

THE NELSON THOMLINSON SCHOOL



Founded 1714

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Headmaster
Mr D S Northwood, M.A., M.Ed.

September 2012

Dear Parents

As the new Headmaster here, I could not be more proud. I moved to Cumbria with my family from the Midlands, where I was a Head of Modern Languages, for a better quality of life - and was naturally thinking of my own children's future education as well as my career when I joined NTS. It was a major upheaval at the time but the more I observe what goes on here – the dedication of the staff, the standard of behaviour, the sheer quality of the teaching, the more I am convinced that this is the right place for them and for me.

In my previous role of Deputy at this school I was subject to a steep learning curve. Having previously taught only in the private system, I was clinging on to distant but happy memories I had of the state comprehensive I attended as a child but more importantly I was acutely aware that the comprehensive I had now joined was like no other. Three years down the line I am more convinced than ever of the School's uniqueness and what this constitutes. Our uniform will therefore remain traditional (steps have already been taken to tighten up the Sixth Form dress code), we will continue to expect the highest standards of manners and behaviour and our primary foci will still be our pupils' academic achievement and their attitude to learning.

The demands we make of our staff will continue to be as high as they ever were, and strict monitoring and 'supported accountability' continue to ensure that our pupils receive the best possible service. True to form, we will not be jumping on band-wagons and we will continue to adopt a no-nonsense approach, keen not to take our eye off the 'teaching and learning ball'. For example, this year we will be placing an emphasis on the basics of recall and comprehension.

We continue to be ambitious on behalf of *your* children - *our* pupils - and continue to expect in return your support on matters such as homework, behaviour, uniform and respect for others. It is equally paramount that you tell us when you have concerns or when we might have got something wrong. The School continues to pride itself in its attention to detail and when things do need fine-tuning then I would like to know.

There are a few additional matters that I would like to draw your attention to:

Reminder re: Driving in the School Grounds

- If you are bringing your child to school by car in the morning or collecting them at the end of the day **please do not drive through the school grounds**. (Students arriving by taxi or with physical disabilities are exempt from this.)
- If you are bringing your child to school by car in the morning, please do not stop in the bus bay - you are likely to cause problems for the large number of buses that deliver our students to school.

- At other times when you visit the site for an appointment or to pick up a sick child **please remember that there is a one-way system in operation at all times through the school grounds**. Entry is through the bus-bay and the exit is onto the High Street.
- Please be aware that there are county parking restrictions in force on Lowmoor road.

School Buses

Reminder: If your child comes to school on a bus, sensible behaviour is obviously expected and this includes sitting down on a seat with the **seatbelt fastened**.

Receiving school letters by email

Reminder: We will send our school letters and newsletters to parents by email. If you are already receiving information in this way you do not need to do anything. However, if you are not on the list – or the parents of a new pupil – please go to the following website and follow the instructions on the webpage: www.nts.cumbria.sch.uk/lettershome. Please contact us if there are any problems. For ease of administration all students are also given a hard copy of letters and newsletters.

Data Collection Sheet and Parental Survey

Once again we need to ask for your assistance with regard to information we require.

- a) Data Collection Sheet (Y7 and new pupils from other year groups). These will be issued shortly. Please amend or complete this as appropriate. It is particularly important that you complete the photo permissions slip.
- b) Parental Questionnaire (Years 8, 9, 10, 11 and Sixth Form.) As the new Head, I am particularly keen to receive feedback and for this to inform future school developments.

We would like both the Data Collection Sheet and the Parental Questionnaire returned to the school by **Wednesday September 12th**, please.

SIMS Learning Gateway

Parents are able to access their child's data, including his/her school reports, via the Internet. If you would like to use this facility, please go to the school website at www.nts.cumbria.sch.uk and go to **Parents** then the **SIMS Learning Gateway Usage Policy** followed by **SIMS Learning Gateway Access Request Form**. Please print off this form, complete the details and return it to the school reception. You will then be issued with your personalised access details. If you are already using this facility there is no need to complete another form. If you require a hard copy of the policy and/or the form please contact the school office.

Exam Results

A level

Our students have achieved some excellent grades once again, with a quarter of all entries being A/A*. Early indications are that the majority of our students have been successful in securing their offers for University, apprenticeships or work related training.

Out of a cohort of 140 we have 24 students who gained 3 or more A/A* grades, 11 students who gained 4 or more A/A* grades and 3 who gained 5 A/A* grades.

We have 6 students who will be taking up Oxbridge places, which equals the school record:

Chris Connell is going to St. Peter's College Oxford to read Law

Oliver Lewis is going to Downing College Cambridge to read Engineering

Tom Mattinson is going to Merton College Oxford to read Mathematics and Computer Science

Kathryn Poole is going to Hertford College Oxford to read Mathematics

Charlotte Wise is going to Hertford College Oxford to read Philosophy, Politics and Economics

Nicholas Wragg is going to Wadham College Oxford to read Physics

GCSE

65% of the students gained 5 or more higher grades including English and Maths and 81% gained 5 or more higher grades. Out of a cohort of 231 we have 34 students who gained 8 or more A/A* grades and 26% of all our entries were A/A*. Our students can be very proud of their achievements.

Sporting Success

In the holiday three of our pupils won gold medals at the English Schools AAA Championships in Bedford:

Natasha Wilson	U17 Javelin
Abbie Hetherington	U17 1500m
Chelsea Nugent	U15 800m

New Staff

We are pleased to have recruited the following staff for the new academic year:

Neil Parker	(Deputy i/c Data & Curriculum/Teacher of Geography)
Tom Priddle	(Head of History)
Ruth Calvo	(Teacher of History)
Esther Hudson	(Teacher of History)
Andrew Dawson	(Teacher of Science)
Diane Clorley	(Senior Science Technician)

Prize Ceremonies

For Years 8, 9, 10 and 11 ceremonies will be held in school in extended assemblies starting at 9.15am and lasting approximately half an hour:

Year 11	Tuesday 25 th September	(receiving Year 10 prizes)
Year 10	Monday 24 th September	(receiving Year 9 prizes)
Year 9	Wednesday 26 th September	(receiving Year 8 prizes)
Year 8	Thursday 27 th September	(receiving Year 7 prizes)

We will hold our formal senior prize ceremony for the Sixth Form on Friday 28th September at 2pm in St. Mary's Church. Prizes will be presented to last year's Year 11 as well as the Sixth Form.

Term Dates, Examinations and Parents' Evenings

These are printed on side 4. Please keep this sheet for reference.

Yours sincerely

Mr DS Northwood
Headmaster

Term Dates 2012-2013

Autumn Term 2012

Starts Wednesday 5th September for pupils.
Half-term is Monday 29th October – Friday 2nd November.
Last day of term is Thursday 20th December.

Spring Term 2013

Starts Monday 7th January for pupils.
Half-term is Monday 11th February to Friday 15th February.
Last day of term is Thursday 28th March.

Summer Term 2013

Starts Monday 15th April for pupils.
Half-term is Monday 27th May to Friday 31st May.
The last day of term is Friday 19th July.

Key Dates

1. Examinations

Parents are requested, as far as possible, to arrange holidays during the school holidays. However, the following dates should be absolutely avoided:

November 6 th /8 th /12 th	Years 10 & 11 Maths Modular Exams and resits.
November 6 th	Year 11 Science Modular Exams and resits.
January 9 th – 30 th	Module Exams for some L6 and U6 (AS & A2) and Years 10 and 11 GCSE modules (provisional)
March 4 th /6 th	Years 10 & 11 Maths Modular Exams
March 14 th – 28 th	Year 11 Mock Exams and Y10 Exams
April 29 th – May 8 th	Year 9 Exams
May 13 th – 26 th June	AS/A2 Exams (provisional)
May 13 th – 26 ^h June	Yr 12 Study Leave - until 10 th June
May 24 th	GCSE Exams (provisional)
June 3 rd	Y13 Leaving Day
June 3 rd	Years 7 & 8 Exams.
June 27 th	Year 11 study leave during period of remaining exams
	Year 11 Leaving Day

2. Parents' Evenings

We have planned the following dates during the year :-

Monday 24 th September	Year 6 Open Evening for pupils and parents
Monday 1 st October	Year 13 Parents' Evening
Tuesday 6 th November	Year 11 Parents' Evening
Tuesday 27 th November	Year 12 Parents' Evening
Tuesday 29 th January	Year 7 Parents' Evening (NELST half of year)
Monday 4 th February	Year 7 Parents' Evening (HMWG half of year)
Tuesday 19 th February	Year 10 Parents' Evening
Monday 4 th March	Year 11 6 th Form Information Evening
Tuesday 5 th March	Year 9 Parents' Evening (X half)
Monday 11 th March	Year 9 Parents' Evening (Y half)
Monday 18 th March	Year 8 Parents' Evening (X half)
Tuesday 26 th March	Year 8 Parents' Evening (Y half)