



# The Headmaster's Newsletter

19 December 2008

Dear Parents,

December and Advent have arrived simultaneously! We have an exciting programme of activities planned before Christmas and we hope that you will join us for some of them!

**Please remember in your prayers ...**

Mrs. Wood, Miss Hicks Miss Anderson, who are on sick leave.

Mrs. Margaret Parker, mother of Mrs. Murphy, who is seriously ill.

Mrs. Doreen Cummings, wife of Mr. Cummings our Chairman of Governors.

**Congratulations to ....**

Simon Perkins who left St. Anselm's in 2003. His proud mother has informed us that he has just been awarded his Master's Degree and is now working towards his PhD. It is always pleasing to hear of the success of past-students.

Matthew McKenna, 13 CMS, who has represented Cheshire at under-18 rugby.

**Cross Country**

Both our Junior and Intermediate Teams have qualified for the English Schools Cup Final on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> December in Shepshed, Leicestershire. This is an outstanding achievement! 17 boys from Years 7-10 were selected to run for Merseyside in the recent Inter Counties Match. Our Year 7 & 9 teams won the Wirral Cross Country team trials in late October.

**Key Dates**

2<sup>nd</sup> December: Year 7 Parents Evening

11<sup>th</sup> December: Advent Service at Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, Cavendish Street at 7.00 pm

15<sup>th</sup> December: Senior Citizens' Christmas Party

18<sup>th</sup> December: Annual Prizegiving

19<sup>th</sup> December: End of Term:

College finishes at 2.00 pm and H5 and H7 buses will depart at this time

5<sup>th</sup> January: College resumes at the usual time for the Easter Term.

**PLEASE NOTE, TEAR -OFF SLIPS WILL BE ATTACHED TO THIS NEWSLETTER FOR THE ADVENT SERVICE and PRIZEGIVING. PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN TO THE COLLEGE OFFICE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE**

**PRIZE-GIVING**

This year Prize-Giving will be held at **The Church of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, Cavendish Street, Birkenhead at 7.30 p.m. on Thursday, 18<sup>th</sup> December.** All Year 12 students are expected to attend and letters have been posted out to their parents. All those being presented with prizes and/or certificates should arrive at the church by 7.00 pm.

**STUDENTS WILL FINISH AT 2.00 pm ON THIS DAY AND THE H5 & H7 BUSES WILL DEPART AT THIS TIME.**

**THIS WILL ALSO APPLY THE NEXT DAY, 19<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER, WHEN AGAIN THE BUSES WILL DEPART AT 2.00 pm**

**Advent Activities**

The Year 10 SVP will be running an Advent Gift Shop during the final week of term. All proceeds will go to "Stick'n'Step", a local charity for children with cerebral palsy. Any donations of photo frames/albums, Toiletries, Candles, Chocolates, wrapping paper and Christmas Cards for sale would be gratefully received by Mrs. Bridson. We are collecting food, toys and clothes (new & good 2<sup>nd</sup> hand) to support local charities as part of our Advent preparations. Whilst any donations are welcome we have paired the different Key Stages with individual charities.

**KS 3, Y7-9 Tinned food & long life milk for the Charles Thompson Homeless Mission in Birkenhead.**

**KS4 & 5, Y10-13 clothes for Asylum Link and the Homeless Project in Liverpool.**

**All gifts can be handed in at reception or the Prayer Room.**

Your support is invaluable.

**The SHARP System**

SHARP stands for School Help and Advice Reporting Page. This has been set up by Merseyside Police to allow students to report, in confidence, incidents to do

with bullying, health, community issues, weapons and hate crimes. There is a link from the College website to the SHARP System and from the Anti-Bullying section of the MLE. The web address is [www.thesharpsystem.com](http://www.thesharpsystem.com)

Once on, students need to go to **sharp schools** then **north west** and then **Wirral** (they will need to scroll quite far down the page). They will then find St. Anselm's College, where there are a series of links on issues relevant to young people today. They can also report issues concerning them from this page via email.

**College Discos**

From time to time the College holds fundraising discos for Years 7 and 8. These discos are held in the College Hall and supervised by staff from the College. Other discos, which may be advertised as school discos, are not sanctioned by the College, nor are they supervised by College staff. You may wish to keep this in mind before giving permission for your son to attend these events!

**Free School Meals**

If you, or your spouse, are in receipt of Income Support OR Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance OR Guaranteed Pension Credit OR Child Tax Credit, with a total annual taxable income of **LESS THAN £14,495 BUT NOT RECEIVING WORKING TAX CREDIT**, you may be eligible to apply for free school meals and a school uniform grant (for Year 7 only). You should contact the Local Authority if you think you meet any of the above criteria.

**Forgotten lunches PE kits**

Please remind your sons that if they have left their lunch, PE kits or any other property at home to please go to Reception to check if it has been handed in by a parent. Items (marked with the boy's name) will then be left in the 'Collections Tray' for collection by the student. The staff in the Main Office are extremely busy and it can take several minutes checking the timetable and then delivering the items to the student concerned.

**Absence line**

A further reminder – if your son is absent please call the direct line for absentees –

651 3576 – and leave a message before 9.00 am on each day that he is off school.

### Absence Calls

If a boy is not marked in the Register he is regarded as absent and the Receptionist, Mrs. Peers has been instructed to ring a parental contact number. All boys who are late must sign the late book to prevent this happening. These calls can cause distress to parents, but have to be made to ensure a boy's welfare. **If your son is late and has failed to sign the late book then he is to blame for any distress caused. Please emphasise to him that it is HIS responsibility to ensure that he signs the late book.** This includes boys on the H5&H7 Buses, who must also sign in when the buses are late.

### Hair Styles & Appearance

The College Policy is clear. Boys who have shaved heads will be sent home until their hair grows as will those with hair below the collar until it is cut. **No dyed or highlighted hair is allowed.** This rule applies equally to 6<sup>th</sup> Formers. I am the ultimate arbiter of what constitutes an acceptable haircut. And anyone returning in September with an inappropriate hairstyle will be sent home. **No earrings or piercings are allowed, including for 6<sup>th</sup> Formers.**

### IPods/CD Players

A reminder of the College Policy. Boys SHOULD NOT bring these increasingly expensive items to College as we cannot guarantee their security. If a boy in Y7-11 openly brandishes one it is liable to confiscation. Any boy bringing a mobile phone to College does so at his own risk. Confiscated items will only be returned on Fridays after school. To reclaim an item, a pupil must bring a letter from a parent, which Mrs. Howlett or myself will countersign. Confiscated items cannot be reclaimed on any day other than Friday. Electronic equipment, including personal possessions, now plays an important part in student learning. However, it can be misused! I remind all parents that we retain the right to confiscate such equipment if we suspect misuse, such as inappropriate material being brought into the College or circulated.

### St. Anselm's College Mailing List

Keep up-to-date with life at St. Anselm's College by visiting [www.st-anselms.com](http://www.st-anselms.com) to join our mailing list. Look for the mailing list link on the left of the homepage; it couldn't be simpler – so the ICT Dept. inform me!!

### Pupil Amendment Details

If there are any changes to the details we currently hold on file for your son (e.g. change of address, telephone numbers etc.), please ask him to collect the necessary form from Reception. This should be completed by you and returned to the school office as soon as possible.

### College Buses

The H5 & H7 buses are provided primarily for the benefit of those students living furthest away from the College. There is unprecedented demand on the H7 at the moment, so it will not be stopping regularly in Upton for the time being, as there are many other services available and the bus is frequently full by the time it arrives there.

### FOSA Christmas Quiz

**The Annual Christmas Family Quiz will take place this Friday, 5<sup>th</sup> December from 7pm. Family Tickets priced £10 are available from Reception, so get your teams organised! All children and your friends are welcome.**

The Christmas Raffle will be drawn on the Quiz night.

### 6th Form Sierra Leone Immersion Retreat

In February 2009, 12 students from the 6<sup>th</sup> Form, accompanied by Mr. Fraine, Miss Baines and Mr. Hollifield, will be visiting the Christian Brothers' projects and schools in Sierra Leone. These will include the Centre for Disadvantaged Youth in Freetown, where young people whose lives were wrecked by the civil war, are given a fresh start and our twin school, St. Francis in Makeni, which was founded by our own Br. Coffey. In taking part in the immersion, these students will be continuing the long-standing association between our College and Sierra Leone, and supporting the work for which our former headmaster, Br. Senan Kerrigan, gave his life. We will be donating the proceeds from our recent Br. Kerrigan Walks, which will support new building projects.

The visit will cost each student over £1,000 and they are keen to receive support from the wider College community which they will be representing during the immersion visit. Please support this important venture in any way you can, through donations of items for auction or raffle, sponsorship of the students, or direct gifts.

**St. Joseph's College, Stoke, have arranged for a container to be shipped out to Freetown. This gives us the opportunity to provide bulkier items. If**

**you have any computer equipment that you no longer need, it will be gratefully received in Sierra Leone. Please contact me and I will make the necessary arrangements.**

### Sports Fixtures

I would like to remind anyone who is confused that selection for a College team is an honour and we expect parents to ensure that their sons attend these fixtures. This is made absolutely clear to all parents before your sons' arrival at the College. We understand that there will be family occasions and other events which clash with fixtures. We expect these to be the exception, not the rule. If your son is genuinely unavailable, please send a note to the teacher-in-charge of his team advising us in advance, so that we may select another boy and give him a deserved chance.

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Specialism

I am delighted to inform you that we have just received notification that we have been awarded a 3<sup>rd</sup> strand to our Specialist status. We have been designated a Leadership Partner School from April 2009, the only one in Wirral. This will require us to develop leadership capacity at all levels and should lead to some exciting opportunities for your sons!

### And Finally,

Advent affords us the opportunity to discover and confirm our true identity. We will be seeking to stimulate a sense of reflection and inspiration in our boys this month.

Yours in Christ,



Headmaster