



Newent Community School and Sixth Form Centre

Striving for Excellence

Principal • Mr Alan Johnson

Telephone: 01531 820550

Community Enquiries: 01531 828916

Sixth Form: 01531 828915

Watery Lane, Newent, Gloucestershire GL18 1QF **www.newent.gloucs.sch.uk** **Email:** admin@newent.gloucs.sch.uk

24th July, 2018

Dear Parents/Carers

I am writing to you as we all look forward to the end of another very busy year at Newent Community School and Sixth Form Centre. It seems somewhat unreal that this is only my second year as Principal here, as it feels like I have always been here. I am sure that must be a good thing. Now while everyone knows that I am always looking for 100% attendance from our students, I do appreciate there are often unavoidable reasons for absence. However, please remember unlike many schools we have a qualified professional nurse on duty who is able to give advice regarding sending students in to school. In addition my mantra of 'every day counts' remains, as such please would you ensure that medical appointments are made outside registration and teaching times and where possible limited to half a day. After the third day of absence from school we would like to receive a copy of the appointment card, prescription etc. In addition please continue to support the school by not taking holidays in term time. As frustrating as it is for all of us to see the price hikes in school holidays our students only get one chance at an education. Please be aware that Shire Hall have confirmed that they will look to pursue cases where parents take unauthorised holidays of 10 sessions (5 days) or more.

Direct line (24 hours) for absence reporting is 01531 828927 or email attendance@newent.gloucs.sch.uk

While I realise that I can often sound like a broken record when it comes to the importance of good attendance, looking back at the end of each week, I am simply amazed by what our students who attend regularly have achieved. So many of our young people have excelled in so many fields it is impossible to list them all. Frankly it would be difficult not to be impressed by all of the many activities and events that take place here week in week out, in addition to our taught curriculum.

Looking back to my own education I don't remember schools being so busy or offering so much to their students. It was fantastic to have so many of you join me at our recent celebration evening as we listened in awe as the citations were read aloud and student achievement described. There is so much talent here in our student body. We can all feel rightly proud of them.

For example, at the weekend I had the privilege to watch Paddy Thompson in Year 10 batting well above his years when he opened for Newent Cricket Club. Whilst enjoying my strawberries and cream in the Newent sun I was proud to watch Paddy make his 1st XI league debut against local rivals Lydney. I witnessed Paddy take a sublime diving catch to dismiss the opening batsman before taking 2 wickets himself with his leg spin. Paddy played the ball with real control and finesse, guiding the ball to the boundary on 5 occasions, scoring 24. At the same time Ella Bardsley-Taylor was competing in the British rowing championships. Her quadruple women's junior aged 14 scull team managed to win the gold medal, and set a new championship record time. In addition, Ella was the 4th fastest girl for her age in a single scull over 500m, and for a challenge in the double sculls, was entered with her partner (also 14) in the 15 year olds event, where incredibly they finished 14th out of over 70 of the best crews in the country.

These incredible achievements by our students are not out of the ordinary as those of you following the sporting achievements of Holly Clifford will know. Holly achieved a Silver medal in Archery at the European Youth Championships in Greece. She won both days in the outdoor championships and is now the U18 British Champion. Stunning chess champions, Tom & Eleanor Cleverley, recently won their sections to become Chess Supremo and Suprema respectively at the Megafinal. They now both qualify for the Gigafinal in July in Birmingham. We are all rooting for them, along with all of the other students who have achieved so much on the local, national and international stage.

When we return in September I am delighted to say that our post 16 students will be learning in their brand new sixth form block. The new building is a fantastic learning resource with big, airy and bright classrooms. The outside performance space connected to the new sixth form block is already in regular use by our performing artists.

On the subject of performing arts please remember that auditions start as soon as we return after the holidays for our next school production. I can honestly say that the excitement is already building in school for our next show, Beauty and the Beast. Those of you that attended Fame or Buggy know that both performances were simply amazing! As someone who has seen a great many school plays over the years, I can honestly say that no school does it better than Newent. It is impossible not to be both impressed and moved by the hard work, dedication and commitment shown by everyone involved in these fabulous events. More than 200 children from all years were involved in our last production of Fame. It was a real privilege for me to watch our talented young people grow in confidence as they performed eight shows to packed houses and rapturous applause. This feels especially poignant when we hear on an almost daily basis of other schools cutting back on this vital area. Well, not here!

Of course, it is the time in the year when we sadly say goodbye to some teaching staff. This year, Mr Judd and Mr Goodchild are moving on to new schools. It is worth noting that between them they have a combined service of 43 years serving the students at Newent. Mrs Arrowsmith, Ms Thompson, Mr Reader, Ms Brittain also leave us for pastures new and will be sorely missed! We will miss them and thank them for all their hard work and dedication to the school.

I would like to end by thanking you all for the tremendous amount of support that you have provided throughout the year. The many parents who have come to see me. Your input has been very helpful and enables the school to better meet the needs and aspirations of the families and students we serve. I would also like to thank the governing body for all their hard work and tireless championing of our school. I would like to conclude by thanking all the staff – both teaching and support staff – who make this school the terrific school it is and a wonderful place of work and learning.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a lovely restful summer and we will look forward to welcoming Years 7, 9 & 12 back to school on Wednesday 5th September and all other students on Thursday 6th September. A copy of next year's school terms and holidays can be found on our website under 'key dates'. However, please remember A Level results day is 16th August and GCSE results day is on 23rd August.

Yours sincerely,



Alan Johnson
Principal