

Dear Parents and Carers

We are already rapidly approaching the end of our first half term. Our theme this week is "Give Thanks". In the Gospel this Sunday only one of the ten lepers Jesus cured took the time to thank him. It is important we too step back from our busy lives to appreciate what we have, giving thanks to God for our many blessings. We are often quick to turn to the Lord in times of need, perhaps a little slower to do so when enjoying the moment!

There is much to be thankful for this half term. We've had a superb start to the year for all our new students in Year 7 and 12 and those who have joined us in other Years. Students have been working hard in class and engaging with the multitude of enrichment activities at school. We've had our opening Mass, welcome evenings, trips and Deep Learning Days. Open Evening last week was a real celebration. I think next year I might ban all adults (including myself!) from speaking. Our students do such a great job; they are our best advert and could run the show on their own! Thank you to Mrs Prescott and Mrs Jones for their input as parents; it went down very well!

We've got some key dates in the diary (see end of the newsletter) which I'd encourage you to note down now if you haven't already done so. This includes our forthcoming Mission Week, which you will find out about soon. It is a week for the entire school community, students, staff, parents, parishioners and governors so I'd encourage you to get involved. We also have our traditional school closure day at the end of November (25th) and have combined this with an inset day, to allow you a few days to potentially get away as a family outside of the normal holiday time. I know how precious time with the family is and I appreciate all that you do to support the school in educating your children by not taking holiday in term time. I have had however one or two requests recently and so I do need to re-emphasise to parents that we cannot support these absences. We only have 190 days a year to educate your children. We really do need every one of them if we are to help your children fulfil their enormous potential and the last thing we want to do is to send a mixed message about how much we value school or support school rules.

You will have seen letters regarding the WorthLess? Campaign in West Sussex about the national funding formula. With almost 1,000 students now, we are almost half a million pounds less well off than the average school in the country. This is an enormous amount of money. Think what we could have done with this money over the years to improve the education of the children here at SPH. Are your children worth less than children elsewhere in the country? I certainly don't think so. I'm travelling to Number 10 on Tuesday 18th October along with 11 other Headteachers and 12 students to let our Prime Minister know our thoughts on the matter! Please do continue to support this campaign. Write to your MP, "like" the WorthLess? West Sussex Facebook page and sign the government petition. Below is an extract from an article I have sent recently to our local paper:

"If we value the education and future of our young people we must invest in it. Here in West Sussex we are not asking for more than anyone else, we are just asking for equity; a level playing field with other counties in the UK; a chance to afford our young people the same opportunities that children elsewhere in the country have. The £40 million shortfall in funding for education in West Sussex is having a crippling effect on our schools. We have all made every efficiency saving we can. We are a 'people-business' and when over 80% of our budget is staffing, funding deficits can only now be met by a reduction in this area. This will only serve to impact negatively in the quality of education we can provide, the safety of our students and the life-chances which will be offered to them. Waiting yet another year for a review in the National Funding Formula is storing up enormous problems for our society if our children are left disadvantaged by an antiquated and inappropriate system of school funding. In the last 3 years at SPH, we have had to find savings, on an already stretched budget, of over half a million pounds. This is an enormous amount to find and represents more than 10% of our budget. It is simply not sustainable and I, along with all the other Headteachers in West Sussex, are now having to consider more extreme measures to provide the quality of education we think the children deserve. We are grateful of the support of the local authority, parents and local MPs. If we genuinely believe that the future of our children is worth fighting for, then we must all continue to pressure our government to do more."

Just a reminder from my opening letter this term, getting uniform right is in everyone's interest. There are a number of students who have grown rapidly over the summer holidays and both trousers and skirts are looking a little short for some! Could I please ask that you check your child's uniform? We'll be having our one-off Pink Slip days which result in an hour detention for those whose uniform does not meet expectations. Skirts must be to the knee. If this is not the case we'd ask you please to replace it with the school pleated skirt from our uniform suppliers: Felix or Ricara (based in Littlehampton), or My School Stuff – no shop but contactable via sarah@myschoolstuff.co (tel: +44 (0) 7855 430 640), website www.myschoolstuff.co.uk. We set high expectations on uniform because it makes a difference. Settling for anything less than the best is somewhat short-changing our children (no pun intended!)

Have a great half term once we get there. Give thanks, be joyful and celebrate all that is good in our lives.

God Bless

David Carter, Headteacher

SPH Pilgrimage to Lourdes

The end of the summer term might have meant weeks off and holidays to some, but to a group of us from SPH, the arrival of the summer holidays meant it was nearly time to pack our bags and head off with the Diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes. The school has had a number of young people taking part over the years, and this year was no exception. I had the immense privilege as a leader of the Redshirts, the programme for young people in Years 10 and 11 for my first experience of the Arundel and Brighton pilgrimage. Around 700 people from all over Sussex and Surrey make the journey to Lourdes: the sick and disabled as the VIPs (very important pilgrims), many of our clergy, our Bishop, families, young people, helpers and many other parishioners.



Joining the Redshirts in their ministry of welcome and friendship was a very special experience, and provided many blessings not just to the other pilgrims, but to each of the young people and all the leaders as well. Seeing the volunteers (known as Hospitalite), many of whom give up their time year after year, serving those in most need is also a very moving experience, and coming together as a Diocese to pray, worship, reflect and eat what must amount to several tonnes of ice cream is a truly wonderful thing to do.

If you're interested in finding out more about the Lourdes experience, whether considering taking your family, or have children considering joining the Redshirts (current Year 10 and 11) or Hospitalite (Sixth Form), or perhaps want to work with the Hospitalite yourself, do get in touch. It's an experience I can highly recommend. The dates for your diary are 27th July-4th August for the general pilgrimage (the Redshirts depart for Lourdes a day earlier on the 26th).

Clare Long, Chaplain

DofE Gold students get to the top of highest English peak!

During the first week of summer, a group of seven, Panda Patrol as we called ourselves, embarked on the four-day Duke of Edinburgh expedition across the Lake District. There, we aimed to find the hidden treasure the wild country had to offer while following some of the routes set out by Wainwright. We planned to start south of Keswick and hike for the following days climbing various mountains for a total of 70km and finish west of Keswick.

With the training we'd had and nice weather, we breezed through the first day - dare I say it, while enjoying ourselves. Being such a strong team, we were able to help each other through the eight-hour long walk into camp.

The next day we woke up early as we had been told of a wave of bad weather heading our way. We had planned to climb Scafell Pike on this day so we wanted to summit this before the weather became too bad. For nearly four hours we were climbing towards Scafell, summiting two mountains along our way to the big one. By the time we had reached our final ascent to its summit, we were beginning to tire. With an average of 18kg on our backs, climbing the sheer slopes of Scafell was not easy. Again we supported each other up the perilous slopes, making it up in good time. For so long we had dreamed of reaching this highest peak in England, and together, we had finally made it. Our elation did not last long as we soon realised we had a hard slog back down the other side of the mountain into camp.



The third day seemed a blur. With some heavy rain and fog coming in at times, visibility almost was a blur. Climbing Haystacks was one of the highlights of our trip. Although rock climbing on smooth, slippery rocks with heavy rucksacks on next to cliff edges may have been a little dangerous, it was worth it by the time we made it to the top to see Innominat Tarn where Wainwright's ashes were scattered.

On the fourth day the weather had really turned for the worse. The paths were no longer visible and our morale was wavering. We fought through the pain in our feet and the chill of the wind towards the endpoint of our journey across Cumbria. This day was really testing of our teamwork and friendship. We finished as a team with a much stronger relationship and much stronger mental and physical endurance: so much so, that we are now arranging to attempt the Three Peaks Challenge together!

DofE Gold participants

Extra-curricular clubs

Friday 9th September saw students from all year groups signing up for a wide range of clubs. From creative writing to rugby, ukulele to chess, students are enthusiastically joining in. Our hope is that all SPH students will take part in at least one club: it's a great way to make new friends from different classes and to relax while having fun.

Mrs Baker, Community Outreach Manager

Music lessons and clubs – get involved!

At SPH, we offer tuition on a wide range of instruments and all of our highly experienced teachers are flexible in their approaches to accommodate students who wish to pursue exam grades and those who want to learn for fun.

We currently offer lessons on:

Piano	Guitar (electric / acoustic / bass)	Drum Kit
Saxophone	Flute	Trumpet
Voice	Ukulele	Trombone
Clarinet	Violin	

Contact details for all of our teachers can be found on the school website along with a little more detail about the lessons. Please don't hesitate to contact one of the team or West Sussex Music Service for more information, including lesson prices.

There are also the following music clubs running throughout the week:

	Lunchtime	After School
Monday	Ukulele Club	
Tuesday	Swing band (by invitation)	Orchestra
Wednesday	Song Writing	
Thursday	Singing Group	
Friday		Drumming Club

Mrs M Williams, Head of Performing Arts

Students visit Oxford University

On Friday 16th September, myself and a few other students went to Oxford University with Miss Birch and Miss Schaeffer for the Open Day. I thoroughly enjoyed myself! All of the architecture was beautiful and the city itself



was stunning. I firstly attended a computer science lecture on parity graph games which was fascinating. We then went to Oriel College to meet the tutors and discuss any personal questions we had on our specific interests. After Lunch we took student tours; I visited Keble and St Catherine's Colleges. They were very friendly and gave us a good insight into what life is really like attending Oxford. Finally, I visited the maths department; a huge modern complex with fantastic facilities and lecturers. Seeing all these keen and inquisitive people around me really lit a spark inside to want to work

really hard and take full advantage of this great opportunity I have to apply. Thank you to Miss Birch and Mrs Schaeffer for taking us!

Anna McCartain, Sixth Former

World Class Schools

We were very excited to receive an invitation to apply for World Class School status. To achieve the award, a dedicated group of students from all key stages have given up their free time to complete a range of reviews, all designed to show that our school is truly world class. We have our fingers tightly crossed that our application will be successful!

Mrs Baker, Community Outreach Manager

Rwanda visit

Not long to go at all now! Sixth form students Rosie, Hanako, Ellie, Mollie, Sam, George, Nick, Sam and Bruno are travelling to our partner school, ES Kagogo, in north east Rwanda on October 19th with staff members Alison Baker, David Edmed and Sally Wallbridge. During our 10 day stay we shall take part in a range of lessons in the school, help with English language and ICT skills and join in with extra-curricular activities. Naturally we'll be spending time with Mr Finniear and his family, who are volunteering in Rwanda for a year.

We shall visit a home for former street children, a rehabilitation centre for women and support conservation in the Volcanoes National Parks. We have had a tremendous response to fundraising, but are still hoping to raise enough money to be able to take a couple of new laptops. Please support our mission at:

www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/SphtoRwanda16 For more information, please contact Alison Baker:
abaker@sphcs.co.uk

Mrs Baker, Community Outreach Manager

Make your Mark

We are very proud to have a number of students who sit on the Arun Youth Council, the West Sussex Youth Parliament and we even have 2 UKYMPs – Members of the UK Youth Parliament. Such participation is a great way to learn about democracy first hand. Every year we take part in "Make your Mark", where young people are asked what they consider the most important issues for the Youth Councils to prioritise for their campaigns. We are very proud that this year our voting achieved a massive 98% turnout. It will come as no surprise that transport issues received the highest number of votes, followed by a curriculum for life and NHS cuts which affect young people. Thank you to all our students and their group tutors for their support.

Mrs Baker, Community Outreach Manager

Forthcoming Dates for your Diary:

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| 13 Oct – Y7 Parents' Evening with Tutors | 10 Nov – Sixth Form Open Evening |
| 19 Oct – St Philip Howard Feast Day (fundraising) | 21 Nov – Advent non-uniform day |
| 21 Oct – Y7 Inaugural Mass | 23 Nov – Y13 Parents' Evening |
| 24 – 28 Oct – Half term | 24 Nov – Staff Inset |
| 7 Nov - 18 Nov – Y7 Days of Reflection | 25 Nov – School closed for staff and students |
| 8 Nov – Senior Maths Challenge | 28 Nov – 2 Dec – Mission Week |

St Philip Howard **SPH**
Catholic High School
Headteacher Mr D Carter
Sixth Form

OPEN EVENING
For Students applying to
Sixth Form for September
2017

Ofsted
Outstanding
2015/2016



YOU ARE UNIQUE, SO ARE WE

Subject presentations	Together we make a difference	Thursday
Meet the students		10th November
How to choose a subject		6.30pm - 8.30pm

Elm Grove South, Barnham, PO22 0EN 01243 558218 www.sphcs.co.uk/sixthform sixthform@sphcs.co.uk @SPH6thForm

Save the Date!
SPH Christmas Ball
Friday 2nd December 2016
7-11pm Adults Only

More details to follow soon!

