

Penketh Pages

April 2019

Dear Parents and Guardians,

It's been another exciting and rewarding term at Penketh High School. Pupils have continued to demonstrate their impressive capabilities and have worked hard to make progress. They continue to deliver impressive learning scores in lessons with over 98% of learning scores awarded being 2 or better, as pupils strive to rise to the challenge of meeting our high expectations. We have a shared responsibility in the success of pupils and they are showing through their commitment in the classroom that they understand their responsibilities, which include hard work and application towards their studies and ensuring that they don't disturb the learning of others. They should be commended for their efforts.

As you will know, we introduced a comprehensive enrichment programme this year with over 50 activities available for pupils to engage with across the now extended lunch period. These sessions have expanded our curriculum beyond our usual classroom based curriculum and it's pleasing that not only has attendance been high at these sessions across the year, but that it continues to improve as pupils engage with more experiences. I'm grateful to our committed staff who dedicate their lunchtimes to facilitating these sessions for pupils so that they have the opportunity to engage with a wide range of activities that will help them foster life long passions. It's incredibly important to the school that not only do we develop pupils academically but we also help them to develop holistically, enhancing their wider skillset to include key skills that will help them flourish in adult life, college, university and ultimately in the workplace.

We are working on some exciting developments at the moment, which we're looking forward to sharing with pupils and parents, as we continue in our tireless efforts to drive improvement at the school. We're pleased with many of the transformations that have taken place at the school over recent months, but parents should rest assured that there will be no let up in our pursuit of an excellent provision for outstanding young people.

The school are keen to update parents regularly and we use Twitter to post daily updates as to what is going on in school. You can follow the school at twitter.com/penkethSchool and you can access our feed without being a Twitter account holder. Our new website also has our Twitter feeds embedded within the homepage.

Year 11 continue to impress in what is an extremely busy period for them. The start of their GCSE examination period is imminent and they are working hard towards their final preparations. They should be congratulated on their dedication so far this year. Hard work and dedication across this final period is the key to cementing success in the summer and both the staff and I will be doing all we can to support them over the next few weeks.

There have been a number of notable achievements over the last term and I'm pleased to say that the Penketh Pages for the second term of the year is attached to this letter; this details some of the amazing things that our pupils have been involved in over the last few weeks. I'd like to take this opportunity to wish our families all the best for the break; the staff and I look forward to welcoming the pupils back upon our return.

Yours faithfully,



Mr J Carlin.
Principal.

SPARK

AT PENKETH



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Museum in a box

Spark had the privilege of being asked to be one of only two schools in the UK to take part in the "Museum in a box" project this term. The amazing project utilises 3D prints, postcards, near-field communication (NFC) technology, and Raspberry Pi to connect objects and artefacts to the web and radically increase outreach and engagement through local museums, along with museums further afield.

As an Internet of Things project it uses cutting edge technology and we have been delighted with the support from the team at Museum in a box. We were fortunate to have a visit from Adrian McEwan and Craig Sherwood who we have been working with since January to create 3D scans of museum objects. "It's been a fascinating experience", said Collections Officer Craig Sherwood, "We were founded as a museum of Science and Art in 1847 and so it feels fitting that in 2019 we should be working with SPARK Penketh to use technology to explore the museum collections. 3D printing is already changing how we are approaching art, design and manufacturing and a project like this engages young people in exciting and creative design work while also encouraging them to consider how they can use AR technology to interpret the material culture that surrounds them."

Several staff at Penketh will be developing their own collections for this project so watch this space!

Digital Upskilling

As you know the main focus for Spark is to provide our own pupils with experiences to support their wider development. This term has seen us developing skills in 3D printing with all students in year 7-10, this will continue into next term with workshops in Wearable technology during Tuesday Lunchtime and a bespoke 3D printing enrichment each Wednesday Lunchtime.

Pupils are continuing to design items in Autodesk 360 which is free for all young people, or Tinkercad online. If any parents have ideas for 3D printing projects that they would like to contribute please get in touch as we would like our students to use their newly acquired skills in 3D printing to contribute to our community and be able to establish creative solutions to real world problems.

Thank you to all parents who donated electronic goods, laptops and equipment to our space this term. As you all know Spark has been built entirely on community contributions and we are exceptionally grateful for the support. If you would like to donate equipment or funding for Spark, please get in touch with Ms Keep.



SPARK

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Since launching the first makerspace housed within a UK state school, SPARK has provided numerous opportunities for our pupils to engage in additional learning to supplement and extend their classroom based learning. These additional opportunities provide us with much needed scope to deliver content and involve pupils in learning strands not covered in the curriculum. More often than not this has “sparked” passion for learning and a curiosity for all aspects of the STEM agenda. We’ve also been fortunate to be able to extend these opportunities to some of our feeder primary schools and also to the wider local community.

Warrington Libraries - SparkED at Penketh

We have been working with our local libraries to expand the SPARK project to other areas. This has involved us giving some of our time to training local librarians to enable them to run workshops during school holidays for young people across Warrington.

Chris Everett (Senior Community Librarian) LiveWire said;

“Working with Penketh High School has been brilliant for Livewire libraries. It has really made our digital offer to families more exciting and expanded the skill set for our staff. The partnership has created more learning activities that are fun and relevant to taking the STEM agenda outside the classroom. The school couldn’t be more supportive and Caroline’s calm and positive attitude together with her vast knowledge has encouraged our staff to have a ‘can do’ attitude. We are looking forward to more brilliant projects in the future.”



Primary Outreach

Through SPARK we’ve been able to establish Primary Code Clubs across Warrington with Great Sankey and Penketh South Primary being the first schools to facilitate a Code Club. Our staff have been delighted to offer training and help other staff within these TCAT schools and expand digital expertise. We are very proud to be able to collaborate and support our primary partners so that they can develop their own Code Club and offer these educational experiences to their own pupils.

“Our children have been really excited and motivated by the weekly Code Club sessions. The support I have received from Penketh High School in setting these up and delivering them has been fantastic. I know that I will be confident leading these sessions myself in the future thanks to Caroline’s excellent support” - **Anna Mitchinson – Computing Lead, Penketh South**

“We have visited the @SparkPenketh makerspace as part of our transition weeks where we created robots that the children were able to take away from the session. They have also aided in setting up our school’s first Code Club, with staff coming to run the club each week. This club has been hugely popular in our school and has really helped to raise the profile of the computing subject. In addition, we have been invited to Gifted and Talented workshops, where selected students have taken part in an exciting project using Raspberry pi. Penketh are also offering us workshops for our upcoming STEM week again and extending their support by offering eight sessions as well as supporting with the planning of sessions” - **David Ellis – Computing Lead, Great Sankey Primary**



Enrichment @ Penketh



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As a school we recognise the importance of academically developing our young people in order that they have a solid foundation with which to continue to succeed beyond their time at Penketh. The school have increased our learning focus across last year and it was pleasing that we achieved the school's best outcome for 3 years. We're also extremely committed to developing our pupils holistically, providing them with opportunities and experiences that extend their learning beyond their standard curriculum, this helps with engagement and to prepare them for life at college or university. These experiences can also help to broaden horizons and cement life long passions.

World Book Day

Thursday the 7th of March was World Book Day! We celebrated the event by encouraging Year 7 to dress up as their favourite book characters; some of the costumes that they came up with were brilliant – one particular much-loved costume was Lucy as the Mad Hatter. The English department also got on board and dressed up to celebrate the event too.

World Book Day definitely allowed the English department to create a real "buzz" around reading; a key skill that here at Penketh High School we are passionate believers of developing to ensure pupils are fully engaged when they go on to study English Literature texts to a much higher degree. The day also enabled the English department to hold a Bake Sale with cakes selling out in just short of 5 minutes!

Overall, the event was a real success and helped to raise £115 towards the purchase of new books for Year 7 to enjoy.

Building on the success of World Book Day, we now look forward to celebrating National Shakespeare Day on the 23rd of April to further develop our engagement with national initiatives.



Performing Arts Evening

Performing Arts evening showcased a culmination of work from Dance, Drama and Music subject areas and extra curricular groups, including Performing Arts Club and Boys Performing Arts Enrichment.

Our GCSE Drama students at year 9, 10 and 11 shared their GCSE performance preparations. Their scripted work was taken from Kindertransport, The Unreturning, Bouncers and My Mother Said I Never Should.

GCSE Dance students shared their Dance performance pieces, students have responded to a stimulus to develop their own choreography working with students across all year groups to ensure their pieces are exam ready.

The Boys Performing Arts group made their debut with preparations they have made from their Enrichment with 'First Act Warrington', the students performed 'Born to Hand Jive' from Grease the Musical. Performing Arts Group share their wonderful performance of The Greatest Showman, this group rehearse on a Monday after school developing their singing and dancing skills.



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Elite Rowing

Penketh High School was proud to have two of our pupils represent Warrington at the National Indoor Junior Rowing Competition on the 15th March in London's Olympic Park. Amelia and Poppy, both in year 8, were selected to be a part of the Warrington Youth Rowing team, along with select pupils from other schools in Warrington to go up against other schools from around the country. The girls have been working hard during their Tuesday sessions at Warrington Youth Rowing Club with Richard Sinnott, Head of WYR, and Mr Pinder to prepare for the competition. Amelia and Poppy both competed in the singles and team event, placing 17th and 30th out of 194 competitors in the singles, and 5th out of 66 in the team event! The girls did themselves and the school proud in the effort and commitment they have shown since starting Rowing in October, leading to both girls becoming members of WYR club and regularly attending weekend training sessions. Future Olympians in the making?



Duke of Edinburgh

This year has seen 80 year 9s undertaking their Bronze Award and 15 of our year 10s are doing Silver.

Having successfully completed their Voluntary Paired Reading at Christmas, they have nearly completed their Physical Achievement. This takes place every Wednesday and Thursday afternoons in the Gym.

March saw the beginning of Expedition training; four groups go out on consecutive Saturdays to Edale in the Peak District. They complete a 9 mile circular route up onto the Kinder Plateau.

57 pupils completed their preliminary expeditionary walk in the Peak District over the month of March, braving conditions that ranged from 50mph winds to torrential rain to glacial temperatures!

Our awards evening for previous achievements was a great event also held this term. Over 150 parents and pupils were in attendance as we celebrated the outstanding achievements of pupils who were presented with their Bronze and Silver awards by Nikki Hughes, Regional Director of D of E Education).

Pupils should be congratulated on their performance and proud of these notable achievements!



Careers, Advice and Guidance



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Career clusters

Lots of exciting opportunities are available through school focusing on aspirations, careers and life skills. Paula, our school careers adviser, is in school every Tuesday and Wednesday and is currently working with year 8 and 10. Paula is there to offer support and guidance with career choices, work experience and more. Appointments can be made through Mrs Jones or at lunchtime in the Futures Room with Paula. Career Clusters have now been established within the school and a careers programme now focuses on every pupil's aspiration and chosen career path. The enrichment team have been extremely busy offering numerous workshops and presentations from employers focused on specific career clusters, these have included participation from the Police, Medical service providers, and Knowsley Safari Park. Pupils have had the opportunity to attend a talk or session that is relevant to their chosen career cluster/path.

The last Career Focus week was undertaken during National Apprenticeship Week. We were fortunate to secure Riverside and Cronton College to come into school and deliver a presentation to all year groups about the different options available once leaving Penketh High School. Next term will see college taster days for year 9 and 10 at Riverside College, Priestley and Warrington Vale Royal in preparation for their future decisions. Pupils will take part in a range of lessons and explore the vast post 16 courses available as they start to consider their next steps.

A group of year 8 pupils have also been involved in the Warrington Wolves Business Mentor Programme and had the opportunity to visit Warrington Wolves. They discussed the different range of careers available in the sport industry and had a stadium tour



Ryman National Challenge

In February, twelve of our Y9 Enterprise and Marketing pupils took part in the Ryman National Enterprise Challenge. The pupils travelled to the University of Chester and had to complete a number of activities against the clock to plan a sporting event to increase female participation in Sport. One of our team's pitch was so successful that they qualified for the Regional Finals which will take place in Chester at the end of April.



Penketh



PRIDE

Our outstanding young people have achieved some amazing things already this year. Here are some of the things we've celebrated together since the last edition in December.

Rewards

This term has been a busy but amazing half term. Pupils have continued to compete each week to be in with a chance of winning the counter competition. Year 7 have maintained their lead but, with one half term to go, might they be overtaken by another year group?

Over this term, pupils have been working harder than ever to achieve learning scores of a 1. For two consecutive days, pupils in Year 7 achieved over 200 outstanding learning scores. In addition, this year's first Gold Award was awarded to Emily in Year 7 at an assembly, alongside her parents who were invited in to join the celebrations.

Pupils in Year 8 have been working extremely hard this term and have achieved the highest number of postcards per pupil, with almost 700 postcards being awarded this term.

This term has also seen the start of the Form Attendance Competition. The group stages of the competition were fierce enough, but it was 9/5 who retained the lead through the finals to win the competition. They look forward to receiving their reward on the last day of term before Easter.

In their three core subjects, English, Maths and Science, pupils in year 10 and year 11 have achieved the highest number of postcards. These have been earned following their exemplary effort and achievement in their recent mock exams.

TCAT Brexit Debate

On 1 March, pupils from the TCAT secondary schools - Penketh, Bridgewater, Boteler, Beamont, and Padgate - participated in the first TCAT Debate competition, supported by pupils from Priestley College. Nine of our Year 9 pupils went to the Pyramid Centre in Warrington to fiercely debate Brexit in the style of the MPs in Parliament. In the morning session, our two teams debated with teams from other the schools whether (1) Brexit was in the best interests of the UK and (2) whether there should be a second referendum. In the afternoon session, the pupils had to research and prepare a presentation on the legal and economic consequences of Brexit in relation to Employment law. There was a high level of academic challenge presented by these topics and our pupils performed exceptionally well, to achieve a third placed finish in the event!



Penketh



PRIDE

Big Bang @ Penketh

On Friday 22nd March, Penketh High School had the privilege of hosting a satellite event for the Big Bang North West Festival. The students of Penketh High School were given the challenge of showing how the moon landings (50 years ago this year) had affected how we live our lives. After working on their projects for 5 weeks, they were given the opportunity to present their ideas to a judging panel that included Penketh's own Mrs Lomax and Daisy Fox from the Institute of Physics. The event was supported by Ali Christoffer and the media team from All About STEM. This meant that the projects and involvement of Penketh students were shown on their social media feeds and their website (<https://www.allaboutstem.co.uk/2019/03/big-bang-north-west-big-bang-penketh-high-school/>). Not only did a dedicated group of students present their ideas to the judges, but they also explained their ideas to year 5 and 6 pupils from Great Sankey Primary School, not an easy task as any teacher would tell you. Well done to all who took part and good luck to our winning teams who will be presenting their projects at the Big Bang North West Festival in Liverpool in the summer term.

(Third place - Year 10s Brad, Ethan, Sam, Matt, Dominic and Joe. Second place - Year 7s Chloe, India and Sophie. First place - Year 8s Abbi, Amy, Rachel, and Alice.)



United Utilities STEM Masterclass

In February, 2 teams of talented Year 9 students went to the final of the United Utilities/TCAT STEM Masterclass. This was the culmination of a 16 week project that the students had been working on. The theme of the project was to design a new building to be built in the town of Coniston in the Lake District. The building had to fulfil a role within the community of either technology, performing arts, or sports. The students had to produce plans for the building as well as justifying their decisions about how it looked, where it was going to be built, and how it was going to be sustainable. Not only that, but they also had to design an innovative piece of equipment to help reduce water usage within their building.

The two Penketh teams performed so well that the judges awarded them joint first place, and third place, from the 8 teams in total from TCAT. This was a brilliant result and was a just reward for the hard work that the teams put in over the course of the competition.



Penketh



PRIDE

Sellafield/EDF Energy

Over the last few years Penketh High School has been working closely with Sellafield Ltd, this has included taking part in the Sellafield Big Bang challenges (which we won in 2018), having Sellafield come into Penketh to deliver a STEM workshop to Year 9 students (Summer 2018) and allowing a member of Penketh teaching staff to shadow some of their engineers for 5 days in July of last year. As a reward for the Big Bang win and the STEM workshop, Sellafield organised for a group of Year 10 students accompanied by Mr Fone and Mr Webb to visit the nuclear Power Station at Heysham. During this visit, the students were taken around the main reactor building (observing from the safety of the viewing gallery) and the turbine room. To see the scale of the operation and be told how much electrical energy is generated was quite staggering. This visit also happened to take place on International Women's Day and some of our learners had pictures taken with an engineer, which were posted on the EDF Energy social media feed.



Year 11 examination focus

Year 11 are full steam ahead with their GCSE revision now.

Each week pupils have 54 EPS sessions to choose from each and every week before school, during lunch and after school - 5 days a week!

These sessions are vital to the success of our Year 11 students and also are a great way of managing time. On average a Year 11 student at this time of the year should be completing 3-4 hours per night of work.

If students attend EPS they can complete half of this before they even get home. It is all about working smart!

At Easter the staff of Penketh High are giving up days in their holidays to secure further success by running Easter EPS sessions - some of these last a full day! There will be a full timetable available to students and parents to make the most of the time available at Easter. Again, time management is absolutely crucial.

After the Easter holidays Mr Farrar and Mr Smith will be opening up school each Saturday 10am-12pm for pupils to work on their maths but pupils can also come in for a quiet space to work on other subjects too.

There is a vast range of support given to our students with their revision if they engage with these sessions.

Balfour Beatty Construction

During the last term, Penketh High School has had the privilege of hosting a construction day with Balfour Beatty. The whole of Year 8 were able to take part in a series of activities which illustrated the different careers and occupations that are available to our students in the Balfour Beatty company. This included highlighting the differences between careers needing college qualifications and those needing higher education qualifications. The student were then able to have a go at building a tower from a limited set of resources. This was intriguing to watch, especially as one of the year 8 groups actually made something similar to a structure that Balfour Beatty had just finished in another country. In the afternoon session, students from years 9, 10, and 11 who had shown an interest in the construction industry were able to come along to an interactive discussion about the construction industry. This was again a good session to observe as it showed students from different year groups working together as a team to complete a task.



Pupil Leadership Team



For Pupils -
By Pupils

The Pupil Leadership Team have been very busy this last half-term, making sure everyone's voice is heard and helping to improve the school for you!

The Student Responsibility sub-committee is currently working on how we can decrease the carbon footprint of the school by reducing plastic bottle use. They have also sent surveys out to some students regarding how we can improve standards even further. These results are currently being analysed by the team.

The Enrichment sub-committee is working hard on advertising the many clubs that happen during lunch times. They have launched a range of new clubs – including a retro games club which has been very popular.

The Transition sub-committee have also been working hard at getting into the Primary schools that don't have a direct link to Penketh. They are doing this by hosting SPARK workshops and sporting activities to get these pupils involved in Penketh. They are really looking forward to seeing all of the soon-to-be Year 7s who will be joining us in September!

In Promotions, we have been busy starting up the new Pupil Voice twitter page, so please follow us to find out about events happening around school! We have also been writing some articles about issues around school for you to read. These will be sent to you shortly through pupil email addresses (found on Office 365 with your E-portfolios), so keep checking for them!

Our new initiative is to help students to voice their opinions on events in school, for example, things discussed in assembly or in form, or proposed changes within school. As pupils, we need to make ourselves heard as our thoughts will help school to keep improving. Pupil Voice will run every Friday lunchtime in P13, and all pupils who are interested in sensible debate are welcome so please come and sign up as soon as possible!

Red Nose Day

Red Nose day occurred on Friday 15th March, and we did many things around school for this. A group of the Pupil Leadership Team stayed behind with teachers after school to bake some delicious cakes and cookies, which were sold outside Mr Smith's at break time on Red Nose Day. We had a complete sell-out within 6 minutes! At lunch time, Dan Harding in Year 10 hosted a comedy special, which was hilarious and enjoyed by all who went along. Red Noses were also sold around forms during the week. We raised lots of money for such a good cause, and hope we can do this again later on in the year for other causes.

Clatterbridge

Clatterbridge is a cancer hospital which treats many patients who need chemotherapy and radiotherapy, however there is only one of these hospitals in the North West so many people have to travel hours a day to receive lifesaving treatment. Therefore, Clatterbridge have decided to build a new hospital which is in the heart of Liverpool, hopefully meaning many more people can access it easier. To help raise as much money as they can to build this, they are making an exact replica of the new Hospital in Lego. The idea is to encourage people to buy a brick which is then going towards the making of the new cancer hospital. As we know, many families are affected by cancer, therefore as a school we have decided to help Clatterbridge in whatever way we can. After a variety of fundraising activities we managed to raise over £850. Clatterbridge then came into school with the amount of bricks we had raised money for. A group of pupils used the lego bricks to choose and build the different parts/equipment that our fundraising would contribute towards. After building them they were added to the Lego structure in Liverpool. As a school we are still fundraising for Clatterbridge in whatever way we can. This has now developed into something that all the schools in TCAT are involved, this means hopefully we should be able to raise a huge amount for such a great cause.