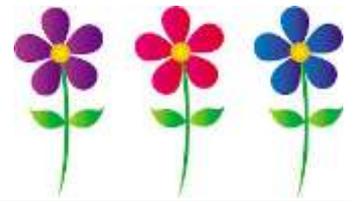


EXCEL ACADEMY NEWS



www.excelacademy.info

February 2017



We now produce regular half term Newsletters to keep you better informed of developments at The Excel Academy. Hopefully you find this useful.

It has been good to meet so many of you at recent Parents' Evenings and we have the Year 8 Parents and Pathways Evening on Thursday 16 March 2017. For those whose Parents' Evenings are yet to take place, please take the opportunity to discuss your child's progress with their teachers and work together with us to ensure even better learning takes place over the rest of the year.

As I have stated previously we have extremely high expectations of all our students' behaviour, their personal standards and their effort and determination, because if these things are right, progress is guaranteed. Their response to this continued 'raising of the bar' has been extremely encouraging. There is much still to do, but the Year 11 students are setting a new standard in the Academy for lower years to match and build upon. Our best years as an Academy are certainly yet to come. We maintained our 'Good' Ofsted rating and we now strive to become outstanding.

I hope that you will find our Newsletter useful and informative. Please feel free to let us know your thoughts. I wish you a happy half-term break, if you're lucky enough to get one.

Polite notice - our staff are here to help, so please extend to them the respect and courtesy they offer you. Any forms of abuse including shouting, swearing or any act of aggression will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Please treat our staff with the respect you expect from us.

Mr D Bishop - Principal



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HOY Updates!



Happy New Year! Just before Christmas, Year 7 students were involved with the When You Wish Upon a Star charity who help grant the wishes of children living with a life threatening illness. Year 7 raised £104 for the charity! An incredible achievement!

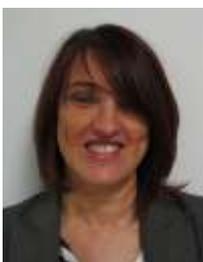
In another story, sixteen Year 7's went to Fenton Manor for a Netball Tournament. All members showed excellent effort and commitment to the Academy and the sport! Well done!

Year 7's have shown incredible commitment and enthusiasm for our extra curricular activities and attend many of our activities! Well done!



Year 8 have had a good half term, showing consistently good uniform and attendance standards across the year group. They are working towards planning a charity fundraising event over the next half term for Douglas Macmillan, with several students leading an assembly and then an inter-form contest to see who can raise the most money for the charity! Looking to next half term, it is the Year 8 Parents Evening and Option Choices event - more information will be released on the website and via Facebook over the coming weeks.

Thank you for your continued support!



It has been a good start to 2017 with majority of students coming back to the Academy with the correct attitude for learning after the Christmas break. As usual the uniform and attitude of students as been excellent.

We have had PHSE and Form time activities focusing on British Values, alcohol abuse and e-safety.

Looking forward to next half term, we will be having Year 9 Parents Evening and it would be excellent to see as many parents as possible attend.

As always thank you for your ongoing support.



Happy New Year! A great start to 2017 as the Y10's came back to the Academy in the mood for hard work, perhaps reminded by the fact that this time next year they will be preparing for their all important GCSE exams! As the current Y11's enter this phase, the Y10's will step up in to the Prefect roles. If your child has not been a Peer Mentor this year, they can still apply to become a Prefect. Many of the Peer Mentors will be going through the rigorous selection process in order to be selected to become a Senior Prefect - a process that will help them in future interviews. I look forward to seeing who will be our new Head Boy and Head Girl!



Many of the Y11's have just had their first real taste of exam pressures as they prepared for their Mock Examinations just before the Christmas break. They then has Mock Results Day in early January, where they had a morning session with Elevate, where students were involved in the 'Ace Your Exams' workshops, where they picked up a range of top tips about how they can work smarter to prepare better for their exams, followed by collecting their Mock results. We were lucky enough to have representatives from Stoke on Trent College, Newcastle College, Reaseheath and Stoke 6th Form College on hand in the afternoon to discuss results with students and

whether they would be enough to get them on to the courses that they wished to take. For many this showed that if they continued to work hard they could achieve the good grades that would allow them the chance to go on and study what they wanted. For others, it has opened their eyes to the efforts they must now give so that they can be successful in their Summer examinations and go on to be accepted on their preferred courses. The Academy is fully supporting students by offering P6 classes, extra tutoring and a dedicated revision and study hub, nicknamed "The Night Club", 3pm - 5pm Monday to Thursday every week with staff support on hand. With only a matter of weeks left until the exams, there really should be no excuses for students not to be grasping all of these opportunities with both hands to ensure great GCSE results and success for their futures.

Mr Kelsall - Vice Principal

Parent Forums



Our Parent Forum programme continues, with a good turnout of parents in early January, where Mr Harvey explained to parents the behaviour policy. A lot of parents were really interested to hear about how the Academy has a clear rewards programme to acknowledge the vast majority of students who show good behaviour each day. If you have not been to a forum yet, they provide a great opportunity to gain an insight into different areas of our Academy as well as allowing senior leaders to listen to the views of parents. Our next Parent Forum meetings are shown below, all parents are welcome to attend.

Dates for your diary – 6-7pm

02 March – Special Educational Needs & Pupil Premium – Mrs.C.Malhi

27 April – Achievement – Mr.R.Kelsall

Y11 March Mock Examinations

Year 11 completed their mock exams in December. Since this time they have been very busy in lesson completing the taught element of the course and/or completing controlled assessments. An increasing number of students have also been attending our new 'Y11 Nightclub' where students can study in a quiet environment with staff on hand to support. After school lessons are also an integral part of the Y11 exam preparation provision as well as our new tutoring service that we have



been able to offer to some students.

In March, Y11 students will sit additional mock exams in Maths, English and Science – the timetable can be found on the Academy website and further on in this newsletter.



The Night Club

Termly Target Grades - Go4Schools

You Said...

In my first meeting with parents back in October, I discussed how parents may use our achievement programme 'Go4schools' to see how their child is performing across different subject areas. Many parents have now logged in to this system (www.go4schools.com) and commented on improvements they would like to see. One issue was that End of Term Targets, where parents felt a little dismayed by the fact that new Term Targets were entered at the beginning of the term, meaning that students often appeared to be underachieving until they had sat their test paper at the end of the term. We have now agreed that new term targets will only be uploaded in the week students sit their end of term exams, reducing the impact this has.

We did...



Mr Harvey - Assistant Principal



Uniform update

Since Christmas we have had a few instances where boys have worn black trousers to the Academy. Can I please remind all parents that the Academy uniform is a 'mid grey' colour for trousers, skirts and tights.

Attendance and Punctuality

I am pleased to report that the punctuality of students to the Academy has been excellent this half term. In what is the bleakest of half terms it is a credit to the students that they are here on time and ready to learn every single day. The sanction for poor punctuality is a same day detention and I thank parents for supporting the Academy when/if it has been necessary to impose this sanction on your child.



Supporting Attendance

The Excel Academy remains committed to ensuring all students attend the Academy every single day. We have recently started working with an Attendance company called AttendEDC (Every Day Counts), and their role is to support families and individuals who may not be in school on a particular day without reason. AttendEDC have officers who will visit homes and talk to parents and students who are absent, and encourage them to make their way into school wherever possible.

Further information about the exact role of AttendEDC can be found on the Academy website in the Parents section, under 'SLT Letters.'

Encouraging Positive Thoughts and Communication

The Academy has focused on 'positive communication with each other' during registration and PSHE sessions this half term, and has also been a part of the 'Safer Internet Day' campaign. This is in response to students who use social media in a negative way. I often talk to parents who struggle to control the negativity of social media. As a result could I ask that all parents monitor their child's use of their mobile phone/social media accounts to ensure they are being used appropriately at all times.

On a similar theme we have also welcomed to the Academy 'LZ7 and Lily Jo' who are delivering a spiritual message to students across the country in association with the charity organisation Ruff and Ruby. The group performed a collection of songs to the students in Year 7 – Year 10, and interspersed it with key messages of positivity, self-esteem and self-worth. The show had a real impact with the students and the messages were extremely well received.



Student Voice!

The Excel Academy has now launched the new "Student Voice" button on the Academy website. Students can use this to make suggestions or to give feedback on any topic they wish.



The image shows a screenshot of the Excel Academy website. The page title is "Excel Academy Student Voice". The website header includes navigation links: Home, Academy Evaluation, Information, News & Events, Parents, Students, Staff, Governance, and Contact us. A search bar is also present. The main content area features a "Students" section with a login form, a "HELP" button, and a "New Student Voice Button" highlighted with a yellow arrow. The button is a blue megaphone icon with the text "STUDENT VOICE". The Excel Academy logo is in the top right corner.

Poppy Appeal



POPPY APPEAL

Thank you very much for helping with our Appeal.

£ 239.07
was collected by you.

Without your help, we would be unable to continue our vital welfare and benevolent work.

Yours sincerely

MR A. FORRESTER

Local Honorary Organiser

MFH01

District Total (if available) £ 36,863.04

Registered Charity No. 219279

The Excel Academy raised an incredible £239.07 in 2016 with our Poppy Appeal!

A huge thank you to Mr Graham and the Prefect Team who promoted and sold the poppies around the Academy.

It was lovely to see so many staff and students alike wearing their poppy's with pride!

Well done!

Macbeth!

On Monday 27 February 2017, Fred Productions - a Birmingham based company - will be coming in to the Academy to perform Macbeth and workshop ideas with our Year 10 and 11 students who are currently studying the text.

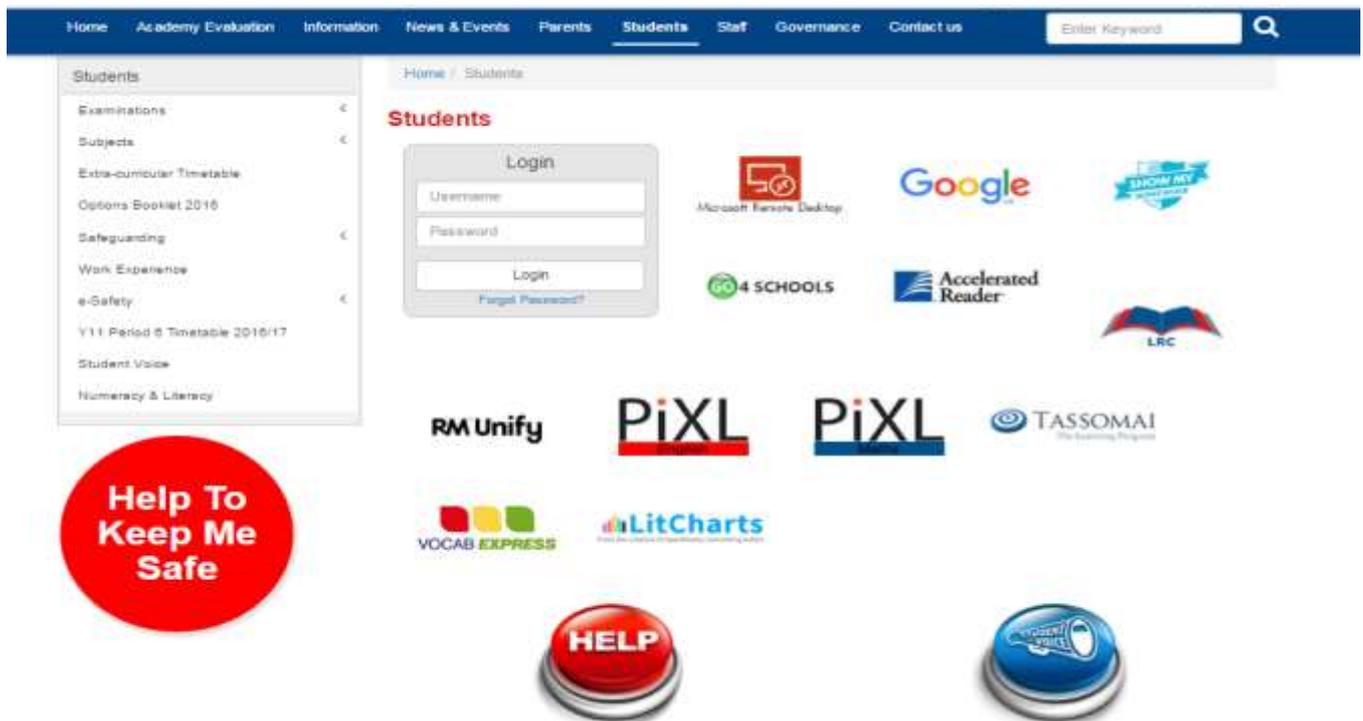


Pictures to follow in the next newsletter!

Student Page

On the Academy website, the Student tab holds lots of useful links for students to access with just a click of a button!

There are links for Google, Show My Home Work, Go 4 Schools, Accelerated Reader, the Academy LRC, RM Unify (email), PIXL Maths, PIXL English, Tassomai, Vocab Express and Lit Charts, alongside the "Help" safeguarding links, and the Student Voice button.



Parent Governor



We have received three expressions of interest for the Parent Governor Vacancy here at the Academy, therefore a vote will now take place.

A voting form will be sent home with every students and should be returned to the Principal's Office at the Academy by 12 noon on Friday 17 February.



Y11 Core Mock Timetable

In March, our Year 11 students will be sitting Core Mock exams in order to further prepare them for their GCSE examinations in the Summer. Please find below a copy of their timetable. This can also be found on the Academy website.

Students will need to bring a black pen, pencil, rubber, ruler and calculator to their exams.

DATE	Start	Len	Component Title	Cands	Rooms
Mon 06 Mar	09:00	02:00	English Language	All	MUH, T3, Conf Rm, R1, M5
	11:20	01:30	Maths Non Calc	All	MUH, T3, Conf Rm, R1, M5
	14:00	01:00	11X1, 2, 3, 4 Physics A181	91	MUH
Tues 07 Mar	09:00	01:30	Maths Calc Paper 1	All	MUH, T3, Conf Rm, R1, M5
	11:20	01:00	11X1, 2, 3, 4, 11L1, 2, 3 Biology A161	All	MUH, T3, Conf Rm, R1, M5
	12:20	01:00	11X1, 2, 3, 4, 11L1, 2, 3 Chemistry A171	All	MUH, T3, Conf Rm, R1, M5
	14:00	01:00	11X1, 2, 3, 4 Physics A182	91	MUH
Wed 08 Mar	11:20	01:00	11X1, 2, 3, 4 Chemistry A172 11L1, 2, 3 Physics A181	All	MUH, T3, Conf Rm, R1, M5
	12:20	01:00	11X1, 2, 3, 4 Biology A162	110	MUH
Thur 09 Mar	09:00	01:30	Maths Calc Paper 2	All	MUH, T3, Conf Rm, R1, M5
	11:20	02:00	English Language	All	MUH, T3, Conf Rm, R1, M5
Fri 10 Mar	09:00	01:00	11X1 Biology A163	27	MUH
	11:20	01:00	11X1 Chemistry A173	27	MUH
	12:20	01:00	11X1 Physics A183	8	MUH



Safeguarding

- ⇒ Our team
- ⇒ Apps
- ⇒ Decoy Apps
- ⇒ Sexual Exploitation
- ⇒ Facebook Top Tips for Parents

Meet the Team!

In September 2016 a new safeguarding team was developed to include a range of staff who can support your child with welfare needs. Generally, this means that your child has somewhere to go if they feel upset, lonely, scared or worried about anything in or out of school.

This team consists of 5 members of staff.



Miss Smith works across the College Academies Trust (Excel Academy, The Discovery Academy, Maple Court, Studio College) in her role as safeguarding lead. She has been working within safeguarding for 9 years and teaching for 15 years, but now has the opportunity to do this work with even more students and staff!

Mrs Wainwright (right) has a wealth of experience in supporting young people and is on hand every day in the welfare office.



Mrs Sherratt (left) is usually everybody's first port of call! She is incredibly approachable and likes nothing more than seeing happy and safe students!

Mr Pickup (right) is a Maths teacher, and as you can see our only male member of the team! We are looking to expand this – so watch this space!



Mrs Malhi (left) is also the Academy's SENCO. She has lots of different roles to play in the Academy, but oversees all the Special Educational needs provision.

Information for Parents / Carers

Useful info

'Apps'

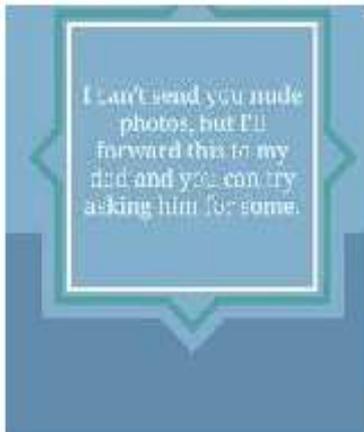


The "Send this Instead" app empowers kids giving them a voice when they are under pressure to send intimate images of themselves online.



A company asked all the funny people they knew, "What would you say if

someone asked you to send images you didn't want to?" They took their answers and made posters and developed this app. The posters are witty, sarcastic and meant to help get the point across – using humor as a strategy.



The 'Send This Instead' app has been developed to help children combat **sexting** from peers. The app gives a range of optional images with humorous messages so that children can send these as a response to sexting, putting them back in control.

Decoy 'apps'

In order to throw off the unknowing eye, decoy app icons often look like a regular camera icon, music app, photo app or a calculator. These apps are great for securing sensitive information from strangers, but they also make it difficult for parents to monitor what information children are accessing and holding on their devices.



Poof

Poof hides other apps instantaneously. All that's needed is to open the app and to select which apps should be hidden and Poof will make those other apps disappear. Poof is no longer available, but it is still available for those that downloaded it before it was removed from the app store.

Secret Calculator

Appearing as a calculator icon, the only giveaway that this may actually be a decoy app is if you see more than one calculator icon on your child's device. Private information, videos and photographs can be hidden in this app.



Secret Chamber

The icon appears as a sunflower sitting within a picture frame and is labelled 'SC'. As a decoy app SC creates a secure, private zone for images and videos that is accessible without a passcode.

Secret Piano

This decoy app looks like piano keys but it actually conceals passwords, notes, photographs, videos, contacts, messages, audio, downloads, to-do lists and the locations of contacts.



Sexual Exploitation

On Facebook this week and in The Sentinel, was an article about whether parents should be letting their children see this film. The consensus was a definite YES!

We believe that parents/carers, should watch this film first before showing their children, but then sitting with them when they watch it, so they can discuss it and show the dangers of online social networking.

Please follow link below to see the short film - "Kayleigh's Love Story" produced by Leicester police force with the support and consent of Kayleigh's family. The film tells the *true story of the last 13 days in the life of 15-year-old Kayleigh Haywood.*



The Leicestershire schoolgirl was groomed online by Luke Harlow, a man she had never met, before being raped and murdered by his next door neighbour Stephen Beadman. This all happened within the space of 13 days.

The film is part of the Leicester police force campaign on sexual exploitation, hoping to serve as a warning to children and adults of the dangers of grooming and sexual exploitation following Kayleigh's tragic death in November 2015.



Please note that if the film was to be shown in British cinemas it would have a 15 age certificate.

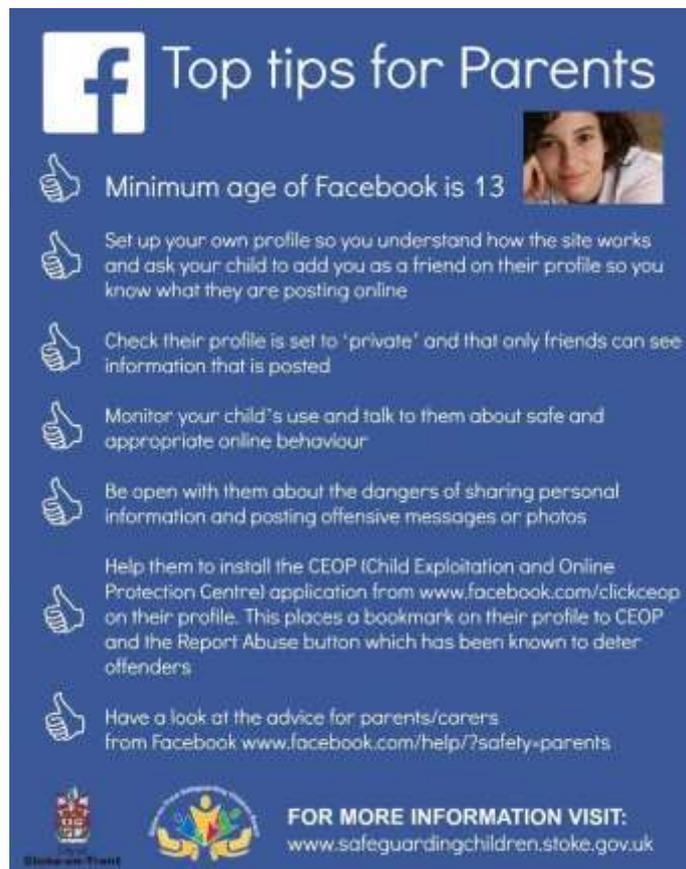
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WsbYHI-rZOE>

Please also note that since its release, this film has been widely shared through the internet and social media, so many young people may already have seen it. Please sit down with your child and discuss it.

Regards,

Paula Ripplingham-Smith (Designated Safeguarding Lead)

College Academies Trust



f Top tips for Parents

-  Minimum age of Facebook is 13 
-  Set up your own profile so you understand how the site works and ask your child to add you as a friend on their profile so you know what they are posting online
-  Check their profile is set to 'private' and that only friends can see information that is posted
-  Monitor your child's use and talk to them about safe and appropriate online behaviour
-  Be open with them about the dangers of sharing personal information and posting offensive messages or photos
-  Help them to install the CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre) application from www.facebook.com/clickceop on their profile. This places a bookmark on their profile to CEOP and the Report Abuse button which has been known to deter offenders
-  Have a look at the advice for parents/carers from Facebook www.facebook.com/help/?safety-parents

  **FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:**
www.safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk

Dates for your diary

Spring Term 2017	
Half Term	Monday 20 February - Friday 24 February
Academy Closes	Friday 07 April
	N.B. Easter is 16 April
Summer Term 2017	
Academy Opens	Monday 24 April
May Day	Monday 01 May
Half Term	Monday 29 May to Friday 02 June
Academy Closes	Friday 21 July

Upcoming Events

Parent Forum Meeting (SEND & Welfare Focus)	Thursday 02 March 2017	All Parents Welcome
Year 11 Photographs	Wednesday 15 March 2017	
Year 8 Parents and Pathways Evening	Thursday 16 March 2017	All Year 8 Parents Welcome
Year 9 Parents Evening	Thursday 30 March 2017	All Year 9 Parents Welcome
SEN Parents Evening	Wednesday 05 April 2017	All SEN Parents Welcome

