



PARENTS' NEWSLETTER

Macclesfield High School
Arts and Technology College



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11.9.09

Motivated, Happy and Successful Learners

Dear Parent(s) / Carer(s)

Happy New Year! Along with this Newsletter, here is our annual, start-of-the-year mailing which we have posted home today. The mailing provides parents with important information about the school and contains:

1. a letter from Mrs Whitehurst (Assistant Head, Student Services) about the importance, for all our students, of good attendance;
2. a letter from Mrs Dutoy (Deputy, Teaching and Learning) about your child(ren)'s Student Planner;
3. our policy on improving "behaviour for learning";
4. our school ICT Network User Policy;
5. our Homework Schedule;
6. our Home-School Agreement. (See separate note below);
7. our School Uniform Policy - please pay particular attention to the school's expectations concerning jewellery and piercings. Examples of acceptable school footwear can be found on our website (see details below). There is also guidance on mobile 'phones and MP3 players
8. list of school term dates;
9. letter about Parent Governors;
10. parental consent for regular out-of-school activities (Y7 parents only);
11. letter about Online Learning at www.samlearning.com;
12. Privacy Notice - Data Protection Act 1998;
13. Policy on student use of mobile 'phones and A/V equipment;
14. our MHS Charter;
15. letter about text messaging service.

There is a lot to read here and I am not expecting you to read it all at once! However, it contains valuable information which will be useful to you throughout the year and, for that reason, you can also

refer to it on our website, www.macchigh.cheshire.sch.uk. (Click on Parents' Area and Useful Information).

Please note that our website is regularly updated and holds a wide range of information relating to school activities. I would encourage everyone to explore the website and use it as an initial point of contact with the school.

Please look out for your weekly newsletter which will be sent home each Friday with your child(ren). It contains useful information about the school, including a list of forthcoming events such as parents' evenings.

YOUR NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL

Many parents have already asked us to send the weekly Parents' Newsletter to them by email. This has two immediate benefits. For you, it makes sure that you receive it, and for the environment, it saves paper.

Parent Governors have asked me to make this offer to all parents. If we do not have an email address for you, please forward it to us and we can then add you to the distribution list.

To do this, please send an email to admin@macchigh.cheshire.sch.uk putting "Parents' Newsletter" in the "Subject" box. Please include the names of your children. Thank you.

HOME/SCHOOL AGREEMENT

Two copies of our Home-School Agreement are enclosed for all our new Year 7 students, and only one for everyone else. Please take a few minutes to go through it with

your child(ren). Parents of Year 7 students are asked to send it back into school signed, and your child should hand it to their tutor. However, we will assume that you agree with everything that is in it, even if you don't return it.

SCHOOL GOVERNORS: OUR ROLE

A word of welcome from our **Chairman of Governors, Mr James Bisset:**

Welcome to what will undoubtedly be another very exciting year for Macclesfield High School. Our new premises provide wonderful facilities for all our students and I am sure that they will enjoy their new school and excel themselves in all sorts of ways. The Governors are totally committed to supporting our school in every possible way. Like you as parents, they want only the very best for our students.

They want to make sure that our students do their best academically, personally and socially.

We are a group of 20 individuals representing parents, staff, the local authority and the community. We come from all walks of life, are committed to raising educational standards and to helping all children reach their full potential. We meet at least once a term and are responsible for:

- planning the future direction of the School;
- ensuring that the curriculum meets national requirements and is broad and balanced;
- making decisions about the school budget and staffing;
- ensuring that the School provides for all students including those with special needs;

- deciding how the School can encourage students' spiritual, moral and cultural development;
- the performance of the School to the parents and the community.

A full list of serving governors is available from school, and on the website, and we can be contacted via the school office.

PUNCTUALITY

School starts promptly each day with registration at **8.40 am**. Students must be in school by 8.35 am to enable registration to start on time. Our attractive Dining Hall is open for all students from 8.15am, and breakfast is served. I would be grateful if you could ensure that your son or daughter is on time for school every day.

CARS and PICKING UP STUDENTS

Please be considerate, when collecting your child(ren) at the end of the school day.

Please do not use any part of the long parking bay along the front of school as this is reserved for buses and taxis. Instead, please wait in the bay outside the LZ6, or even in the first car park bay – you can always move your car if a teacher needs to leave.

Some of our own students have taxis and one or two are disabled. **The students from Park Lane Special School** also leave from our school every day now and almost all of them need access to taxis.

LITTER

It is important for everyone in school that the site is kept litter free. I intend to continue the practice of previous years in asking students to help staff collect litter at lunchtimes, since this has worked well in the past. No one has to use their hands – we always have litter pickers available. **Unless, therefore, you write to advise me that you are unwilling for your child to help in this way, I will assume that you have**

no objection. Thank you for your cooperation.

Litter is one area where we set very high standards. I want the whole site to be litter-free. And that should go for the neighbourhood around the school. Please remind your child of the basic advice: litter should go in a bin, or in their pocket until they find one. Thank you. If we can work together on this, we can create a litter-free environment for our students and for our neighbours.

EXAM RESULTS

There were some excellent examination results this year for students who achieved some very high grades.

Well done to all our students, both at A level and GCSE. If I have to single out one, I must congratulate Philip Waite in particular who achieved 10 A*s and one AS level at A grade.

OPEN EVENING FOR YEAR 6

6.30 – 8.30pm
WEDNESDAY
30th SEPTEMBER 2009



Please come and see how your school works!
Please tell your friends with children in Years 5 and 6

ATTENDANCE

At the start of this term, we have been stressing to all students how important good attendance is, especially if they want to do well in their studies. We have shown them national statistics which prove that students with attendance of more than 95% do

much better at GCSE than those with 92%.

One very practical way you can help to improve your child's attendance is to **avoid taking children out of school to go on holiday**. We are no longer allowed to authorise holidays in term-time unless there is a valid reason why the holiday can only be taken at that time. It should be noted that "cheaper holiday" is not a valid reason. If families still choose to take holidays in term-time, then this will be classed as unauthorised absence and may result in further action being taken by the Local Authority.

There is a separate letter and chart from Mrs Whitehurst in this pack. **Please show it to your child.**

Please remember that all of the evidence shows that good attendance and punctuality leads to higher attainment for students.

SIXTH FORM OPEN EVENING FOR YEAR 11

Please note that our **SIXTH FORM OPEN EVENING** for Year 11 students

will be held on **Wednesday 4 November** from 6.00 – 8.00 pm

Please make a note of this date in your diary. Further details will follow.

PENS AND PENCILS

Please ensure that your child has a sufficient supply of pens and pencils in school at all times. This will save wasting lesson time as teachers will be able to make a prompt start. Thank you for your cooperation.

CONTACTING SCHOOL

Parents who wish to clarify a point or discuss an issue of concern should contact school as follows.

Your child's form tutor will often be the best person, since they will know your child better than anyone. Others you may wish to contact are:

MULBERRY

Director of Learning
Mr Dolman
Head of House
Mrs Shuttleworth

HOVIS

Director of Learning
Mrs Greener
Head of House
Mrs Chesters

SILK

Director of Learning
Mr Nicholson
Head of House
Miss Wilson

Our Form Tutors and Directors of Learning are also teachers and so it might be easier to contact your child's Head of House.

NO SMOKING POLICY

Can I ask you please to remind your children that Macclesfield High School (indeed the whole of the Learning Zone Campus) is a **no smoking** campus for everybody. In addition, **smoking is not allowed on the school buses.**

Please remind them of the adverse effects of passive smoking. It is particularly important, therefore, that **there is no smoking on the school buses** where everyone is in a confined space.

IMPORTANT HEALTH AND SAFETY REMINDER

Please remind your child that, in the interests of safety, **students are not allowed to leave the school premises during break or lunchtime.** If your child is caught off site, we will, of course, inform you.

If there was a fire in school, valuable time would be lost by the police and fire crew in searching the premises for students who had left the site at lunchtime against school rules. The rule is in place for important health and safety reasons.

Please stress to your child(ren) the importance of staying on the school premises at lunchtime. Thank you for your cooperation in this important matter.

Exceptions are sometimes made for students in Year 9 and above, but only in order to allow them to go home for lunch. If they cannot get home and back in the lunch time, permission will not be given.

SCHOOL MEALS

We have a fabulous dining hall at Macclesfield High School for your children. Please encourage them to make use of the excellent facilities on offer.

We offer a wide variety of items on our menu including:

- Sandwich Meal Deal - £2.15 (sandwich, drink, biscuit)
- Main Meal Deal - £2.15 (hot meal, drink and dessert)

Please remember that your child's card may be credited by cheque. Please send all cheques (made payable to **CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL**) in clearly marked envelopes with your child's name and date of birth. The cheques should then be taken to the Dining Hall. Please contact Mrs West in the School's Finance Office, if you need any advice about the system.

Lunch cards

Free school meal students, who have forgotten their lunch cards, should come to the Finance Office at lunch to collect a slip as normal. Slips will only be given for 2 days. New cards must then be purchased at a cost of £3.

Students who have money on their cards, who have forgotten their cards, need to see Mrs Salt in the kitchen at break. She will check the balance ready for lunchtime.

If students do not have money on their account or any cash to be added to their card, they need to see the Finance Office at break so that staff can contact their parents to confirm they need a loan.

Kitchen staff will no longer allow students to have food unless they have the money to pay. No second loan will be made until the first one is paid off.

Any money to be added to a student's account should be handed to the kitchen **before 10.30**, clearly marked with their full name and tutor group. If this is unclear, there may be a delay in the account being updated.

There is a limit of £4.00 which can be spent each day for all students. This includes both break and lunch.

STUDENT PLANNER

At the start of the academic year, we provide all students with a Planner. Students should use the Planner to record, for example, homework, important events and to communicate between school and home.

Students are expected to bring their Planner to school every day. The Planner should be signed by the form tutor and parent/carer every week.

Please refer to the separate letter about Planners in this mailing pack.

STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

Here, I am sure, you are in full agreement with me. I want to be sure that our students behave according to the **highest possible standards** at all times.

Obviously, we work hard here in school to make sure that **respect** and **courtesy** is everywhere to be seen. We seek to treat all students with respect. We expect them to do the same. We will listen to each one with care and attention. We expect each student to do the same to any member of staff (teachers, teaching assistants, caretakers, office and kitchen staff, and cleaners) and to all other students, because we are all one community.

On the way to and from school, especially on the buses, our students know that we expect the same high standards. Please repeat these expectations to your children. We want you to be proud of them as well.

Here are a few reminders, at the risk of repeating myself, about important school rules which are set for the sake of everyone's health and safety.

Smoking is not allowed on the school site or on school buses. Cigarettes should NOT, therefore, be brought into school. **Other items not allowed in school are alcohol, non-prescription drugs, knives and any other dangerous implements.** Any student who brings these items into school must expect to have them confiscated. Further punishments might also follow. If the law has been broken, we will not hesitate to involve the police. Let me stress that this has never happened, but I need to point it out so that there is no doubt.

COMPUTER NETWORK USER POLICY

With this mailing, you will find a copy of our Policy for students' use of the computer network and the facilities we have such as e-mail and the Internet.

Please talk to your child about these important matters. Many of you will have needed to sign such a document where you work. Please explain this to your child and stress that misuse of a work's computer network may lead to dismissal. Tell them that it is just as serious at school.

We will assume that, whenever your child uses the school network they are agreeing to the Network User Policy.

Whilst you are doing this, you may wish to talk to your child about their use of the Internet at home.

HOMework

Enclosed with the start-of-year mailing is a homework timetable for the coming year. Please support your son or daughter by discussing the homework set, checking upon its completion and by monitoring the quality of the work done. Please also ensure that you sign the Planner each week. If you have any concerns relating to homework, please do not hesitate to contact the Director of Learning concerned. **The responsibility for the completion of homework rests with**

students and with yourselves, as parents.

We hold a drop-in style Homework Club on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays after school. Students can call in to the LRC (library) to do their homework at any time between 3.00 pm and 4.30 pm. They do not have to stay for the full hour-and-a-half (unless they want to!)

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

Parents often ask office staff to take a forgotten item to an individual child. Office staff are always happy to assist and, in an emergency, to take whatever action is necessary. However, office staff do not have time to take action to compensate for forgetfulness. Parents are asked to encourage their sons and daughters to be responsible in preparing for school days.

YEAR 11 PROM

I want every single member of Year 11 to attend the Prom next June. At the moment, everyone is on the "guest list". Please remind your child about the rules for staying on the guest list and attending the Prom:

- 92% attendance at school;
- no exclusions; and
- a clean, used planner.

We would love every single student to be able to attend the Prom this year. Details of date and location will follow soon when the Prom Committee has had its first meeting.

DANGEROUS SCIENCE SUMMER SCHOOL

Four of our students, **Katie Conroy, Daniel Grindey, Rachel Hunt** and **Michael Symons** participated in a "Dangerous Science" residential summer school at the University of Liverpool in July. Over 140 young people from across the North West took part in the event, the purpose of which was to see where studying science could take them in the future. They took part in a range of hands-on science sessions and met some of the university's undergraduate

students. They were able, therefore, to experience what living away from home is really like.

The students' feedback included:

- "It was fun and interesting and it gave us a real feel of what university life is like. We learnt new things about university and I really enjoyed myself".
- "The Dangerous Science Summer school helped me to understand what university is like. I really enjoyed listening to the talks as I am especially interested in taking biology at A level and University".

NAVY WISE RESIDENTIAL WORK EXPERIENCE WEEK

Three of our students, **Rachel Hunt, Kirsty Lomax** and **Amy Jackson** (Year 11) participated in the above residential course on board HMS Bristol. I have received feedback from the Royal Navy informing me what a credit the students had been to our school. The letter stated that "It was a pleasure to have them as part of the group and I hope the school is very proud of their achievements". Well done all of you!

DIARY DATES

*Next Week is Week A
14-18 September*

- ✓ **Wednesday 30th September**
Open Evening at 6 pm
- ✓ **Thursday 15th October**
Y7 Parents' Evening with Tutors
- ✓ **Friday 23rd October**
School Closes for half-term

I hope that you and your child(ren) will have a very Motivated, Happy and Successful year at MHS. Thank you for all the support you give to Macclesfield High School.

Yours sincerely



GED WARD
Headteacher