

Dear Parents, Carers and Friends of St Peter's

Welcome to the new School Year which we begin with great celebration. Our examination results both at KS4 and KS5 were excellent this summer. Our Sixth Form numbers have risen and we have welcomed new and enthusiastic staff who join a passionate and committed community. All year groups are full, including our Reception and Year 1 classes. Our new primary classrooms are up and running and were even finished on time! The new build at Southbourne will start by half term (we are assured) and the contractors are still on target to finish by September 2016. The students have returned rested, rejuvenated and ready for study – you have obviously done an excellent job of preparing them for their return in spite of the summer weather!

### EXAM RESULTS

At KS4 our Year 11 students achieved exceptionally well, especially during a turbulent time in public examinations. The levels of progress made by all students were very high.

St Peter's again bucked the national trend providing higher numbers of students with the top grades. One fifth of the year group achieved five or more A\* and A grades, with nearly 30% of all entries achieving either an A\* or A grade. Thirty students achieved 8 or more of the top A\* and A grades. Well over half of the results were A\* to B grades. The majority of students far exceeded their expected progress measures, especially in subjects like science and the humanities. Over three-quarters of students achieved results between an A\* and C in one or more of the core subjects such as English, mathematics and science, which is well above the national average.



Year 13 students also exceeded their established targets based on national comparisons. St Peter's has significantly improved its overall pass rate for A level from 97% last year to 99.2% (above the national rate of 98%). There were some stunning individual performances and outstanding subject results. In Geography, for example, over half of the 15 students achieved A\* grades. For the year group as a whole, nearly three-quarters of results were above grade C.

These results show how Sixth Form teachers and associate staff have worked hard with the students to ensure that they achieved above expectations. For example, across the year group there were 25 A\* grades and 40 A grades; however, according to the students' target grades, based on national statistical progress measures, this year group should have achieved 3 A grades and no A\*s grades. Consequently our students were able to access some places in the top universities thanks to this high quality teaching and support at St Peter's.



Our exam analysis at KS4 also showed some interesting outcomes for our most able students in Year 11, particularly in comparison with selective schools. We identified our top students (on intake in Year 7) – those who might be eligible for entry to a grammar school. In this group more students, proportionately, achieved the better GCSE grades than the average of the results as published by our four local grammar schools. They achieved a rate of 98% for students achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grades A\*-C including English and mathematics. For St Peter's more able students this measure was 100%.

Another important measure is the average point score per student (when each grade is given a score and added up and then averaged across the students). Last year the average point scores (APS) from local grammar schools ranged from 406 to 422. We do not have the figures for this year, but at St Peter's the APS was 425. That would suggest students, on average our more able students achieved half a grade better than similar students in the best of the local grammar schools.

#### **NEW STAFF**

We welcome all our new colleagues joining us this September:

Mr Birdsmith Mathematics	Mrs Lesbirel Teaching Assistant (Primary)
Mr Brown English	Mrs Lovell Teaching Assistant
Mrs Buchanan Admissions Officer	Dr Montes Science
Miss Dhoot Primary Class Teacher	Mr O'Shea Mathematics
Miss Croucher Teaching Assistant	Miss Read Science
Miss Dridge Science	Mr Riggs Teaching Assistant (Primary)
Miss Dunnigan Iford Office Assistant	Miss Sibson PE
Miss Elsworth Pastoral Support Worker	Miss Southcombe RE
Mr France RE	Miss Warriner Dance/ Drama
Mr Hall Subject Leader of History	Miss West MFL
Mrs Henwood Primary Class Teacher	Mr White History
Mr Jelitko Music	Mrs Willcocks First Aid

We sadly say farewell to a long standing science technician who has worked at Iford for 15 years. Mrs Lisa Stuart is leaving St Peter's for a full-time post in a veterinary surgery. We wish her every happiness – although they do say you should never work with animals or children!

#### **TOUCHING HEARTS**

Our staff day in September included a presentation and reflection from me about the life and philosophy of St John Baptist de La Salle. De La Salle described the mission of his 'associates and brothers' as work "that requires you to **touch hearts**." Education in a Catholic School and certainly at St Peter's is about "bringing children to Salvation". De La Salle made it clear, however, that we do not perform and achieve this mission by our own efforts but by being open to "the Spirit of God."

As an example of this, we were joined by three very brave students from Year 9 who have been part of the latest 'Rainbows' group here at St Peter's. Their witness was received with great admiration. 'Rainbows' was originally conceived as a way of supporting primary age children who had been bereaved. Over twenty years ago, St Peter's was the first secondary school to provide the programme amended for secondary age students. The Rainbows programme allows students who have struggled with the death of a family member or indeed any kind of separation to share their feelings and provide support for each other with adult leaders. The adults are made up of trained volunteers mainly from the staff – both teaching and associate – who attend the twelve week programme for one evening a week.

These three impressive students stood on the stage of the Southbourne theatre before the entire staff and spoke about how 'Rainbows' has supported them and helped them come to terms with some difficult experiences in their lives. They expressed, from the heart, how their lives had changed and how they had found a degree of salvation from the kindness of others. The assembled 200 strong staff body were spellbound. Here was an example like no other, that the work of St Peter's is more than just getting grades (which we do very well), but it is fundamentally about **touching hearts**.

"Pray to him to give you today the same grace he gave the holy apostles, and ask him that, after filling you with his Holy Spirit, he will also communicate himself to you in order to procure the salvation of others". *De La Salle*

Please continue to pray for the work of the school, that the Holy Spirit inspires, guides and sustains our staff and students that we might continue to touch hearts and become the best we can be.

Yours sincerely



Mr DJ Todd  
Headteacher