



‘Cardinal Pole Catholic School is a community of *service* guiding young people on a path to *opportunity*, *aspiration*, and *reward*, founded on Catholic values.’

HEADTEACHERS ONLINE PARENT FORUM

Friday 30th June 2023

Question: Strikes next week – how will year 11 prom still go ahead? Yes, it will, the two events under threat were the summer concert and Year 11 prom but we are pleased to say staff will be supporting the events regardless of industrial action.

Letters have gone out to all parents on the plans for students on these days - selected students will be in for years 9, 10 & 12 and they will be written to separately, all other students will be learning from home. It is day 8 now and the reason for action is that the Government said they would accept the independent review on pay but they are still yet to publish this. A leak has suggested that the offer is 6.5% however, of this pay rise the Government need to say how much of it they will fund. If they do not fund the totality then it will affect school budgets. It is also about individual pay but also about school budgets. All the retreats and events become more difficult to organise and subsidise with additional requirements being asked of from our budgets.

There is also a crisis nationally of the recruitment of teachers currently there are 7,000 vacancies for secondary school teachers. We, however, are fully staffed for September, both teaching and support staff. We are delighted by this. Some schools are asking teachers to teach outside of their subject specialism to fill vacancies but we are not.

Question: Year 8 have chosen GCSE options already; will their Year 9 exams count towards GCSEs?

No, the exams sat in Year 9 do not count towards GCSE it is only the GCSE content that is studied from September. Concerned a year of learning KS3 is lost. This model is an inherited one and we are looking to expand the KS3 in September 24. The reason for the two-year KS3 model was that the Education Secretary some years ago reformed the GCSE exams to be very content heavy and a higher level of challenge. Because of this many schools decided to give students an extra year of study and this has proved to be a successful model for Cardinal Pole. Ofsted reviewed our KS3 offer and were satisfied with this back in March. The extra year is used as a bridging year between the two key stages. English and RE do not start their content until Year 10 as they have more flexibility. Our extensive extra curricular offer supports KS3. To have a more detailed discussion on this, please contact Ms Connolly, Deputy Headteacher for curriculum and assessment before end of term.

Question: Year 7 son having AP2 exams this week, what are they for?

There are two assessment points in our school year, one in December and one in the summer. Lots of schools have assessments every few weeks but we prefer not to do this and therefore ours run for a whole week and are longer and more rigorous. During this time the students are very aspirational and work hard and then the next week is DIRT week which stands for Directed Improvement and Review Time which gives students and teachers to look at and discuss their exam papers. After this there is Rewards Week for trips etc. These exam results are sometimes used to put students into their SETs for some subjects. All follow up discussions can be had with form tutor, HOY etc.

This experience goes in part to learning what it will be like in Year 11 and the process/revision involved.

Question: Is there a new school blazer and will it be for all students?

No there is no new school blazer, there is a new school coat and this is optional. All current items can be continued to be used. The School Council worked with our uniform supplier on this new coat for our new Year 7s. The new coat is made by Regatta and is completely waterproof and costs less than £40 only a pound or two more than the previous coat. It has a built-in hood and the badge is now dark. Feedback from students on this new coat was extremely good they are very popular. There is a new PE kit also but again these will be for the new Year 7s you do not need to replace your current items.

Last Friday was the TES National Awards and we were nominated for Secondary School of the Year unfortunately we did not win but we did get down to the last 7. Tremendous work by staff, parents and students to achieve this.

We say goodbye today to our Year 11s at their Mass of Transition and assembly and Year 13 have their Leavers' celebration. Also.

Deputy Mayor Councillor Bramble will be visiting the school on Monday to see exactly what we do, she is a very good supporter of the school.

Social Media: Please follow us on Instagram, you may have seen our Windrush 75 celebration, we are currently having a huge mural going up in the playground by the students and a local artist. Which will be completed by the end of the school year.

Building works: Lots going on this year, a brand-new gym installed, two new classrooms for the sixth form, expansion of the changing rooms for PE.

Final Parent Forum on the 14th July – see you then!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Hall', written in a cursive style.

Mr A Hall
HEADTEACHER