

# SPOTLIGHT

SPROWSTON COMMUNITY HIGH SPECIALIST SCHOOL FOR PERFORMING ARTS AND MEDIA

ISSUE 8 JANUARY 2010

January brings the snow, makes our feet and fingers glow. – Sara Coleridge

## Dear Parents, Guardians and Carers,

As you might know I'm a big fan of NCFE and season ticket holder. What a pulsating game at Carrow Road on Saturday with a thrilling end to end encounter with some brilliant performances from individual players in front of 25,000 fans!

The win on Saturday took Norwich City to the top of the division, which is a marvellous achievement considering that six months ago the team were in the relegation zone.

Courage and tenacity are exactly the same traits we all need, especially when important decisions have to be taken in regard to University destinations after the sixth form studies or choices Year 9 students have to make for their GCSES...

'Thank you' for your excellent contribution to the success of your child's future prospects...whatever they might be. Have a good fortnight! — On The Ball City!

Best Wishes

**Andrew John**

**Headteacher**



## Leaving the school site during the day

### Dear Parents, Guardians and Carers,

As you will be aware the school takes very seriously its duty to safeguard students during the school day. As part of our ongoing review of measures to ensure student safety we would like to remind all parents of the procedures for students leaving the school site during the day.

Students who have appointments or other reasons to leave the school during the school day (including leaving at lunchtimes) should bring to school a letter from a parent explaining this.

All such letters must be presented to a member of staff and counter signed before the child may leave.

At the time when the student wishes to leave they must sign out at the Student Liaison desk presenting their letter again at that time.

Students who are unwell during the school day must present themselves to the school office and allow the school team to contact a parent or carer. Students **may not** make their own arrangements to go home.

Students are not permitted to leave the school site during the day to purchase items from the local shops and we ask that parents do not request that their child do so.

Students who travel independently to NVQ provision during the school day must also sign out at the student liaison desk.

Students who leave the school site without following the correct procedures will be considered to have truanted and will face the appropriate sanctions. We ask that all parents discuss the contents of this letter with their child to ensure they understand the school procedures.

Yours sincerely

**Mr D Reynolds**

**Deputy Headteacher**



# A CONCERT FOR LIFE: HELP US TO HELP ELLA GRACE

Many of you will have heard about the case of Ella Grace Honeyman, a local toddler who is struggling with a life threatening brain condition. Ella-Grace's family have been offered a lifeline in the form of a revolutionary operation in America carried out by the leading specialist in this field. However, they are seeking to raise the thousands of pounds necessary to finance this operation. Further information about Ella Grace's condition and the family's plight can be found on the

Ella Grace Website: [www.lifeforellagracefund.co.uk](http://www.lifeforellagracefund.co.uk)

As a school we feel privileged and proud to offer our support to the family. We are working with a group of semi professional singers from Norfolk, Essex and Suffolk, the "Pyramid Singers" to stage a major concert to raise monies.

The concert will be themed around songs from Broadway and the West End and will feature a stunning range of songs from a wide range of our favourite musicals. In addition to performances from the Pyramid Singers, we are delighted that a number of our own students will be performing solos, duets and taking part in medleys and choruses.

The concert will take place on Saturday February 27th at 7.30pm in the School Hall. Tickets are priced at £8 and £5 for concessions. Tickets will be available from the school office.

For us, this is an opportunity to put good citizenship into action and to show why we feel it is important to be a community school. We are actively seeking support from a wide range of local and national celebrities including Chris Evans, Terry Wogan, Ross Kemp, Ruthie Henshall, Delia Smith and NCFE. We are also seeking sponsorship from local companies in the form of donations or the offer of prizes for a raffle.

## HOW CAN YOU HELP?

- (1) Please come and bring your families! Apart from raising money, we are confident that this will be a brilliant evening of "feel good" fun and quality musical performances. We will only truly support the family if we can raise money through ticket sales.
- (2) If you have any business links that you feel may support us in this event we would be extremely grateful. Even the donation of small prizes would make a difference.
- (3) If you would like to be involved in organising the event, whether it is in marketing or backstage help, please get in touch. We want this to be a project that brings the whole community together.

Many thanks for your support

**Liz Wood**

**Acting Deputy Headteacher**



# Year 7

**“Now is the winter of our discontent  
Made glorious summer by this sun of York”**

My apologies for beginning this weeks column with this rather gloomy quote, but the opening lines from Shakespeare’s play Richards III, encapsulates for me one of the major issues that faces the Year 7 as they settle into the second term of High School. The issue in question you ask? Who do I want to be friends with?

For many students the period of settling into the school is naturally followed by a period of transition and exploration, when new friends are made, old friends drift part and friendship circle change. For many, this is indeed a period of ‘glorious summer’ in which bonds of kinship that will last lifetimes are made, but of course for others, it can be a very challenging time. In my role as Head of Year 7 and in conjunction with the Year 7 form tutors, we do what we can to ease the student through these times, but as Parents you too can play a vital role. Why not take the time to discuss with them how your child is getting on, ask them about their friends and, as much as possible encourage them to participate in the wider school, through plays and extra curricular clubs, where new unexpected friends are often found.

To lighten the mood a little I am proud to announce that the first two winning forms of the 2010 PANTS award. Congratulations to 7DI and 7DG who respectively won the award. To recap, the PANTS award is a points based award in which form groups gain points by performing simple tasks such as being punctual and remembering to get their journal signed. The winning form receives the PANTS Trophy to display in form and a box of chocolates to celebrate their success. Next week’s award will focus on uniform and I look forward to announcing the next winning form.

Over the past few years the school has developed its links with the Norwich City Football Club and the attached NCFC Study Centre. An excellent resource for schools, the Study Centre is presently running both the Double Club and a series of after school sessions for the school. A selection of 45 students was invited to take part, where the aim is to use the appeal of football to support students in their numeracy and literacy skills. It is a great opportunity for all involved and a great credit to Norwich City Football Club.

Finally to finish on a high, I am glad to announce that the date for the re-arranged Christmas assembly will be Friday 12th February. Running from 9:00 until 10:15 the event will be a celebration of the student work and talent. The event will be followed by coffee and refreshment for parents. It would be great if you can join us and if not, well why not tell the grand-parents and invite them along instead.

**Darren Bidle**  
**Head of Year 7**



## Year 9

It was lovely to see so many parents and students at the Preference Evening on Monday 25th January. It shows that you all have a big commitment to making the right choices at Key Stage 4. This means our Year 9 students are growing up from the small quiet Year 7s when they joined us over 2 years ago.

This is the biggest decision our students have made in their lives and is a very important one to get right. The process is very much based on interests, strengths in subjects and future aspirations. A good place to start is with your child's target and current performance levels that are sent to you on their reports. If a child is achieving a level 6 or higher in a particular subject then they are very good in that area – that could be a good place to start.

The process of choosing subjects at Key Stage 4 can be a stressful and confusing time but we are aiming to make the process an individual one with students opting to take advantage of the many pathways we offer at KS4. Parents are very welcome to join the process in school. Through-out the whole decision making process parents and students will be offered as much support and guidance as they need. This can come from me as the Head of Year 9, from Form Tutors whom students have built up a strong relationship with over the last 2 years, from subject teachers in their classes who can provide them with information about their subject and even Connexions who joined us in assembly last week. Please remember that I and my strong team of tutors are at the end of a phone. Please don't hesitate to call the school office if you have any queries or questions. The school website and spotlight newsletters also have key dates and information that you may find useful.

The final Preference form will be handed in on Wednesday 3rd March. We are holding a Collapsed Curriculum day in school and during this day we ask all parents to make an appointment via the school office with your child's tutor. Parents and students will be in school for that appointment where the preference form will be discussed and checked. Year 9 will not attend school on this day, only with parents for this appointment time. This is to ensure that this process can be a truly individual one for students and it allows tutors to have the time to focus on your child's options. A letter will be sent home shortly advising you on how to make this appointment.

The most important message I have been trying to deliver to students over the last few weeks about Preferences is that:-

1. It's about them – Think about what they enjoy doing, where do their strengths lie.
2. It must be an informed decision, so spend time collecting the information you need and thinking about what's right for you.
3. This is about them as an individual - Don't choose subjects because your best friend is, choosing the pathway that is right for them.

Thank you for attending the preferences evening and special assemblies.

### **Did You Know...?**

... There are 5 pathways for students to choose. GCSE's, BTEC's, Diploma's, NVQ's and a Young Apprenticeship. Year 9 students have a wide range of choices available to them.

... We offer 5 Diplomas, 4 of which are taught off site.

... A BTEC is worth 4 GCSE's but is completed in half the time. You must be able to work independently and be self motivated to complete these courses.

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# Year 9

## Did you know? (continued)

...There are only 40 places available on the NVQ courses so make sure you have an alternative plan. If opting for this pathway you will need to have an interview to assess your attendance, behaviour and suitability for this course.

...It's important to have a second choice for subjects just in case.

### Miss Dawbarn Head of Year 9



## Year 9 Preferences.

The preference process for Year 9 is now well underway. It was really encouraging to see so many of you at our Preference Evening on January 25th. Informed decisions are much more likely to be right for your child.

Please refer to the web site for help with completing the form or to find out about assemblies. We would be pleased to welcome you to any of these.

Shortly, you will receive a letter to make an appointment to see your child's tutor. Your prompt response will be appreciated.

Please contact your child's form Tutor or Head of Year via the school office if you need any particular help.

I will be asking for your comments on the preference process on March 3rd, but if you do have any feedback at this stage, please contact me via the school office.

Many thanks for your support.

### Mrs V Beames Assistant Headteacher



# Year 11

## Examinations

The exam fortnight is nearly over, and I am really proud of the Year 11's who have shown maturity in and around the exam hall and areas. Routines during exam periods are vital – students should continue to check seating, candidate numbers and equipment before they enter the hall. For those students who have struggled with this – please make sure you prepare fully in time for the 'real GCSEs' in May and June (not long to go...)

Thank you to all invigilators and staff, who have supported Year 11's during the mock exam fortnight, particularly Science staff, who have been carrying out 'real GCSEs' during this time. Mrs Nicklin, as always, is an integral part of the whole organisation and process, so a sincere thank you from me to her also.

## Congratulations

Some of our Year 11's have received some excellent results in both Maths and English. This is a massive boost for these students – achieving a good result in an early entry exam should motivate and encourage all students. 'WELL DONE' to all of those students who achieved a good result on 14th January.

It's really important to remember that the key to success in exams this year is preparation and revision. I am keen for students to be boosted by their wonderful successes this year but not to become complacent. Students must 'bottle' the feelings they had on receiving their results and keep this in mind when striving in all other subjects. The sense of satisfaction and pride the students had on results day was a pleasure to witness however these feelings are nothing compared to how they will feel in August on receiving a set of all round good results.

It's not too late for those students who may have been slightly disappointed with their results, early entries are also useful so teachers can identify areas of need and target these for the retaking of exams. Ask your teachers for help and feedback and they will work closely with all students to achieve what they are capable of later in the year.

The real message – keep going! Teachers and support staff can help and support all Year 11 students to the best of their ability, but ultimately success will come if the students put the effort in and I hope the next few months will see an all round increase in engagement, progress and therefore achievement.

Thank You...

...to the Maths and English departments. The hard work and effort these departments have put into the early entry exams for Year 11s is second to none. The Year 11 Team is really grateful for their enthusiasm and drive; we would like to say a massive thank you to all Maths and English teachers, from the tutors, Ms Adams and myself as well as the students of course.

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The Leader in eLearning

# Year 11 (continued)

## Mock Exam Results Day

### A date for the diary – 11th February 2010.

On 11th February we will be handing out Mock Exam results. The event will take place in the school hall during 5th period. This is a very important time for Year 11's; we are taking the mock exam results very seriously at school. The results will enable students to see how they are progressing in all subjects after completing a 'proper' GCSE paper. Mock exams give both students and staff a clear indication of what is needed to help students further. It is vitally important students take this results day as seriously as we are. A 'good luck' to all students yet again from the Year 11 Team, I hope the results reflect the work and effort many of them have put into their studies.

### Aim High!

I am conscious that for many at this time of year, getting through the exams and completing coursework etc is of the utmost importance. Students will have lots of pressures and different priorities – something I appreciate and understand fully. I wanted to highlight the importance, however, for all students to 'aim high' in their studies. We hear a lot about 'the number of GCSEs' and 'how many Cs do you need to get into college...' etc. For many this drives them to succeed and work hard in their studies. Its vital that's students are aware of their own ability and know what they can get if they work hard. What are their target grades, and what are the teacher's expectations? I want all students to achieve their full potential – if they are capable of getting an A\*, A, B...then they should be aiming for those high grades.

I am aware that pressures are high, but all students should have high aspirations and expectations for themselves too...because we know they can do it!

Good luck for the forthcoming results and well done for your continued hard work.

**K Sully**  
**Head of Year 11**

