and its been a real pleasure to be back. We have had a lot of refurbishment and redecoration going on over the holidays and am pleased to see that this is now nearly complete, as we continue to improve the fabric of the buildings and classrooms at Murray Park.

We were very pleased with the results of our outgoing Year 11 . They worked incredibly hard throughout the year (as did our staff!) and deserved to do well. Over 51% of students managed to attain 5 A*-Cs with English and Maths and it looks like we have managed record scores for student progress in Maths, English and a host of other subjects. I am proud of both staff and students and am pleased that the school has been able to continue to improve despite a fast changing educational world and declining results nationally.

I'm a firm believer that school is about much

more than results. I believe that our role is to prepare young people for every aspect of their future lives, developing resilience, leadership and other work skills alongside passions and memories that will last a life time. We continue to encourage students to take on roles across the school, whether these are as prefects, mentors, peer listening counsellors or sports coaches. To this end I was moved by the stories that our Year 11s brought back from their Camps International expedition to Peru. This was clearly a life changing experience and I've asked Mrs Hadden to write something (below) in order to give you a flavour of the trip. They had a great time and were a credit to our school.

We have included some key dates for your diary in this newsletter - please make note of some of these dates, particularly the start of the Christmas holidays as this may differ from some other local schools.

Looking forward to seeing and working with you over the coming year.

Mr M Owen

Autumn Term Key Dates

Tuesday 4th October	Post 16 Evening
Tuesday 18th October	Year 7 Tutor Afternoon (3:15-4:15pm)
Friday 21st October	Break up for Half Term
Monday 31st October	Return to school
Tuesday 1st November	Year 7 photos
Tuesday 8th November	Certificate Evening
Tuesday 15th November	Year 11 Parents' Evening
Friday 18th November	World Skills show at NEC in Birmingham (group of Year 11 students)
Thursday 8th December	Christmas Concert
Thursday 15th December	Rewards Trips
Friday 16th December	Break up for Christmas
Monday 19th December	INSET Day
Tuesday 20th December	INSET Day
Wednesday 4th January	Return to school

Peru Experience 2016

Wow where do I start to explain the incredible experience we had in Peru. The whole thing was fantastic from beginning to end. We trekked for 4 days, walking over 65km in temperatures ranging from freezing to over 30 degrees, going up and up and up and then down oh and then up again! Before finally arriving at the breath taking site of Machu Picchu, which really does have to be seen to be believed, none of the pictures do it justice, it is a wondrous place which just goes on and on. How the Incas built it is beyond me, it really is one of the wonders of the world. We also did lots of project work, mixing and delivering concrete to help build outside toilets in a village that had very few. We spent time down at Lake Titicaca building a greenhouse and stable out of mud bricks, mixing the mud and sticking it all together for an older lady who was a widow. She was so appreciative of our efforts that it made the hard work feel very worthwhile. We visited the museum in Arequipa, where they have a remains of a young girl who was a sacrifice to the sun god is kept, she is so well preserved that you can see her finger nails and skin, even though she is hundreds of years old. All the students got so much out of the whole experience that they will be inspired hopefully to carry on travelling the world and do doing incredible things. In the next few weeks Camps international will be launching the next trip to Borneo in 2018 I am sure it will be incredibly exciting to be a part of it.



Mrs Hadden

Times Table Rockstars August Challenge

At the end of the last school year we issued a challenge to pupils in Year 7, now in Year 8, to become the 'School Champion of Times Tables'. Using the website www.ttrockstars.com pupils can practice their times tables with the aim of becoming a rock god; where they need to be able to answer times table questions in less than one second! Some pupils have thoroughly impressed us with their efforts over the summer holidays and we would like to recognise their achievements. The top three performing pupils were Aneesa Fazal (answering correctly 15906 times tables questions!!), Tavonga Mugigo-Shoko (5345) and Scarlett Smith (4002). A terrific effort from all three pupils who have won themselves a selection of prizes. As well as a number of Year 7 pupils making use of the ttrockstars website there were some (now) Year 11 and (now) Year 9 who will also be receiving a small prize for their efforts.

The Mathematics department would like to encourage your child to make full use of the ttrockstars website so that they can become fluent with their knowledge of times tables and achieve greater success in their maths!

Mr Birt

Catering

Since coming back to school in September Mellors Catering Services have been delivering the catering provision in school. Initial feedback from students and staff has been very positive as they are offering an exciting selection of food. Mellors plan on holding regular taster days and theme days throughout the year to show case locally supplied produce and also develop and educate our students to make the best nutritional choices. Hopefully they have already told you about the new choices.

To ensure the service runs efficiently and all students have the opportunity to use the catering provision, Students will need to bring in their cashless catering card and make sure it has been topped up. This can be done by either bringing a cheque into school made payable to **MELLORS CATERING SERVICES LTD** or by using the cash top-up machines in school. We are currently looking into the option of on-line payments so hopefully this option will be available shortly.

All students in Year 8-11 are being re-issued dinner cards at no cost. If they lose these there will be a charge of £2 for a new one.

New service for checking Free School Meal Eligibility

School now has access to check whether parents/carers are entitled to claim for free school meals for their children. To allow school to run this check on your behalf please contact Student Services with the following information

NI Number - blank if there is a NASS number

NASS Number - blank if there is an NI number

Parent's date of birth (in reverse - yyyymmdd)

Once we have this information we can enter the details into a secure portal which will check your eligibility. If the results show you are eligible for Free School Meals and are currently not claiming the entitlement, Student Services will send you a form to complete and sign so we can update our records.

If you qualify but have chosen not to apply for free school meals please consider applying. You do not have to take up the free school meal to attract this valuable funding for school and our catering system allows children to access their Free School Meal allowance without it being known by other students.

Murray Park School's 3D Printer

The Art and Design department are extremely excited to have purchased a 3D printer. The printer will be used primarily for our KS4 students to enable them to use new technologies in the production of their GCSE products.

The 3D printer will allow us as a department to bring our schemes of learning into line with the forever changing technological world. Our students will be able to gain first-hand experience of the Technologies that are used frequently in some of our local industries, and prepare them more effectively for careers in the technological world.

Have you got time to come into school to listen to our students read?

Can you spare 20 minutes a week?

Would you like to become a buddy reader?

If so please contact the school