



Plessington News

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Theme for the Week - Harvest

Harvest Prayer

Lord of the harvest, You share your wealth with us in creation and show us the abundance of your generosity
in the fruits of the earth.

Give us eyes to see your face in the needs of others and ears to hear your voice in the cries of the poor
that with arms outstretched we may let go of our riches and share the earth's bounty with all your people.

Amen.

Dear Parents

Welcome to the new version of Plessington News, now a weekly newsletter designed to keep you in touch with all that is going on at our college.

I am delighted to have joined the college at a very exciting phase in its history. We have just applied for re-designation as a Technology College as well as receiving the school's best ever GCSE results with 65% of students achieving 5A*-C and 94% of our Sixth Form students achieving A' level passes.

The new year has started positively and I thank you for the encouragement and support expressed by yourself to myself and all the staff. I am confident that this will be a productive, successful, orderly and eventful year.

We are pleased to welcome our new Year 7 pupils who have arrived not only with enthusiasm but looking so smart in the uniform. Many thanks to all Year 7 parents for equipping your children appropriately. They are a credit to you. This was highlighted even more by Tuesday's Year 7 Welcome Mass this week that followed a whole year group retreat.

We also welcome, apart from myself, many new staff:

Mr L Botes – Business Studies,
Mrs J Fleet – Teaching Assistant
Miss J Lee – Learning Support
Mrs D Sadler – MFL
Miss J Stott – Head of Music

Miss M Boast – Teaching Assistant,
Miss L Hill – History
Mr P Leicester – ICT
Miss H Smith – Art
Mrs M Thomson – Maths

Mrs A Finley – Teaching Assistant
Miss H Horne – Music/SEN
Miss E Rowe – Science
Miss J Smith – Head of Geography

I'm sure they will make a tremendous contribution to our success. You will notice that your child has a newly designed pupil planner with very useful information. This will enable you to track the amount of homework that your child should be receiving and we have also included within the planner a space for rewarding good work. I would ask you to check daily that your child is recording homework and obviously setting time aside to do it. It is never too early in Year 7 or too late in Year 13 to get into the habit of setting aside a regular time to complete outstanding work.

Homework is a very important part of our curriculum and I would urge you to check that your child is doing and receiving homework. If you feel that the school is not meeting your expectations of the quantity and quality of homework, please let me know next week via pupil planners. I will ask my teachers to send any planners with comments from yourself to me so that I can have a full picture of how you feel.

As a rule of thumb your child should be receiving homework for the core subjects of English, DT, Maths, Science, RE and ICT at least once a week and with the other subjects once a fortnight. Obviously these will vary, especially at KS4 (Yrs10/11) where your child should have ongoing homework via coursework as well as regular homework.

I intend to focus on homework via a new initiative called Learning Programmes which I will outline to you in the next few weeks. Please also ask your child for details of SAM learning, another useful source of learning which the college has purchased for your child.

As most parents will get to know, Plessington News is a means of communicating weekly events to parents. It will tell you about meetings in school and also alert you to look out for letters from us giving details about school events, e.g. parents' evenings and school visits. I intend to publish a school calendar next week helping you plan the year.

Plessington News will be published on a Friday, so please ask your child for a copy every Friday afternoon.

It is my belief that a Catholic school should form, inform and transform the lives of children. It is my desire to continue to make Plessington in the next five years a purposeful, highly motivated Catholic comprehensive, which delivers appropriate vocational and academic courses, whilst enabling all members of its community to develop their personal and vocational talents to the full. It is my role as Headteacher to lead the school to enable the students and pupils to extend their possibilities and potential, to lead them to new horizons and to empower them to realize the gifts they possess as human beings.

Schools are about Teaching and learning and in my view the ethos of a school is paramount to its success. Good standards of uniform and appearance, sound punctuality and attendance are crucial if teachers are to be enabled to do what they do best – teach.

We intend to celebrate successes – it is often the case in schools that children who are doing everything right end up being ignored or just simply merging into the background, it can be that all our focuses become on the children who are more vocal. With this in mind, we intend to celebrate all the children next week who have kept all their credits, by sending home a letter of congratulations.

Please keep an eye open for the Gold letter.

Furthermore, I would also like to draw your attention to the uniform appearance policy – outdoor coats section. Named or logo sweatshirts (hoodies) are not acceptable. This also applies as students travel to and from the college. Again, I would appreciate your help in ensuring that we can have all children in correct uniform during this term.

I am keen for children to have a mobile phone for use in emergency. However, some children have been abusing this by keeping their phone switched on or indeed using it in class and around the school. This has led to teachers having to divert their attention away from teaching to correct this. I have therefore asked for confiscated phones and I will personally return them to you at a mutually convenient time to both of us. I would therefore appreciate if you could instruct your child (if they have a mobile) to turn it off and not have it on in class as the phone is for emergency use only.

In doing all of this you are supporting myself and the staff to instill in our children a healthy diet of respect, responsibility and discipline.

We are also proud to have a new restaurant and I can report that the children's behaviour, manners and etiquette are superb. We have also opened all the toilets, introduced a one-way system and I plan to make other changes very soon.

I will be outlining in later editions of Plessington News my aim and aspiration for the community. I intend to develop the use of ICT and I'm convinced that ICT enhances teaching and learning. All of our community will have access and the benefit of e-learning.

This will enable everyone to share in the exciting world of online learning. No more will your child be able to say that they do not have anything to do from school. You will have access 24/7 to a range of enrichment and enthusiastic activities for all your child's subjects. I intend to develop this within my first year and will let you know more details in future editions.

I also intend to change the school uniform from September 2006 and will write to you for consultations in the next few weeks.

I am extremely proud of my new privileged position. I have returned to the college, having left 3 years ago to take up my first Headship at a Catholic school in North Wales. Hopefully I can continue the Plessington tradition, whilst moving the school forward to a place of further and future success.

Every good wish

Yours sincerely

T QUINN
Headteacher