

# Penketh Pages

## December 2019

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We reach the end of what has been a busy but exciting term at school and we continue to build on the successes of the last two years. Parents will be aware that we fully anticipated that results in the Summer would be our best ever set of outcomes and I'm pleased to confirm that this was the case. This is testament to the hard work and dedication of the pupils and also to that of the staff. We're incredibly proud of this achievement only two years in to our improvement journey. Pupils at Penketh made more progress than ever before and many of our outcomes are significantly above the national average, for example the proportion of pupils leaving Penketh with at least a grade 4 in both Maths and English was 7% higher than the national average, as was the proportion of pupils leaving Penketh with at least a grade 5 in these subjects.

You will know that since September 2017 we have worked tirelessly on raising standards and expectations at the school to be more in line with the capability of our pupils. We have increased the academic focus at the school and the proportion of our pupils undertaking the English Baccalaureate suite of subjects (English, Maths, Science, History, Geography and Languages) at Penketh is significantly higher than both the national average and also of schools in Warrington. Our pupils are extremely capable and so it's vitally important that our curriculum matches these capabilities in order to support them to maximise their potential.

The creative arts have always been a strength of the school and these subjects support the pupils' wider curriculum offer as part of their options, but our performance in the academic core subjects is now significantly better so that we have that balance of strong performance across all subjects.

A huge feature of improvement at Penketh has been the appetite of staff to deliver this improvement, their dedication and determination to deliver a better educational provision and experience for our outstanding young people is inspiring. They have committed to an array of professional development opportunities beyond the school day and this has facilitated a greater degree of purpose and a climate focused on progress in classrooms. A key feature of this has been their work in completely redeveloping curriculums for delivery this year. We wanted to ensure we invested quality time in this process and so staff have been working for the entirety of the 2018/19 academic year, behind the scenes, to ensure the new curriculum was ready for delivery from September this year.

Parents, I'm sure, will have noticed a greater emphasis on the curriculum as we have published the curriculum bulletin documents this term so that you have greater insight into what it is that pupils are studying across their subjects. There is also a greater level of information for parents on our school website relating to the curriculum that pupils undertake. It's essential that we provide you with this information so that we can work together to fully support pupils and their development.

This work really underpins our commitment to keep striving for improvement at the school. Part of this work has been to improve classroom based experiences for pupils to help them maximise their progress. Our overarching goal is to provide pupils with greater life chances and opportunities to continue to be successful once they leave Penketh. A good set of results is one aspect that provides a platform for future success as it ensures that no door is closed as pupils pursue their chosen path. It's these positive life chances and the opportunity to prepare pupils for lifelong success that is our driving force and the thing that inspires us every day to secure further improvement at our school.

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Of course, enrichment is a big feature at the school since launching our enrichment programme in September 2018. Across last year there were over 50 enrichment clubs for pupils to access during lunchtime sessions. I'm pleased to report that this year we have offered over 60 different enrichment clubs. It's these additional experiences and our comprehensive careers programme which help to develop pupils in different ways, providing them with alternative skills and experiences to their academic studies, often helping to develop passions for life or inspiration for future study.

It's this combination of academic and holistic development that we feel will provide pupils with not only the best experiences at school, but also a range of skills that will support them in later life.

We're pleased to be able to say we achieved the school's best ever results, but what this represents is more important to us. We can say that pupils have achieved better results; so they leave us having made a greater degree of progress and are better equipped for future challenges within both further education and the work place.

This rapid improvement means that the school is in a very different place than it was, though we are aware that we have to battle with some outdated perceptions and opinions of our school, often formed a number of years ago. Do we have challenges? Of course we do, like any school or organisation with nearly 1000 people, but the support systems to support pupils with these challenges are not only effective, but well thought of by those I routinely invite in to scrutinise our practice. I do so to validate our work and ensure that our practices are continuing to drive improvement for our outstanding young people.

We're determined to keep making strides, working collectively with our pupils and our families to provide pupils with positive experiences and a platform for inevitable future successes.

Attached to this letter is the latest edition of the Penketh Pages newsletter which includes a range of stories that are celebrating successes from across the term.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support in helping us to achieve the vision we have for the school and to wish all of our families the very best for the holiday period, and for 2020. We look forward to welcoming pupils back to school on Monday 6th January, 2020.

Yours faithfully,



Mr J Carlin.  
Principal.

# 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 and academic rigour and it was pleasing that we achieved the school's best ever GCSE results this year. 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.

## Food and Nutrition Curriculum Enrichment

Our year 7 and 8 pupils are being offered food and nutrition sessions across the academic year. Year 7 sessions have already started and year 8 will begin in January. Pupils will learn about food hygiene and kitchen safety. They will also be taught basic knife skills and will be preparing and cooking healthy food dishes. We will be looking at current healthy eating guidelines, analysing food labelling and modifying recipes to create healthier options. Pupils will also be encouraged to sample different foods. The program will give pupils the opportunity to look at the importance of living a healthy lifestyle and ways they can implement changes to their own lifestyle. Here are some of our year 7 pupils tasting different types of fruit.



## Christmas Hamper Appeal

Miss Baron and Mrs Rudd have been working hard to bring some extra Christmas magic to some deserving local families this year. The Penketh Christmas Hamper Appeal has been a great success with generous donations from both staff and the local community. We are very grateful for the support that we have received and look forward to getting on our sleigh and delivering these over the next week.



## Careers Roadshow

The BBC Bitesize careers roadshow presented to our Year 7, 8 and 9 pupils. This was well received by pupils who relished the opportunity to think about their own future pathways after hearing from representatives from a range of industries.

## Humanutopia

We were thrilled to welcome Humanutopia back to school this term, this time to work with our Year 9 pupils. They engaged with a range of topics including hope, self confidence, happiness and employability.





# Enrichment @ Penketh



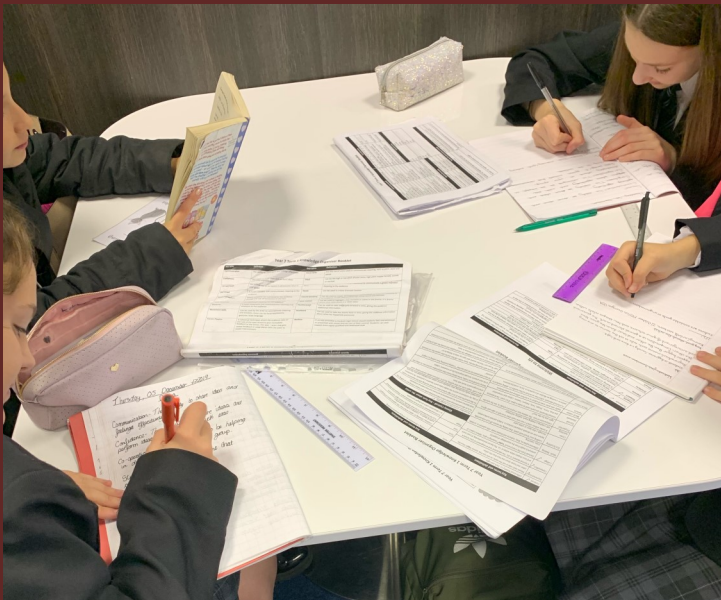
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## Penketh High Library

The library at Penketh High School has had a fantastic second term! Firstly, we celebrated Banned Books week, encouraging the pupils to look up why the books were banned, then we moved on to explore Mental Health Awareness week; building our own well-being tree and raising the profile of mental health within our school through reading. Next, came Remembrance Day, with many Year 8 students studying WW1 literature, it has been fantastic to see so many of these books taken home to enrich their learning!

It has been fantastic to see the library become a central hub of learning over lunch; over 170 books are currently on loan for over Christmas! We have also been very lucky with a plethora of books being delivered this term! Thank you to everyone that has also used our Amazon WishList scheme - these books have been flying off the shelves!



Finally, Christmas has enabled the library to host a fabulous festival treat whereby a number of pupils had the opportunity to listen to "Twas the Night Before Christmas" in a beautiful Christmas setting. The event was a perfect way to round off a magical term filled with reading!



# Enrichment @ Penketh



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## Year 10 Maths in Action Lecture University of Salford

Ten of our Year 10 mathematicians made the journey to Salford for lectures from experts in their fields of maths. The first lecture, delivered by James Grime, Mathematician and communicator, saw students learning about how information is transmitted electronically and how fail safes in code allows parts to be missing but the message still interpreted correctly. This was demonstrated by drilling a hole in to a CD and highlighting that it still functioned.

In the second lecture, delivered by Aimi Elias currently working at NOWTV, pupils learnt about how maths is used in software by computers to learn and spot patterns in order to recognise differences in images and this is how devices such as your phone can recognise your face.

The third lecture, delivered by Dr Matthew Scroggs from the University of Cambridge, was centred around computer games and using mathematical techniques and algorithms to find the best possible route to complete Pacman in the most efficient way. This also led on to how computer games represent 3D worlds in 2D and the distortions this can have on the reality it creates.

The fourth lecture, delivered by Dr Emily Grossman, centred on statistics often quoted in the media and how seemingly reputable studies can have fatal flaws that lead to incorrect conclusions. Students learnt to look deeper into studies and look for common problems that can make them unreliable.

The final lecture was quite philosophical, considering if the world is made of maths or does maths only exist in the human mind. Delivered by Dr Mark Lewney, Mathematician and physicist, students saw how one or two mathematical rules repeated can create seemingly random patterns and these appear in nature all the time. They were then shown how the unit circle can create trigonometric functions but then how this same wave shape is used in the transmission of signals and this is the basis of how an electric guitar actually works.

It was another exciting opportunity for pupils to see their curriculum applied in the real world and the range of work place roles available for a mathematician.



# P e n k e t h



## P R I D E

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 July.

### Year 11 Exam Focus

Since September, our Year 11 students have had a very clear message – hard work pays off!

The lessons that students have in each of their subjects with their specialist teachers are the foundations of a good set of results. That subject knowledge and content is crucial to be able to sit the full range of GCSE examinations in May and June. Attendance to lessons alone, however, is not enough to secure the grades that our outstanding young people need and, more importantly, are capable of.

As a school we try and structure the revision of our students in such a way that they feel supported, informed and organised to complete meaningful revision.

EPS (Ensuring Progress and Success) sessions run 5 days a week before school, at lunch time and after school. Staff offer their time freely to run sessions for students to consolidate their learning in the classroom. After each set of mock exam results, we closely monitor each student and advise them of the key areas they need to attend for the next 2-3 months until the next set of exams.

We also work closely with a company called Elevate Education who specialise in preparing students for their exams via seminars. These sessions are run by young graduates who have just been through the process themselves and who can relate well to our students.

### Rewards

This term has been a busy but amazing term. Across half-term pupils have worked extremely hard preparing for their EPS assessments.

This hard work and dedication to studies has resulted in some remarkable achievements in the recent mock exams and pupils recognise how important application is in achieving this success. We're so proud of their dedication and so we're thrilled when we can issue progress postcards with pupils striving to collect these and receive their Going for Gold badges. Pupils have already broken records this year with over 1000 post cards being awarded during a single week this term. Year 10 have also broken our daily learning score record not once, but twice this term receiving over 400 learning scores of 1 in a single day.

As we come to the end of the first term year 7 are winning the counter competition with 176 counters; however, it is all to play for especially with year 10 being a very close second.

This year we have introduced special recognition nominations; the pupils that have been nominated have shown perseverance and willingness to learn new skills across school. It's been an absolute pleasure to issue pupil with certificates and awards, recognising the fantastic attitudes to learning they show each day.





# Penketh



## PRIDE

### Outstanding Performances

The second TCAT Concert took place on 16th November with pupils from across the The Challenge Academy Trust schools delivering a number of fantastic performances. Our contribution to the evening included: Penketh High Advanced Singers, JETEG- Rock band ensemble, TCAT drumming group and TCAT Choir. All of the performers performed with confidence and to the highest professional standard, making the evening very enjoyable for all.

On 21st November we were visited by the Stoller Outreach Ensemble and members of the Manchester Camerata. They gave three performances throughout the day: a Maths themed performance for our local primary schools, a popular music short programme for our Year 7 pupils and a listening experience for our GCSE pupils to improve their listening skills. It was a privilege to have a professional ensemble at our school and gave pupils an opportunity to hear classical instruments playing live.

This year's P-factor took place on the 27th November and was a showcase of unbelievable vocal talent. All finalists performed with confidence and showmanship, demonstrating some of the best talent we have ever seen in this competition. The runner up from the evening was Holly in Year 11, with best newcomer being awarded to Lily in Year 8, and a rendition of Demi Lovato's "Stone Cold" secured high praise from the judges for Shori in Year 10 who was awarded P-factor winner 2019. In truth all of the performers were worthy of the highest praise and they should be incredibly proud of their contributions to a wonderful showcase of musical talent.



# Penketh



## PRIDE

### CHICAGO

Our students began rehearsing in April for their performance of The Schools Edition Chicago; In roaring twenties Chicago, young and impressionable Roxie Hart murders a faithless lover and convinces her hapless husband, Amos, to take the rap...until he finds out he's been duped and turns on Roxie. Convicted and sent to death row, Roxie and another "Merry Murderess," Velma Kelly, vie for the spotlight and the headlines, ultimately joining forces in search of the "American Dream": fame, fortune, and acquittal.

Show week for students consisted of a Monday morning performance to all year 7 students, followed by a matinee performance to our local primaries and special invited guests from the local community. Staff, friends and their family were then invited to our open dress rehearsal before a full show week Tuesday through to Friday night. There were over 60 students involved in the performance and production roles of this fantastic show and yet again the standard of performance did not disappoint, students as always at Penketh High School delivered above and beyond outstanding in the Performing Arts! Some comments received from guests included:

"We enjoyed a fine afternoon tea followed by a performance of the latest school play " Chicago ". What a show!! The time and effort that must have gone into it was evident and what a talented company of youngsters.

We wish to thank you very much for your invitation to watch your fantastic production of Chicago. The talent on view was a credit to both students and staff who are to be congratulated on their efforts."



### Penketh Authors

Six Year 9 pupils from Penketh High School became published authors last month after writing the novel "Interview With Anxiety".

The project "White Water Writers", in conjunction with Higher Horizons+, provides pupils with the opportunity to undertake the process of writing a novel from conceptualisation and planning, through to the publication.

Pupils were given a week to plan, write and proof read the book. During the initial planning stage pupils said stress and anxiety were important to young people today and so this feature of adolescent life became an integral part of the plot. Each pupil was responsible for a character and independently wrote their chapters.

The pupils had a book signing at which pupils were able to sign copies of the book for staff and families.

Mrs Moore who co-ordinated the programme said:

"The pupils worked so hard, they had no adult input just supervision. I was amazed that they managed to produce the book in just a week."





## SPARK Students Showcase Excellence

As we share our great projects and practice, we have started to encourage our students to share their expertise in short clips and videos to explain their learning process. Our wearables and 3D printing enrichments have expanded to include a festive theme this month with pupils developing skills in Computer Aided Design to design Christmas decorations which they have been able to print using the 3D printer. Two of these designs have pride of place on the Christmas tree in the main school reception.

We were delighted to be asked to continue our resin printing projects that have been showcased worldwide by Photocentric at the international 3D printing event recently.

Our year 7 pupils have been learning about how to 3D print and all about careers in the additive manufacturing industry as part of their curriculum enhancement sessions. Year 8 designed, coded and built their own robots and have been learning about how to use microcontrollers. Whilst Year 9 have been wowing us with their use of GIS (Global Information Systems) to showcase the uses of big data. The museum in a box team has shared it's final designs with representatives from the Smithsonian Museum including a resin model of Buckingham Palace. Due to the popularity of our mircobit classes we will be including more mircobit session within our

enrichment programme so that pupils can develop their projects further. We are looking forward to them sharing more clips and showcasing their work at events in the coming months.





# SPARK



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## AT PENKETH SPARK sharing our expertise

Over the last few months SPARK has been sharing its expertise with several digital events and contributing to national guidance. We were delighted to be part of the Digital Media Culture and Sport (DMCS) Libraries official national guidance as a best practice example of digital education in the National Makefest Guidance. Similarly we were delighted to share our expertise at the first Mircobit Conference at the BBC, giving educators across the world information regarding the foundation and implementation of a makerspace. We have also been involved with a digital program with businesses within Warrington at a Warrington Business Exchange event at the end of September and discussed ways to improve digital education to support local businesses that recruit our young people for apprenticeships.

Following the success of our work with Warrington libraries we have been pleased to be able to support the work in Halton Libraries as they look to start providing digital workshops for young people across Halton. It's been a busy term sharing best practice and we have a lot of new collaborations for our young people in the next term ahead.



## SparkED across Warrington

The SparkEd program has been extended with support from the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership, after securing funding for the SparkED program in collaboration with Culture Warrington and Livewire. The funding has helped to establish a new Program for Warrington Digital and is due to launch in the next few weeks. We were delighted to take a lead role in securing this funding meaning that SPARK can further expand our outreach programme to support libraries and young people across the town.

Warrington's Digital Programme delivers coding, digital fabrication, physical computing and other innovative digital workshops to young and other vulnerable people in schools, central and neighbourhood libraries. The program will support young people to access pathways into future careers within the digital sectors.

Penketh High School are leading the development of 18 free to access workshops and programs throughout the year. We are extremely proud to have been awarded funding to support this program alongside our fantastic partners. SPARK have commenced the training for librarians with the first workshops due to commence on Friday 13th December.







# Penketh High School

Dear parents, guardians and other interested parties,

On behalf of the Academy Trust at Penketh High School, I am writing to inform you that we will be consulting on admission arrangements for Year 7 entry to the school for the academic year 2021/22.

Our outstanding young people are at the heart of all of the decisions we make, as we strive to develop pupils both academically and holistically ensuring that they have the best possible opportunities for future success when they leave school. We are passionate about our school community and the strong relationships between both our families and the pupils themselves. These relationships are key to developing a supportive and inclusive community built on two key principles of respect and high expectation.

Those of you familiar with the school will know we have secured consecutive years of significant improvement, resulting in the school's best ever outcomes in 2019, meaning that pupils leave Penketh with a strong foundation for future success. Central to supporting pupils to make this progress are the relationships across the school, really knowing our pupils helps us provide them with better and more personalised support so that they make the most of the opportunities at school to maximise their potential.

This aspect of school life is important to us and so we feel it is the right decision to reduce our Published Admission Number from 2021/22 onwards. Whilst some may feel this adds a degree of exclusivity to our school as we accommodate a smaller cohort than in previous years; we feel this is in the best interests of our school community and will provide our pupils with an even better school experience – which is our priority.

The proposal is to maintain existing arrangements with the exception of a change to the Published Admission Number (PAN). The PAN is currently 240 across all year groups at the school and the intention is to reduce this PAN to 180 for Year 7 entry for then academic year 2021/2022 and all subsequent years.

All comments received between Monday 16<sup>th</sup> of December 2019 and Monday 27<sup>th</sup> of January 2020 will be considered by the Academy Trust before final arrangements are determined.

Please send all comments to the following address:

Chair of Academy Trust  
c/o Penketh High School  
Heath Road  
Penketh  
Warrington  
WA5 2BY

Or by emailing: [pan@penkethhigh.org](mailto:pan@penkethhigh.org)

The school's proposed admission arrangements are available to view/download online. For more information, please visit the School's website at [www.penkethhigh.org](http://www.penkethhigh.org).

Yours sincerely,

Mr J Carlin.  
Principal.



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