



The Headmaster's Christmas Newsletter

07 December 2011

Dear Parents,

Our Advent preparations are advanced and the College community is united in prayer and acts of charity as we seek to make ready to welcome Jesus Christ into our world anew at Christmas.

Please remember in your prayers ...

Mrs. Doreen Cummings and Miss Lizzie Cummings, wife and daughter of Brian Cummings, our Chairman of Governors.

Mrs. F. Wood, Head of Spanish. These ladies are currently undergoing medical treatment.

Please pray for the repose of the soul of ...

L/Cpl. Peter Eustace, who was tragically killed in Afghanistan last month. He was the cousin of Ben and William Horan (11M and 7E respectively). Please remember him, his parents, family and friends in your prayers.

Congratulations to ...

Cormac Hayes (11M) who continues to excel in Judo and has been ranked 7th in Great Britain for his age group.

Basic Life Support

The College is pleased to announce that they are working on a pilot project with Liverpool John Moores University. The project involves paramedic students and staff from the Faculty of Health & Applied Social Sciences coming to the College to teach students in Year 9 Basic Life Support (BLS) as part of their science curriculum. This exciting project is the first part of what could be a local roll-out of the scheme across Wirral, Cheshire and Merseyside. Students will be given instruction on how to stay safe, how to note whether someone is unconscious, what to do if they are and how to do the potentially life-saving skill of BLS, if the need should arise. If there are any enquiries about this pilot or you have concerns regarding your son's participation, then you can contact either Mrs. Howlett at the College or Paul Jones at LJMU for advice.

Thanks

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone – parents and friends of

the College – for their donations of raffle prizes for various College functions. These are as diverse as Moulton Brown toiletries to a whole lamb! They help enormously in raising much-needed funds and your generosity is greatly appreciated.

Buses

The 611 Bus continues as normal. There are now two 612 services morning and afternoon, as a result of unprecedented demand. One runs between Bebington & the College, the other runs from Eastham. See our website for further details. My thanks to Mrs. Howlett and to MerseyTravel for their efforts in securing this excellent, and cheap, service!

'Keep Kids Safe'

We have introduced a new and up-to-date Absence Reporting System at the College. The new system reads 'N' absence marks from the registers and automatically sends a text message/voicemail/e-mail to parents/carers. All Absence/Medical Appointment messages reported on the absence line are keyed into registers. Late pupils must sign the late book to avoid a call home.

Asthma

Many students at the College have been diagnosed with asthma. Please ensure that your son carries his inhaler with him at all times. We are happy to keep a spare inhaler for him in the Medical Room. Please send it into College in a box, marked for the attention of the School Nurse, and clearly labelled with your son's name and form.

Car Parking

Anyone who parks illegally from 3.30-4pm risks police action. If you insist on coming into Egerton Rd at the end of the College day make sure that you are parked **safely and legally. There is no road access to the College from 3.45-4.15pm.** Please ensure that YOU do not block our neighbours' driveways. I again congratulate our parents on the improved situation this year, the best I have known!

Key Dates

Advent Service	7th December
Senior Citizens' Christmas Party	12th December
Prizegiving	14th December
End of Term	16th December

(NB: COLLEGE WILL FINISH AT 1.00 pm ON BOTH 14th and 16th DECEMBER & SCHOOL BUSES WILL DEPART AT THIS TIME, HOWEVER, THURS. 15th DEC. WILL BE A NORMAL COLLEGE DAY, i.e. 3.45 pm FINISH)

FOSA- Family Christmas Quiz

The next event is The FOSA Family Christmas Quiz Night which will be held this Friday, 9th December at 7.00 for 7.30 pm. Tickets, available from the Main Office, are £3 for adults, £2 for children or a family ticket for £10. Don't leave it too late to get your tickets as this is usually a sell-out!

Fantasy Football League

Mrs. Martin (Maths Dept.) is inviting all students (and parents if they wish) to register for the 2011/12 season. For more information you can visit www.schoolsfl.com with the College PIN number 6401 to set up your team. It is felt that SFL helps to improve maths and ICT skills and helps develop a positive community spirit within the school. 1,407 schools finished the season last year out of 47,203 entrants. The overall winner of the 2010/11 season was a Year 12 pupil from a school in Hampshire. This year it could be you!!

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 £15,860 BUT NOT RECEIVING WORKING TAX CREDIT**, you may be eligible to apply for free school meals.

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.

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.

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 6th Formers. I am the ultimate arbiter of what constitutes an acceptable haircut. **No earrings or piercings are allowed, including for 6th Formers.**

iPods/CD Players

A reminder of the College Policy. Boys SHOULD NOT bring these 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.

Lost Property

If your son has lost uniform, kit, a coat or bag etc, do not immediately assume that it has been stolen or is lost forever! Modern youth is utterly clueless in its inability to retain possessions (who loses their school trousers?!) and we have collections of lost property at the College & at the Games Fields. Please feel free to come & check. Parents can do their bit by ensuring that your son's property is labelled or marked. Most of our collection is anonymous!

Sweet and Drink Selling

Any boy found doing this on the College site, or buses, will be excluded and his stock and ill-gotten gains will be confiscated and given to charity. This practice can lead to a trade in contraband, such as cigarettes, and worse! Schools are obliged to ensure that no sweets, fizzy drinks or chocolate are available on site, in keeping with the Healthy Schools agenda.

Charity Shop

More than £1500 was raised at the charity shop in Liscard for the Sierra Leone mission. Thank you for your generous support, and particular thanks to the parents who staffed the shop, led by **Mrs. Emma McNamara.**

Cyber Bullying

The College advises all parents to be vigilant regarding their sons' use of the internet. We have had to deal with some examples of on-line bullying during the past few months. Cyber bullying will be punished in the same way as other breaches of the Code of Conduct. Our sympathy is always with the victim.

Staffing

Mr. Peter Ravenscroft, Head of Year 12 and Teacher of English, leaves us after 7½ years' distinguished service for a new appointment as Head of English at St. Mary's College, Crosby. He will be replaced in the English Faculty by **Mrs. Gemma Parry-Paxton**. On behalf of the governors I thank Mr. Ravenscroft for his excellent teaching and wonderful support for extra-curricular activities, particularly drama, live music, his editing of "The Anselmian" magazine and as a Staff Governor.

Lord of the Flies

I am delighted to announce that the hottest film release of the year will enjoy its world premiere at the College on Thursday 15th December at 7.30pm. Tickets are available from reception. They are free and a donation to the Edmund Rice Trust is requested. Refreshments will be available afterwards.

6th Form Block Project

The Architects **Ainsley Gomon** have been appointed and are preparing the tender documents. Phase 1 will see the conversion of the ground & first floors into teaching rooms and a new chapel and the basement into a new Library. The Edmund Rice Trust needs your financial support and Gift Aid forms are available on the College website.

New Website

There has been a favourable response to our gleaming new website which compares favourably to that of any local school! It contains current information about College events and policies. If you have yet to view it the address is the same at: www.st-anselms.com

16-19 Bursary Fund

This has replaced the EMA for students in Year 12, although the EMA will continue to be paid to eligible students in Year 13, at a reduced rate. The Bursary will only be available to students in disadvantaged circumstances or from families on low incomes, comparable with qualification for Free School Meals. If you feel that your son might be eligible he should collect an application form Mr Hollifield. Alternatively, you are welcome to contact Mr. Hollifield, Mr. Morgan or myself in complete confidence.

Cross Country

Our teams did not quite attain the heights of recent years, but still gave a good account of themselves in the Northern regional final of The English Schools Cup.

The Juniors finished 7th and the Intermediates 6th.

Parental Help

College rugby is enjoying a very successful season. The 1st XV have won 50% of their games whilst the 2nd, U-15, U-13 & U-12 teams have excellent records and we frequently field 10 teams at weekend. I would like to thank the parents who support us, especially those who serve in the kitchen and tuck shop at The Ridings. This creates a wonderful atmosphere and is greatly appreciated by players, staff and visitors. Mr. Taylor & Mr. O'Keefe love the home-made cakes.

Operation Christmas Child

Over 230 shoeboxes were donated for this worthy cause. Thank you for your generous support.

Advent Charities

This year we are collecting for the **Charles Thompson Mission, The Wirral Ark, Asylum Link and The Wirral Food Bank**. All these worthy charities are grateful for donations of tinned and dried food, toiletries, underwear and new and good, clean 2nd hand clothes. If you are able to help, please send your donations in via your son.

Annual Prize Giving

This will be celebrated at Our Lady's Church, Cavendish St., Birkenhead on Wednesday 14th December at 7pm. All prize winners are required to attend as well as all students in year 12 who will be receiving their GCSE certificates. Our Principal Guest is Right Rev. Monsignor Canon John McManus, parish priest of St. Agnes Church, West Kirby, and formerly Vicar General of Shrewsbury RC Diocese.

Next term

Easter Term begins at 8.35am on Tuesday 3rd January 2012.

And Finally...

This has been an excellent term, perhaps the best of my 28 so far at the College! I pray that the peace and joy of the infant Christ will manifest itself in your lives this Christmas. From personal experience I know that this will happen if we are prepared to make the necessary effort and get our priorities right!

Yours in Christ,

Headmaster