

Achievement and Exams Update

A huge well done to our current Year 11 pupils for their hard work last year. The fantastic mock exam results achieved at the end of Year 10 have set an excellent platform for pupils going into their final year. I would also like to thank parents/carers for their support in ensuring pupils revised fully and were well prepared for their end of year exams.

The academy recommends that pupils in Year 10 and Year 11 spend a minimum of two hours per night on independent study and revision, which includes homework and after school boosters. In order to support your child's independent study at home please encourage them to:

Have a revision plan

We recommend pupils plan out their revision for different subjects, taking on a 'little and often' approach for each subject topic.

Be proactive and use a range of resources available

Pupils have access to a range of web-based programs such as Maths Watch, Educake for science and GCSE Pod for a range of other subjects. These should be used regularly by pupils to support their revision. In addition, pupils are welcome to ask their class teachers for paper based revision resources.

Complete homework to a high standard

Pupils are set weekly maths, English and science homework that is specifically planned as revision.

Purposeful work should be challenging, however, if your child is finding aspects of a topic difficult please encourage them to be resilient, independent and ask for help if they need it.

Understand that testing and reviewing is the most effective revision technique

Past papers are the most effective - 15 minutes reviewing the content/knowledge needed, followed by 30 minutes of answering exam questions, concluded with 15 minutes of marking and correcting answers in green pen.

Have a positive attitude towards revision

Support them in having a quiet revision space away from any distractions such as games consoles, mobile phones and social media. Getting to bed at a sensible time and being well rested will also help concentration levels both in school time and when revising at home.

Encourage your child to communicate with their class teachers if they have any worries about exams in each subject.

All Year 11 pupils are set weekly English Language, English Literature, maths and science homework. Homework is a vital part of learning as they allow staff to judge what knowledge and skills pupils have gained as well as identify any gaps in knowledge. These gaps can then be addressed through teacher intervention. We would appreciate parental support in ensuring this work is completed in order to support your child in achieving their very best GCSE results.

Attendance at after school boosters for all subjects has been outstanding this half term and we thank you for your support in ensuring your child is committed to our afterschool lesson 6 programme.

YEAR 11 KEY DATES

Thursday 17th November – Year 11 Parents' Evening

Monday 28th November – Year 11 mock exams begin

Friday 13th January – Year 11 mock exam results morning

Mr L Holmes - Assistant Headteacher

Macmillan Bake Sale

On Friday 30th September, the Senior Prefect Team successfully hosted a bake sale during breaktime for all pupils and staff, we raised a staggering £342.33. Sweet treats of all varieties were donated by staff, pupils and their families. The proceeds from the event have been donated to Macmillan Cancer Support. A stall in each year group break area was set up, and both the Post 16 pupils and Senior Prefects did the academy proud with their organisation, marketing, financial and communication skills. The Senior Prefect team have chosen another five fundraisers to take place across the year and are really excited to be working with more charities, pupils and staff in the near future.

Senior Prefect Team

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Newsletter

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Headteacher's Welcome

I would like to start by thanking all our parents/carers for your help and support in ensuring our pupils have returned to the academy in such an enthusiastic manner after the summer holidays.

We have been extremely impressed with the high levels of attendance at the academy as it continues to be above both national and local averages. Thank you for your continued support. The start of term has seen our pupils showing high levels of engagement and respect as they continue to make progress in their learning, day in and day out.

The beginning of the academic year always starts with the reflections on the performance of the previous year and I am so proud to report that our Year 11 cohort, who left the academy in the summer, have achieved outstanding outcomes. This summer saw the return to externally assessed examinations and our Year 11 pupils achieved grades in their GCSEs and BTECs that improved on both the teacher assessed grades of 2021 and the centre assessed grades of 2020. We are so proud of those pupils who have recently left us and wish them all the best in the future, as they move into further education, apprenticeships and the world of employment.

We are really pleased that the new Year 7 cohort have settled in well to academy life, with 300 pupils joining us in September. It is a real pleasure to see them grow in confidence as they acclimatise to life in secondary school; once again our extensive transition process has proved a great success. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our secondary school and primary school colleagues in their endeavours to make the transition as smooth as possible.

It is our great pleasure to report that our Senior Prefect Team, led by Lead Prefects Eva and Imogen have taken to their new responsibilities brilliantly. So far, their duties have included, taking a lead on supporting the academy at our recent Year 5 and Year 6 Open Evening as well as providing detailed and helpful feedback on daily life at the academy to the senior leadership team.

We are delighted we have been able to organise an extensive extra-curricular programme across all curriculum areas. It is important that pupils are given a wide variety of opportunities to further extend their learning and experiences. We hope you are able to join in with our pupils' achievements and successes by following the academy's extensive social media platform on Twitter. To see our extensive offer of extra-curricular clubs, please visit the academy website.

Over the coming months, it is extremely important that our pupils build upon their excellent start and ensure they continue to make progress in all elements of academy life. In the meantime, thank you to parents/carers, pupils and staff for your continued support that enables us to work together to achieve excellence for all.

Wesley Bush
Headteacher



Academy Dates

Monday 31st October - Academy reopens for all pupils
Thursday 17th November - Year 11 Parents' Evening
Thursday 24th November - Year 12 & 13 Parents' evening
Monday 21st November - INSET DAY (Academy closed to pupils)
Friday 16th December - Academy Closes for Christmas

Transition and Open Evening

On Thursday 29th September, children and parents from Years 5 and 6 were in high attendance at our hugely successful Open Evening. Activities included: 4 x 4 Land Rover challenge, binary buns and historical food tasting to name but a few. This year, our admission number will be 300 places for our incoming Year 7 for 2023. Current Year 7 is full and 2023 looks to be the same again! In addition, on Wednesday 12th October we welcomed families to visit our academy during the school day. With Year 7 as tour guides, families were able to see what Castleford Academy is like during the day. Applications for a place at Castleford Academy in September 2023 are submitted through Wakefield admissions and the deadline for this is the 31st October. We would also like to take the opportunity to say how well our current Year 7 have settled in to life at Castleford Academy. They have had an excellent start to the year and we look forward to working with them for the next five years.

Mrs K Chippendale - Assistant Headteacher

Show My Homework

Alongside the use of the school planner to record homework, Castleford Academy have continued to invest in the online homework package, Satchel One (Show My Homework). As well as being a simple online homework calendar showing homework information, deadlines and attachments for pupils and parents.

Castleford Academy would like to thank all parents who regularly log on to view homework set, support and prompt their child to complete homework and discuss their child's work with them. As an academy, we would ask all parents to regularly log on (at least twice a week) to support their child with homework. It has become clear after numerous discussions with parents that they often use their child's log in to view Satchel One (Show My Homework). Although this will still enable you to access previous homework tasks and future tasks, it is advised that you use your own unique access code to set up your own account to the platform. If you would like your unique code to log on, or if you want to know the email address that you initially logged on to Satchel One (Show My Homework) with, please email admin@castlefordacademy.com for the information ensuring that you include the reference SMHW and your child's name and form. For more information regarding the Satchel One (Show My Homework) package and to see the benefits of using the system, please view the information on our academy website.

Mr R Guest - Deputy Headteacher

Governors

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all parents / carers for ensuring our pupils returned to the academy, after the summer break, in such a fantastic manner. When speaking to the leadership team, it is wonderful to hear that not only is our attendance above national average, but our pupil's engagement and progress has been extremely strong.

At Castleford Academy, we talk about our core values of Care, Aspire and Succeed and all three of these have been evident in the events we have been lucky enough to attend this half term.

It was a real pleasure to see so many of you at the recent KS3 awards evening and the smiles on our pupils' faces when they received their rewards was wonderful to see. We, as governors, were blown away with the great success of the Year 5 and Year 6 Open Evening, which took place at the end of September. Never has our vision of working together to achieve excellence for all been so proudly on display, with so many staff and pupils ensuring that those attending left really wanting to join our academy community. A special mention needs to go to the four fantastic pupils who spoke so brilliantly during the event; Lead prefects Eva and Imogen, along with Year 7 pupils Cole and Constance.

We would like to wish you a restful half term and look forward to sharing with you the academy's progress and success in the future.

The Governing Body

Help for Households

The Government has launched the 'Help for Households' scheme. The homepage brings together over 40 support schemes that the public can access, depending on eligibility, including help with household costs, energy bills, childcare costs, income support and transport costs. In addition, if you need support with any items of school uniform, please contact your child's year leader in the first instance.

Year 11 Careers

It is an important time for our Year 11 pupils. Not only do they have the most important year of their educational lives but they also need to decide where they are going next! Pupils in Year 11 will be busy completing their applications for college next half term. With guest speakers in recent assemblies from New College, Wakefield College and our own Sixth Form, pupils have lots of information to guide them with their choices for Post-16. We will also have an apprenticeship group forming in January to support those pupils who would like to explore this route further. Pupils in Year 11 must stay in some form of education or training until they are 18 and the vast majority of our pupils go on to further study at a College or Sixth Form. If pupils would like further careers support, they can book to see Dan Kane, our Careers Coordinator dkane@castlefordacademy.com.

Mrs K Chippendale - Assistant Headteacher

Parent Survey

Thank you to all parents who took the time to complete the parent survey. We were overwhelmed with the number of responses we received. The praise for all areas of the academy has been astounding and is thoroughly appreciated.

Thank you to the parents who suggested areas for improvement. As the survey is anonymous, we have not been able to address all of the suggestions individually however, where more general suggestions were raised, we have addressed them below:

Uniform: We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your input during the uniform consultation process. Amendments have been made to the uniform policy, considering feedback from parents and pupils.

Communication: The academy uses a range of methods of communication. With regard to pupil progress, the academy updates parents/carers regarding their child's progress at least twice per year via an academic report which is either collected at parents evening or posted home. Whole school information is sent via letters and e-mails to parents. These are published on the academy website under the letters section, a text message is sent to parents to inform them that a letter has been published or given to their child. Individual information about a pupil e.g. detentions and praise are communicated by text message or by telephone.

Trips and Visits: Unfortunately, certain school trips have had to be postponed over recent years due to Covid-19 restrictions. Upon the full reopening of schools, the academy prioritised re-establishing routines and expectations whilst addressing any gaps in knowledge that arose from lost learning during school closures. As the restrictions have been lifted, we are looking forward to resurrecting our full programme of extra-curricular activities and trips this year.

Homework: Homework is set proportionately to the time pupils spend in each subject throughout the school week. Homework should be recorded in your child's planner and on Show My Homework. We encourage parent support in checking their child's homework deadlines and communicating with staff if there is an issue.

Meeting Specific Needs: All staff are fully trained in the needs and support required for all pupils, they understand how to support within lessons so that all pupils can access work and make progress. In addition, ongoing training is provided for staff throughout the academic year.

We know that all parents are alert for signs of bullying and this is something that is taken extremely seriously at the academy. Please bear in mind The Department for Education definition of bullying, which is '*behaviour by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, which intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally*'. As always, if you have any concerns about your child, please contact the academy.

Once again, we would like to thank you for your ongoing support of the academy and look forward to working alongside you in the new academic year.

Ms M Page - Assistant Headteacher

Presentation Evening

On Thursday 22nd September we welcomed pupils and families to our KS3 and KS4 presentation evening. This was for those pupils who had been nominated by class and form teachers for effort, achievement, improvement and commitment to form time last academic year.

With over 200 certificates given the evening was very well attended and it was lovely to see so many families there to help us recognise the efforts of our pupils. We are very proud of all those who received an award on the evening, or through their form tutors if they were unable to attend.

Mrs S Salmon - Assistant Headteacher