

Dear Parent and Carers,

The school year is now well under way and I would like to provide you with an update on our developments.

BUILDING DEVELOPMENTS

The new building at Southbourne is due to commence this week with the removal of some trees and the creation of an additional gate to the lower field. Next week the contractors will start bringing their equipment on site and their compound will be set up during the half term holiday. By Christmas we should see the overall shape of the building set up in steel and the new 'multi-use games area' will be well under way.

By September 2016 we should have a new block of classrooms, two new science labs, a hall, dining area and PE changing rooms on the Southbourne site so that we can relocate years 7 and 8 from Iford. In addition to the new building there are major refurbishments planned for other parts of the school, notably in the existing dining area and the Design & Technology workshops. We will be taking advantage of the lack of Year 11 and 13 students to re-room lessons at Southbourne to allow this refurbishment to take place.

It had been our intention to complete these operations in two stages, by ensuring that the new building at Southbourne was completed by Easter 2016. Unfortunately due to delays with planning and procurement the time line for the project has been much reduced.

It is a matter of complex logistics as we will need to transfer all our resources and furniture to the Southbourne site ready for September, so that the classrooms at Iford can then be refurbished for the expanding primary phase.

We are currently considering the option of closing the school for years 7 and 8 only, two days early at the end of the summer term to enable this operation to happen. We hope to obtain permission to do this soon and I will write again when we know what is happening.

OPEN EVENINGS

We have had four very successful open evenings this term – two for year 6 parents considering their secondary choices and one each for the Sixth Form and Reception. The evenings were extremely well attended and the feedback from our visitors was very positive.



The stars of the secondary phase evenings were, without doubt, the students. Large numbers of them turned out to assist in subject areas and by guiding the parents and students around the site. Parents also praised the evident enthusiasm, care and commitment of the staff.



We were able to share with prospective parents and students the impact of our strategies to improve teaching and learning and our Positive Behaviour for Learning programme. Our KS4 results and our A level achievements have shown marked improvements and less variation between subject areas. Attendance for our Year 7 intake was up 10% with around 800 visitors.



PTA QUIZ NIGHT



Sixteen teams competed for the highly prized St Peter's Quiz Night winners on Friday 2 October at Iford. It was a highly organized, professionally delivered quiz courtesy of Mrs Green and ably managed by Mrs Ede and Mrs Daly, supplemented by a fish and chip supper. Our thanks go to the PTA committee, especially Mrs James and Mrs Vaughn-Thomas.



The winning team:



Staff teams came in at a respectful middle ranking, with the science department once again beating the senior leadership team. Our Sixth Formers achieved a creditable result too.

The evening was entertaining as well as challenging – more than just your run-of-the-mill quiz event and a great way to meet other parents. The next PTA quiz is being planned for the spring term and is open to all parents and friends of St Peter's.

PUBLIC EXAMINATION ANALYSIS

We have received the annual analysis of results across all Bournemouth Schools and St Peter's features third in the Borough for most of the measures. Both for the EBacc and the Five A*-C including English and Maths scores, St Peter's is in third place below the two grammar schools. For 'A' level, we have the top grades for all non-selective schools with 41% of results at A* to B grades.

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.

OUR NEW SCHOOL INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Over the summer holidays the school changed its information and data system from a product called 'Facility' to 'SIMS'. The process was lengthy and technologically intricate. Until we had everyone back in September we did not discover all the teething issues, which have now been resolved. Parents are now / will soon be able to access information about their own children through a programme called 'SIMS Learning Gateway'. Parents can also check online whether or not the contact and personal details we hold are accurate.

OUR NEW VISION STATEMENT

During the last academic year Governors consulted with staff and students regarding the composition of a Vision Statement which sets out the aspirations of St Peter's for the students and the staff. The final document is included below. We are committed to making this vision a reality for all.

The Vision

St Peter's School is proud of its history and its heart. We are a Catholic School in the Diocese of Portsmouth, founded on the life, teaching and example of Jesus and the 350 year tradition of De La Salle education.

The School works tirelessly to provide a safe, supportive and spiritual environment, in order that its young people and staff thrive and become the people God wants them to be, where all our brothers and sisters love to learn and learn to love.

'With Christ as our guide, learning together, loving God and each other, becoming the best we can be'

St Peter's is a school where young people...

1. Continually develop their personal relationship with God
2. Respect, appreciate and care for others within and beyond their community
3. Are independent and collaborative learners
4. Develop their knowledge, understanding, skills, creativity and imagination
5. Are inquisitive, ambitious and excel in all that they do
6. *Do* their best and aspire to *be* their best
7. Are persistent, not afraid to make mistakes and learn from them
8. Are actively involved in their lessons so, in class, they work even harder than their teachers

St Peter's is a school where staff...

1. Appreciate that their role is a vocation and they are passionate about touching and winning the hearts of the young people, recognising the Christ within them
2. Create a safe, supportive and spiritual environment
3. Develop professionally and have the opportunity to develop spiritually
4. Enable young people to be prepared for learning and for life beyond school
5. Encourage great aspirations
6. Plan and teach engaging lessons that effect deep learning and thus exceptional progress for every young person

UNIFORM

We are very grateful to parents for their support in upholding high standards in the school dress code. The majority of our students arrive at school looking smart and ready for business and remain that way throughout the day. One or two need some gentle reminders, especially boys to tuck in their shirts and girls to roll down the skirts to an appropriate length. We would welcome parents reminding girls in particular to maintain their dignity and decorum by ensuring that skirt lengths are just above the knee, two or three inches at the most. Anything higher becomes inappropriate for a secondary school uniform. To this end we have also invested in some long skirts of varying waist sizes for girls whose skirts cannot be rolled down to an appropriate length. If skirts are deemed to be too short, girls will be given a skirt of a more suitable length to wear for the day. We will then ask parents to adjust the hem or purchase a longer skirt for regular use. This new approach will commence from the 19th October 2015. Should any parent have any concerns about our planned initiative please let me know.

We would ask you to keep an eye on fingernails! Some girls have come to school with colourful false nails that protrude significantly and sharply beyond the end of the finger. Nail colour contravenes the uniform code and their length is potentially dangerous. Please note: nails should be natural in colour and kept reasonably short. When picked up by staff, students will be asked to remove false nails by the following school day.

BIKES AT SOUTHBOURNE

Another plea for students to bring in a D-lock to secure their bikes at the front of the school: we continue to suffer opportune thefts during the school day when students use a simple chain to lock their bikes. In the new build there be new cycle shelters away from surrounding roads, but for the time being our bikes – despite being under the gaze of security cameras are vulnerable.

NEW GOVERNORS POLICY ON DRUGS

Please note that St Peter's Governing Body has approved a new policy on drugs and the associated school sanctions. Governors are promoting a zero tolerance approach, whereby any possession of illegal substances or any paraphernalia used with them (such as a bong or grinder) will result in permanent exclusion of the student(s) involved. The policy covers the whole of the school day and the journey to and from school or during any extra-curricular activity beyond the school day. The policy includes other substances commonly termed 'legal highs' and items such as nitrous oxide. The policy applies to all students at St Peter's, including the Sixth Form. Copies of the policy can be found on the school website.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "DJ Todd". The letters are cursive and fluid, with the "D" and "J" being particularly large and stylized.

Mr D J Todd
Headteacher