



December 2016

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s),

Each term always seems to pass more quickly than the one before and it's hard to believe how close to Christmas it is.

At the start of this term, we launched our vision statement:

Our vision is to ensure all our students achieve a good career through university or equivalent training. Our high aspirations combine the key strands of strong achievement, employability skills and consideration towards others which is summed up in our motto 'work hard be kind. These principles, which guide our school community, enable our students to reach this goal and be well rounded citizens who are highly desired by higher education and employers.

As part of this vision we are developing a 7 year careers programme and our year 7 and 8 students will return to the employability skills as they make new choices for their enrichment activities in the Spring term. All year groups will also have a focus on careers and choices as part of their PSHCE programme in the Spring and Summer term.

Our year 7 students have made a really positive start to their secondary school careers and staff have been very complimentary about their learning focus in lessons. Our year 9 students have also been extremely focused during their assessment week and recognised for their excellent conduct during all assessments. Year 8 also continue to make good progress and their year 7 experience is serving them well as they start to prepare for their assessment week in January.

During this term we also said a temporary goodbye to Mrs Douglas in science as she started her maternity leave and welcomed Mrs Mortimer who will be covering for her.

Our students and staff have managed to fit in a great deal of learning, progress and fun during the Autumn term and this newsletter should give you a flavour of some of the activities they've been involved in. Please note that we have a variety of activities planned for the last week of this term which are detailed towards the end of the newsletter.

We are so proud of all of the achievements of our students and wish them all and yourselves a well deserved rest over the holiday.

With best wishes for a happy Christmas and a prosperous new year,

Mrs J Brown



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Curriculum News

Spanish

Students in all year groups have been working hard to master memorisation techniques for Spanish vocabulary and verb stars. So many students have got into fantastic routines of practising vocabulary and verb stars little and often using a variety of strategies including flash cards, highlighting the easy, medium and difficult words, testing each other out loud and covering the words up and writing them out on whiteboards. A big well done to you all, it will really pay off in the long run!

Plans for the Year 9 trip to Castellón are well under way and we look forward to more details to follow about the trip.

Miss Tervit & Mrs Barratt

Music

Two pupils: Matthew Baggaley (yr 8) and Ellie Stainsby-Grenville (yr 7) participated in the Sing City competition this term. Both pupils had to perform two songs to win their chance of performing at either the Nottingham Albert Hall or the Royal Concert Hall. There were 11 people in the final with two places for each venue. This was a great competition and the standard was so high this year! I am delighted to say that both pupils won and will be performing at Nottingham Albert Hall!! They both performed amazingly and with such confidence!

Our choir are also participating in the 'Christmas in the City' event at the Royal Concert Hall where a number of choirs and orchestras perform together to get us all in a festive mood.

Miss Wilson

Philosophy and Ethics

This term our full course GCSE students had the privilege of two guest speakers from our local Muslim community. Kashif Salim and Muhammad Yaseen both came to visit classes at the Nottingham Free School to share their experiences of Hajj with the students. This was a hugely valuable experience for students and they were able to gain a real insight into the physical and spiritual journey to Mecca. A massive thank you to Kashif and Muhammad for their time and efforts to work with us.

Mrs Inglis

PSHE

Year 9 students took part in a First Aid workshop led by the British Red Cross in November. They learned valuable skills and knowledge on how to treat minor injuries and the importance of not just being a bystander. Emma, our provider from the British Red Cross will be back in the New Year to teach our pupils about CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) and emergency situations.

Mrs Wilken

PE

We have taken part in so many sporting fixtures this term, many of which can be seen in the news items on the school website. Here are two more:

Year 7 Friendly against NUSA.

The Year 7 Boys football team competed in a friendly against NUSA in which they won 2-0 with goals coming from Archie Brown and Josh Pryer. The students played a great game and showed good character and form throughout. We are all hoping this is the start of great things for the Year 7 Boys football team.

Year 9 Indoor Cricket League.

The Year 9 boys competed in the Nottingham Schools Indoor Cricket League on the 17th of November. They played their final game against Nottingham Academy who were a tough opponent. It would be fair to say that Nottingham Academy were bowled over with our standard of play throughout the game. We hit them for six to be crowned as the Champions of the tournament. Another well deserved win for Nottingham Free School.



Nottingham Free School PE Department has gone Viral! Follow us on twitter today @NFS_PE for all of our updates on fixtures, homework, success stories and much more.

Mrs Singleton-Jones & Mr Coppack



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PE Kit

Please can I ask you to support your child/children in ensuring they have the correct PE kit for all PE lessons. Following a number of incidents of forgotten and/or incorrect kit, I would like to take this opportunity to remind you of the expectations for the PE kit at Nottingham Free School.

All students are expected to bring appropriate kit to all PE lessons. They should pay careful attention to which activities they will be participating in as different activities require different pieces of kit. This information is available both outside the PE office on the notice board, as well as on the school website.

Boys

- **PE Shirt:** Plain navy blue polo top with collar and official logo.
- **Rugby shirt:** Navy blue rugby shirt with collar and official logo.
- **Shorts:** Navy blue shorts must be brought to all lessons.
- **Training trousers:** Plain black/navy - the wearing of training trousers will depend on the activity and the weather conditions and will be at the teachers' discretion.
- **Socks:** Blue football socks (**outside lessons**)/white ankle socks (**inside lessons**) depending on activity.
- **Footwear:** Trainers (non-marking soles) suitable for sport with ankle support/football boots. NB: Plimsolls are not appropriate i.e. vans/converse.
- **Other: Navy or Black 'skin' tops, woolly hats and gloves** (where this is appropriate for the activity) can be worn in colder weather, shin pads, mouth guard (optional but recommended).

Girls

- **PE Shirt:** Plain navy blue polo top with collar and official logo.
- **Shorts:** Navy blue - shorts must be brought to all lessons.
- **Training trousers:** Plain black/navy - the wearing of training trousers will depend on the activity and the weather conditions and will be at the teachers' discretion.
- **Fleece:** Navy blue with official logo.
- **Socks:** Blue football socks (**outside lessons**)/white ankle socks (**inside lessons**) depending on activity.
- **Footwear:** Trainers (non-marking soles suitable for sport) with ankle support/football boots. NB: Plimsolls are not appropriate i.e. vans/converse.
- **Other: Navy or Black 'skin' tops, woolly hats and gloves** (where this is appropriate for the activity) can be worn in colder weather, shin pads, mouth guard (optional but recommended).



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Students are made aware of the department's expectations on kit at the start of each term/unit.

- All students will also need a carrying bag for their PE kit and a plastic bag is recommended for carrying dirty boots.
- Except in the case of **serious** injury, all students are expected to come to PE lessons prepared to take part in some physical activity. If students have minor ailments they should bring a note from home explaining this and **still bring their kit** to take part appropriately.
- Students who fail to bring appropriate PE kit for their lesson will be provided with clean garments to ensure full participation in the lesson.
- Students are aware that a missing kit will result in a break time detention.

There has recently been a prevalence of students not changing their socks from the ones worn for school, for PE lessons. For hygiene reasons, socks should be changed for **every** PE lesson. As stated above, these should be **blue** football socks for winter outdoor activities and **white** ankle socks for most indoor lessons as well as summer outdoor activities.

Thank you for your continued support with upholding these expectations.

Mrs Singleton-Jones
Lead Teacher of PE

Enrichment

We have enjoyed starting some new ventures with enrichment at the Free School this term. In year 7 and 8 the drama group have had the pleasure of working with Sooree Pillay from the New Art Exchange. The group have all worked on a script which has been put together for performance at the Christmas concert. I saw a sneak preview this week. It looks great. Choir, Orchestra and LAMDA have also been working hard on their performances for the Christmas concert which we hope you will be able to attend. The charity group have shown great entrepreneurial skills in organising two charity events so far this year. The Macmillan bake sale was the biggest yet and even had candy floss. A huge thank you to Gurkipa Swali's family for coming in to school and helping us with this. The charity group also packed and sent off 17 boxes for the 'Link to Hope charity who provide Christmas boxes for families and for the elderly.

Year 9 have been enjoying their new enrichment lessons. The Duke of Edinburgh group have been working hard planning their Bronze award and students have worked really hard towards other qualifications such as the sports leaders, CREST award and the ECDL. In particular I would like to congratulate a number of students who have recently passed their Level 1 in Health Awareness. Some of these



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students also visited Haydn Primary recently to deliver presentations to year 6 students about healthy eating and physical fitness. This is a real achievement on their part and we are really proud of their hard work and resilience. Assemblies can be a bit daunting for the most experienced teachers, let alone doing it when you are in Y9 to 60 students you don't know! This demonstrates the employability skills of self-assurance and cooperation, both highly valued by employers.

Our World Issues group have also been gaining some really valuable experience from Nottingham University students who are part of a group called Debatemate. They have been focussing in particular on developing arguments and using evidence to back up and develop their arguments. Apologies if your child is taking part in this enrichment lesson and has become increasingly argumentative at home - we promise that this is a valuable and transferable GCSE and employment skill!

Thank you to all of the staff and external providers from our wider community who continue to make the enrichment programme at Nottingham Free School so successful. I have only been able to mention a few classes above but all of the classes and teachers/providers have been fabulous this term.

Mrs Inglis

Here is a little more detail from two of our enrichment groups:

Drama

Students in Drama Enrichment have been working in collaboration with Sooree Pillay at the New Art Exchange in Nottingham this term to create a short piece of ensemble theatre work. Participating in workshops, group exercises, writing activities and more, the students have worked hard to create a thought provoking piece of theatre that explores how individuals feel around the festive period and how inclusion, friendship and togetherness is so important in communities at all times. Exploring various drama skills in the form of improvisation, voice and movement work, as well as whole group ensemble work, the students are really looking forward to presenting their work at the Christmas Concert this year. Furthermore, our links with the New Art Exchange will continue after Christmas when their partnership project with Zeroplus Theatre 'My Grandad and I' will be performed in school.

Mrs Clarke



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KS3 enrichment Creative Arts:

The year 7 & 8 students have been getting creative after school on Wednesdays learning about a range of artists and creating various works. They have made wire and mod roc people inspired by artist Giacometti and have also created pieces based on classical music inspired by Kandinsky learning to turn music into art! In the last two weeks they have been creating layered winter pieces inspired by British artist Angie Lewin which will hopefully make some lovely Christmas cards.

Mrs Wilken

Student Council

Our student council have been hard at work on some of key projects including planning fundraising events for Children in Need on Friday 18th November and gathering feedback from their tutor sets regarding mental health awareness in school and teaching and learning strategies. In particular, they have been gathering student voice about our new 'no hands up' policy for answering questions in class. Some focus groups and the Executive Council are planning to meet Mrs Brown to discuss these initiatives and the council are hoping to then put together a mental health awareness leaflet for students as well as suggest some ideas for questioning in lessons. Watch this space!

Miss Tervit

Attendance

Good levels of attendance at school are vital for every student. We aim for all students to have at least 98% attendance. If your child is ill please ring the school reception, preferably before school starts. Please try to avoid making medical appointments during the school day, but be aware that your child's attendance will be affected if they miss their register mark at 8.15am or 1.20pm. Appointments made in between these times will not affect their attendance. If you request any time off school for any other reason you must complete a leave of absence form, available from reception or on the school website. Please note that we do not authorise any holidays taken in term time and you may receive a fine. Our term time dates are all on the school website.

In order to reward students with an attendance of 98% or more, we have introduced a new challenge; each half term, students are given a token if their attendance to date is at least 98% which can be exchanged for free items. The more tokens that are saved, the bigger the reward!

Study support

All year 7 and 8 students have been given their revision information pack and will be using study support time to complete revision tasks. All information is on our school website under the study support tab.



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Communication home

We have been trialling using email and text messaging to communicate with parents/carers rather than relying on paper copies of letters to get home. All letters and newsletters are also available on our school website (under the information tab) and all student reports will now only be uploaded onto Insight (paper copies will only be provided on request).

It is vital that you let us know your most recent mobile number and email address. If you have not received any messages via text or email, please let us know and whether you need your Insight log in details again. All contact with school for general enquiries can be dealt with through contact@nottinghamfreeschool.co.uk

Christmas Activities

During the last week of this term, we have a variety of activities for students:

Tuesday 13th December - Christmas in the City – Royal Concert Hall

The school choir will be taking part in the annual concert run by the Nottingham Music Hub. The concert runs from 7pm until 9.30pm. Tickets are available on; <https://trch.co.uk/whats-on/christmas-in-the-city/> and are priced at £6.

Wednesday 14th December – Nottingham Theatre Royal Pantomime

On **Wednesday 14th December** we will be taking a large number of students to see the pantomime 'Jack and the Beanstalk' at The Theatre Royal. We shall be leaving school at approximately 12:30pm, travelling to the Theatre Royal by Sharpes Coach Company. We shall return to school at approximately 5pm, although this may be slightly later depending on traffic. We have arranged for the school bus to take those students using this service at this slightly later time.

Please email Mrs Dunthorne at JDunthorne@nottinghamfreeschool.co.uk if you would like any further information about this event.

Thursday 15th December – Christmas Medley Performance

The school music and drama groups will be performing a medley of Christmas songs and acts at an evening performance commencing at 6:30pm. If you would like to reserve tickets then please email: contact@nottinghamfreeschool.co.uk stating your child's name and the number of tickets required. There will be a maximum allocation of 3 tickets per family due to the limited space we have available and they will be distributed on a first come first served basis and are free of charge. The school charity group will be serving refreshments and running a raffle. All proceeds will be donated to the Nottingham Refugee Forum. Any contributions to the raffle will be gratefully received.



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Students will also participate in an achievement assembly, where a variety of their achievements over the term are celebrated and the afternoon will comprise of a reward activity for the winning house from this term and tutor activities for all other houses.

Friday 16th December – Wear Your Christmas Jumper Day, Christmas Dinner and Last Day of Term

Students are invited to wear a Christmas jumper to school on **Friday 16th December** for a voluntary donation of £1 towards the valuable work of 'Save the Children', 'Macmillan' and 'Make a Wish'. This jumper should just replace their normal school jumper, with the rest of the school uniform being worn as usual. This is in conjunction with the national event of wearing a Christmas jumper day which is taking place after we break up for the Christmas holiday.

Christmas dinner will be served during a slightly extended lunchtime, with vegetarian and halal options available.

Future key dates

9/1/2017	First day back for all students
11/1/2017	Year 8 parent's evening
16/1/2017	Year 7 assessment week begins
23/1/2017	Year 8 assessment week begins
13/2/2017	Start of February half term
20/2/2017	First day back after half term
22/2/2017	Parent's forum meeting on mental health and well-being
7/3/2017	Year 8 options evening
21/3/2017	Tutor Review day – school will only be open for individual appointments with your child's tutor