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CARDINAL HEENAN
CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL
Putting Our Faith in Education

22 January 2016

Dear Parents

Coding for Fun

Earlier this week we welcomed children from our feeder primary schools to sample a Year 7 computing lesson. The children were introduced to basic computer programming: they identified coding behind some robotic movements and related coding concepts to some real world experiences. The fascination with robotics was palpable! Our primary partners displayed ingenuity to reach coding solutions. Mr Hartwell, our Curriculum Leader for Computing, was delighted with the enthusiasm shown. Thank you to everyone involved for making it a day of fun! Further sessions are scheduled in the coming weeks.



Early School Closure for Pupils on Tuesday 8 March

The school will close to pupils at 1.20pm on Tuesday 8 March. School buses will collect pupils from school at 1.30pm after an early lunch. Parents, please contact school without delay if this early closure causes you childcare problems. Pupils who are unable to get home may remain in school, supervised by staff, until 3.15pm. Normal lessons will be suspended. The time gained will be used by staff in training for raising achievement as part of the school's strategies for attaining consistently high levels of pupil progress.



Year 8 Directed Choices

The process of selecting courses of study at Key Stage 4 by Year 8 pupils and their parents is now well underway. A booklet setting out details of each core and option subject was given to Year 8 pupils by tutors yesterday. It may be viewed on the Curriculum page of the school website. Our two information meetings for parents last night were attended by large numbers of pupils and parents. Further print copies are available from the school reception office. Taster sessions in the new subjects which our pupils have not yet experienced (*GCSE Triple Science, GCSE Business, GCSE Food Preparation & Nutrition, WJEC Constructing the Built Environment and BTEC Children's Play, Learning & Development*) will be offered to interested pupils in the coming weeks.

Pupils will discuss the KS4 curriculum in small groups of with Senior Staff. The Year 8 Parents' Evening on Wednesday 3 February, when parents meet with their children's subject teachers (4.00pm to 7.00pm), provides further opportunity for advice, guidance and discussion. Many pupils have already completed an online questionnaire about career choices. Mr Gaffey, our Careers Guidance Coordinator, will provide further opportunities for Year 8 to do so and for careers interviews this term. Choices forms will be issued at an extended Year 8 assembly on Tuesday next, 26 January. Completed forms should be returned to Year 8 tutors on the first day back after the half-term holiday, Tuesday 26 February.



Keeping Young People Safe on Line

As you will be aware, young people spend a lot of time online. Although this can be a way for them to socialise, communicate, explore and have fun, they also face risks such as cyberbullying or seeing content that is inappropriate. The school takes these issues very seriously and has been working with external agencies to secure free training for parents and carers in a *Keeping Your Children Safe Online* workshop. You are therefore invited to attend this session in the school hall at 5pm on Tuesday 9 February. The workshop will be delivered by trained staff from the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) and O2, the telecommunications company. This is part of a national strategy to raise awareness and reduce threats that exist in young people's online world. You may wish to bring your child's devices (tablets, laptops, phones) along to the workshop in order to get practical, hands-on guidance and assistance in setting parental controls and privacy settings. In order that the school may cater appropriately for numbers, please confirm your attendance at the workshop by ringing the school or e-mailing at info@cardinalheenen.com no later than Monday 8 February. A separate flyer regarding this event may be found on the school's website and is also attached to this letter.

School Detentions

Detentions form part of the school's behaviour policy, known as *Positive Discipline*. A relatively small number of pupils reach the detentions sanctions stage of Positive Discipline during their time at Cardinal Heenan. However detention of pupils after the normal school day remains an important, integral part of behaviour management.

Detentions at Cardinal Heenan serve a number of purposes:

- They are an effective deterrent which encourages pupils to make better choices about their behaviour, in and out of lessons
- They require pupils to reflect on poor aspects of their behaviour and encourage them to make better choices, based on doing what is right rather than what is wrong
- They take away a pupil's freedom after school
- They engage parents in improving the child's behaviour and approach to learning

Detentions serve to address a variety of misdemeanours in which pupils are involved. The most common reasons include

- Repeated lateness
- Failure to complete work, particularly homework
- Poor 'pupil to pupil' behaviour
- Repeated problems relating to lack of basic school equipment
- Refusal to follow instructions from a member of staff

Increasingly, pupils are receiving detentions for a *missed detention*. The school takes missed detentions very seriously and holds pupils to account by giving them two detentions for each one missed. Non-attendance at a detention is unacceptable. I am grateful to parents for their support of this sanction on occasions when their child may have been served a detention. However, it is important that all parents support the school's policies. We are all seeking the same outcomes for our young people that will hold them in good stead for the trials of life outside school. Your full co-operation is appreciated.

Spring Half-term Holidays: Friday 12 February until Tuesday 23 February

Please note that the half term holiday begins at 3.15pm on Friday 12 February. School re-opens to pupils on Tuesday 23 February. Monday 22 February is a staff training day when pupils are not in school.

Yours sincerely



E A Cox, Headteacher