

Weekly Update – 29th November

Parent Council

A reminder that our next Parent Council meeting will be held from 7- 8.30pm on Wednesday 4 December in the school library. All are welcome!

OSIRIS Professional Learning

This week a second group of teachers successfully completed the OSIRIS Outstanding Teaching Programme. Donna Epton (Science), Natalie Griffin (Art), Joni Hare (PE), David McCreath (Geography), Craig Kellagher (Maths), Karen Sladen (FTT), Darren Smith (PE), Coleen Thornton (RMPS), Claire Wilson (RMPS) and Janet Young (Maths) all embarked on the programme in January and shared their achievements at an inspiring celebration event this week. The programme focuses on three key learning and teaching themes - engagement, challenge and feedback - and involves teachers filming their lessons and discussing what they see with an experienced trainer from OSIRIS. We are pleased to say that everyone who took part thoroughly enjoyed the experience and are looking forward to continuing to experiment with lots of new ideas in their lessons. We are all very proud of the team's achievements and look forward to welcoming a third group of teachers to the OSIRIS programme next June.



S4, S5, S6 Invitational Parent Night 5 December (4:30pm-7:00pm)

As part of our aim to support our young people in S4, S5 and S6 achieve their best, we have asked our teaching staff to reflect on young people who might not currently be on target to reach their potential within a subject area. We have invited the parents/carers of these pupils for an additional parent/carer evening on the above date. Parents/Carers who have been invited should have received a text and email alerting them to this. Letters detailing the courses concerned have been distributed to pupils via Key Adult Classes.

Feedback from last session tells us that this additional parent/carer evening was very well received. Comments included that it gave confidence a boost, made it clearer what was required, helped to understand what kind of work was useful for revising, helped with organisation and planning and brought a sharper focus to revision.

The consultation will be longer than usual in most subject areas and will very much focus on best ways to support learning and moving things forward. Due to the nature of the consultation, we are unable to extend the invitation to subjects other than the ones contained in the letter.

If you have not received notification of this parent evening, you can assume that the teachers are happy with your young person's progress and they simply need to keep working hard and follow the strategies for success contained in their reports.

Project Trust Concert

Well done to Callum Poole in S6 who organised a fantastic concert in school yesterday evening to raise money for Project Trust. Around 90 people enjoyed a varied programme of musical items and also had the chance to stock up on Christmas cards and handmade decorations. Approximately £900 was raised – well done to all involved!

Beats & Bass Music Trip

On Tuesday 26th November a group of 17 S4-S6 Music pupils and Mr Cuthbertson attended a workshop given by Steve White (drums) and Lorna Thomas (bass) at James Gillespie's High School. Steve has played with Paul Weller and The Style Council (including Live Aid at Wembley Stadium), with Lorna playing bass for Tom Jones, Eddie Reader and Mumford & Sons amongst many others. As well as performing Steve and Lorna gave great advice on practice and playing in bands among other things. Finlay Mayers (S6) and Felix Findlay (S4) also got up to perform with these musicians –a fantastic opportunity for both and they represented Portobello well!



Psiphon Software on iPads

Our 1 to 1 iPad programme for pupils in S3 upwards is a great way to provide a richer, more engaging and creative way to learn across the curriculum. We are keen to ensure that pupils learn to use their iPads well and in a responsible way to support their learning, organisation and also their own hobbies and interests.

We have recently become aware that a significant number of pupils have installed the *Psiphon* app on their iPads. This app allows pupils to circumvent our filters and is not a responsible use of the iPads. We have contacted all the pupils concerned and requested that they remove the app immediately. It would be appreciated if you could have a conversation with your young person and ensure that they do not have the app installed.