



October 2009 News Bulletin

Dear Parent/Guardian

It is my pleasure to report that we have had another record breaking set of examination results.

The 'A' level pass rate has risen from 97% in 2008 to 99%. It is in the proportion of top grades that the improvement has been most marked, with more than 43% of all grades this year being As or Bs; an 8% improvement on last year.

Seventeen students achieved at least 3 A grades and five of those achieved the new A* grade in the extended project. Four students, Matthew Jackson, Phoebe Juggins, Jonathon Kram and Emily Stout gained their places at Cambridge, while Annelise Anderson and Naomi Harbottle took up places at Oxford. A further three students, Katie Best, Aishah Latif and Chandri Begum are to study medicine.

At GCSE we have improved on last year's record by achieving a 5 A/C pass rate of 78%. The pass rate including English and Maths stands at 59%. We fully expect these pass rates to increase slightly when all the remarks are taken into consideration.

The results achieved this year were superb and testimony to the hard work of all the students and staff. I would also like to thank the parents for the care and support offered during the examinations period. All in all a good team effort!

Another exciting development is that work has started on our all weather sports pitch. If the construction company keeps to schedule we will have a facility ready for use by the end of November. The second phase/sports hall of the High School development is scheduled to begin in December.

We have had a tremendous start to the year and as always thank you for all your support and help.

Yours sincerely

Hugh Robinson
Principal

APPOINTMENTS WITH STAFF

If you need to speak to a member of staff please telephone and make an appointment to meet them in person. **PLEASE DON'T JUST TURN UP UNANNOUNCED EXPECTING TO HAVE A MEETING. STAFF WON'T BE AVAILABLE!**

PARKING

As building work has now commenced parking places are **VERY** limited. Please be aware that you may have to find alternative parking when visiting. Please **don't** park in a disabled bay without the necessary permit!

Exam Information

Enclosed with this newsletter is information regarding the completion of Controlled Assessments and Coursework. There is also a notice regarding exam regulations. Please pass these on to your children and ask them to read them thoroughly. They are very important and this is **vital information** that all students should be aware of.

There are two exam seasons coming up.

- The November season runs from the 5th to the 13th of November. This is for Maths GCSE modules and Maths and English GCSE resits.
- The January season runs from 11th of January to the 3rd of February. This is for some AS and A2 units. There are also Science and other GCSE modules.

Year 9s are not involved in either season but they need to read the notices as they will need this information in the future.

If your child has an exam they will be issued with an exam timetable which they must keep as it shows the date, time and venue of their exam. Please stress the importance of punctuality and also being fully equipped for the exam they are taking. If a student arrives late they may not be able to take the exam. If your child is ill that day, please inform the school as soon as possible.

Please make particular note of the rule regarding mobile phones, ipods etc. It is advised that they are not brought into exams at all and should be left at home. If students must bring them they must be switched off with alarms disabled and left in their bag or handed in to the Invigilator.

Under no circumstances should a student have a mobile phone or electronic device in their pocket during an exam. If they are discovered with a phone, or any other device, they risk losing marks or disqualification from the exam.

We hope you will support us by stressing the importance of these rules with your child.

PRAISE : REWARDS

Congratulations to all our students in Years 10 & 11 (and 12) who last year surpassed our previous record for gaining certificates! In Year 11 over 355,422 stamps were issued and that in 2 terms and 2 weeks and 587,102 to Year 10 and 706,539 to Year 9 so a big thank you and well done to staff for all that stamping. A grand total of 1,649,063 stamps, so well done to all main school students 08-09!

PRAISE CODE PRIZE WINNERS 2008/9

Congratulations to Frances Leigh, Rachel Tasker and Gareth Man who were the top 'stamp collectors' in 2008-9.

Well done to all our students who attended the Lightwater Valley day as a reward for achieving their targets last year. Congratulations on working hard to earn the reward.



Holidays

As many of our GCSE courses now involve a controlled assessment which must be undertaken in school under (in some cases) strict conditions we request that parents do not request that we allow students be granted holiday leave in term time.

As well as controlled assessments many students will have modular exams at various points throughout the year.

POST-16 NEWS

UCAS season has started, with most of our Year 13 students busily working on their applications. Twenty-two students are busier than most at present, as their applications for Oxbridge, dentistry or medicine have a mid October deadline. Many have been inspired to apply to either Oxford or Cambridge after some successful open day visits were arranged in the summer term and at the beginning of September.

This summer's results were a great success, with an increase of 2% in the pass rate to 99% and a steady improvement in the proportion of A and B grades to over 43%. All of the Oxbridge and medicine candidates were successful in gaining their places and most of our other students were accepted onto their first or insurance choices of course. There was a tangible atmosphere of celebration at the Sixth Form Prom, held on the Friday evening after the results came out, at the Gosforth Marriott Hotel.

The continuation of the Extended Project Qualification for another year has once again proven to be a real success, with most of the students gaining at least an A grade and many gaining the new A* grade, which has been introduced in this qualification first, before being rolled out to all A Levels in the summer of 2010. It will be interesting to see how many of our Year 13 reach this new 'gold standard'.

The popularity of Gosforth High as a Sixth Form continues to grow, with many of our new Year 12 coming to us from other schools in the area, attracted by the range of courses we have to offer, the flexibility of our timetable and the academic standards achieved. We would like to take the opportunity to welcome them to the school, as well as our old Year 11 students into the Sixth Form.

Sixth Formers continue to serve the community in a number of ways. The very successful Hoppings School ran again this summer, with many of our Sixth Formers volunteering to teach the children who arrive with the annual funfair. We also continue to help out in school with the SEN department through the paired reading scheme with younger students. Recently the charity committee ran a very successful cake bake sale, with all proceeds going to their ongoing commitment to the Oxfam Unwrapped scheme. In July a large number of volunteers, including staff, completed a ten mile route march from Boulmer to Embleton, led by Steve Evans, in order to raise money for charity.

The high point of the trip was eating lunch in the sunshine at Craster.

The debating society is going from strength to strength and, at the time of writing, is due to play host to a number of teams from other schools in an annual debating competition.

There have been many individual success stories among our students. Year 12 student, Lewis Wiseman-Ord is one to watch out for in the 2012 Olympic Games. Lewis is a keen swimmer and recently participated in the UK School Games in Wales. He achieved a personal best in the 400m Individual Medley, with a time of 4 minutes and 39.52 seconds. He also won the silver medal in this event, a big achievement for him as he was not at his usual level of fitness. Lewis is also the fastest in his age group in the 1500 metres and has won a swimming scholarship. There are a number of challenges ahead for Lewis, who trains at least ten times a week at the City Pool. Next year he will compete in the trials for the Commonwealth Games, and hopes to get into the top two in his event in order to secure a place in the championship. He is also a member of the England Open Water Talent Programme, one of the toughest swimming events that often involves watery hazards such as jelly fish, huge waves and even fights with other competitors! Ze-Shaan Ahmad in Year 13 has been selected as one of only ten students from the whole of the North East region to benefit from a £500 Nuffield science bursary, awarded as the result of his work on a research project for five weeks this summer. Ze-Shaan, who investigated air pollution, was presented with a certificate to mark his achievement at an award ceremony at Newcastle College in September.

Staff news includes congratulations to Post 16 Tutors Gillian Bradley and Janet Deavin who have both had baby girls. Gillian and Janet rejoin us in January and couldn't have timed their returns better - both now want to work part time so will be able to job share with each other. Congratulations also go to another Post 16 Tutor, Rachel Short, who got married on 30th September and will now be called Rachel Orr. Finally, there are two new members of the Post 16 Team, Pamela Styles, who has joined us as a Post 16 Tutor and Karen Blackburn, who is the new Director of Post 16.

Work Experience

Year 11 students

Work Experience for year 11 students will take place between the **8th February and 12th February 2010**. Connexions have organised a limited number of places on behalf of the school and students are being encouraged to show their interest by registering on line at **www.work-experience-tw.co.uk** via a username and password issued by the work experience coordinator, Mr S DAVISON. As a parent/carer you will be required to authorise your child's inclusion in this part of the curriculum and complete all the necessary documentation by the **6th November 2009**. Following this date no new applications will be able to be processed. Due to the limited number of places available it may be in your interest to organise a **personal placement** thereby avoiding any disappointment should your son/daughter not be successful in obtaining a placement organised via Connexions.

Journeys to school

We are currently revising the School Travel Plan which monitors the way that students make their journeys to and from school, detects any difficulties and seeks to address them with the traffic authorities.

There will be assemblies for all years concerning the proposed changes to traffic management in Gosforth and students will be encouraged to get involved in the consultation process. Many parents and carers have raised concerns about the traffic management around the school or students' journeys in the past and we are keen to hear from you now in order to improve the situation.

Please contact me by email: admin@gosforthhigh.newcastle.sch.uk subject marked as School Travel Plan or write to Simon Richards at the school address. Please indicate which year group your child is in at present.

For details of the proposed traffic changes in Gosforth go to www.newcastle.gov.uk/gti

Congratulations to Gosforth High School post 16 students who progressed to the regional final of the national Debating Matters competition.

Annie Corcoran, Joe Collerton, Gloria Young, Aisling Crane and Levi Freeman beat off competition from Queen Elizabeth 6th form college Darlington, Newcastle Church High school for girls and Whickham Comprehensive during an intense evening of competition. Debate results were as follows:

Round 1

Debate topic - Competitive boxing is beneficial to young people.

Result: Queen Elizabeth arguing for the motion beat Newcastle Church High.

Round 2

Debate Topic - It's undemocratic to treat the BNP differently from other political parties.

Result: Gosforth High arguing for the motion beat Whickham Comprehensive.

Final

Debate topic - Physician assisted suicide should remain illegal. Gosforth High arguing against the motion beat Queen Elizabeth 6th form College.

Regional final will take place during the spring.

Scholars Buses from Westerhope and Fenham (Services 117 and 118)

The bus companies have agreed to retime and reroute their buses to make it easier for students to arrive on time.

117 - MONDAY TO FRIDAY SCHOOLS DAYS ONLY

Fenham to Gosforth Central

Operated by Coopers Tourmaster
on behalf of Nexus

118 - MONDAY TO FRIDAY SCHOOLS DAYS ONLY

Westerhope to Gosforth Central

Operated by Go-North East (AM) & Coopers
Tourmaster Travel (PM) on behalf of Nexus

MAKE-UP

A significant number of female students have begun to wear excessive amounts of make-up. This goes against our school rules which states 'a reasonable amount of make-up'. We will ask students to remove excess using hypoallergenic wipes.

We are grateful for your support in this matter.

Recycle for Life - Recycle for a Future Recycle for St Oswald's Hospice

A paper recycling bank is now available at St Oswald's Hospice for public use. The bank is situated at the side of the gift shop - opposite the donation point and can be used to recycle newspapers, magazines, catalogues, telephone directories, direct mail and office papers.

The more paper we recycle through our bank the better for the environment and the better for St Oswald's, as for every tonne of paper we collect, our charity will receive £5.

Please spread the word and help make 2009 a greener year in our region.

Please see the School Attendance Procedures enclosed with this newsletter.