



# Year 9 Newsletter

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 3

FEB 2015

Welcome everyone, to the year 9 half termly newsletter. I hope you and your families are all well and have been keeping yourselves warm over this half term.

## Year 9 Options

As you have all played an active part in it, you would have noticed what a very busy half term this has been for Year 9. Thank you for your attendance and feedback at the Introductory Evening, Parent Teacher Consultation Evening and the Options Evening this week. I hope every night has helped in some way to ensure your son/daughter is on the right track, and have the knowledge and understanding of what the next steps are. I hope that we are now well on the way with helping you and your son/daughter make the right subject choices to achieve success in the next 2 years of their education and beyond. The Year 9 reports and progress grades will continue to play a pivotal role in guiding us with the options process, and give us a realistic view on the setting process to ensure all students are set at the right level and are getting the best support available.

As you know by now the assessment framework within the College, nationally and within GCSE level subjects, is about to change. To give you an idea of the current changes please refer to the College website and the assessment booklet which can be downloaded from <http://www.helston.cornwall.sch.uk/curriculum-overview> within the parent section of the College website. The Year 9's will be the first to study GCSE Maths and English on the new 1-9 scale. I hope you now know a little bit more about the new GCSE targets, and how they will link to your child's assessment levels. After speaking to the Head Teacher this week, she reminded me that every year group over the last 20 years or so have been through changes within KS 4 qualifications, so we understandably need to get our heads down and focus on the students making progress and performing well, whatever changes to the qualifications and grading criteria there may be ahead.

## Continued Support

There continues to be provision for extra intervention in English including students being given extra support in smaller groups. Many other areas of support are being offered in English, for example after school clubs and work cards monitoring student progress. If you would like any further information on the additional support available in English please contact myself or Miss Godzicz (Head of KS3 English). Later in the term, we will be hoping to add extra Maths classes as well to support year 9

learning in maths in consultation with Mr Stivey (Head of KS3 Maths). There is currently Maths support available on a Monday evening in C29 or alternatively students could use the mathswatch website [www.mathswatchvle.com](http://www.mathswatchvle.com) to aid their Maths learning.

On the topic of extra support, every week myself, Miss Murray (Assistant Head of Progress for Year 9) or a Miss Fuller/Mr Wara will be on hand to support homework club. We will place students in homework club who are clearly struggling with the pressures of homework and deadlines, or if students would like to check their homework is up to date and of the expected standard, then they are more than welcome to come along for an hour. Please continue to check your son/daughter's planners and PlannerLive and if there are any problems please ask them to speak to their subject teacher or a member of the Year 9 team. We will be happy to help before names are sent to me to ensure they attend homework club to further their learning.

## Extra-curricular successes

We have continued to be busy with sporting fixtures this term competing in Cross Country Meets, Swimming Galas and now the football season has begun. Most recently the Year 9 girls beat St Ives School 6-1 and the Year 9 boys beat Truro School 3-1 after losing to the same team last year in the West Cornwall final. So a positive start to the football season for the year group, long may this continue. Good luck to all performers in all future fixtures.

## Snow Queen

The College Drama and Music production of The Snow Queen took place last week and was a fantastic show. Well done to all the Year 9 actors and musicians who performed so impressively and helped to make the show the undoubted success it was. You can see some of the talented year group in action below.





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## Assemblies

In recent assemblies we have been continuing to follow the College's themes of the week 'Embracing the Co-operative values of the College', which have recently included Solidarity and Honesty. I hope that all Year 9's demonstrate both solidarity and appreciate honesty within the classroom and the community. We hope these values underpin all of the students becoming respectful of everyone's right to learn and progress within the College and becoming respectful citizens within the community.

## College Skirts

We have become aware that there has been some uncertainty over what are the appropriate skirts to be worn by our students. We have therefore sourced some styles that can be purchased from the College or a supplier Trophy Textiles in Pool but parents/carers are welcome to source skirts themselves, if preferred. The skirts are all 22 inch in length, and there are samples for students to try at the College. The cost is approximately £15 but this does vary slightly dependent on style and size. Please click on the [Uniform](#) link on the College website for further details.

## Free School Meals

Did you know that we can claim extra funding (£935) for every student claiming Free School Meals. We spend the money in a number of ways to help disadvantaged students, e.g. one to one English & Maths tuition, specialist agency support, plus a variety of extra-curricular & enrichment activities. If you are in receipt of any of the following state benefits then you are probably eligible:

- Income Support
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income that does not exceed £16,190

It's easy to register for Free School Meals. Just go to the Cornwall Council website – [www.cornwall.gov.uk](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk) - and click on Education and Learning; then click onto Apply for Free School Meals; and finally complete and submit the form. If you do not have access to the internet at home, then please contact the College North Site Reception on 01326 572685, who will be able to provide you with a paper copy.

## Science Week

Don't forget to purchase your tickets to the Science Week Evening Lectures, which include *Mind and Brain in the 21st Century*, *Fire and Ice* and *A Journey Through Time and Space*. Tickets are £1-£2 and available from North Site Reception.

## Good news

The College is absolutely delighted with the announcement that Helston Community College has been included in this round of the Priority Schools Building Programme. The visit of Deputy Prime Minister, Nick Clegg, to the College this week will help to reassure people that this time the building programme will go ahead. Fingers crossed and we hope to see the first spade in the ground soon

I look forward to continuing to work with you to ensure all Year 9 students are excelling in their time at Helston Community College through 2015.

With best wishes,  
Mr T Richardson  
Head of Progress – Year 9