

Thursday 16th December 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we approach the end of the first term, I wanted to take a moment to reflect on and celebrate all that has been achieved, in what continues to be a challenging climate for our students and their families.

We have continued to embed our high-quality whole school tutor reading programme and Anthology Plus, leading to some rich debate and enabling our students to become immersed in the power of literature, as well as developing their skills in reading and comprehension. Our students have also grown in confidence with their learning, demonstrating a commitment and resilience to approaching new and complex content, which has led to some incredibly successful outcomes in their assessments. We are rightly proud of all that they have achieved this term and do hope they have a well deserved rest over the next two weeks.

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Celebrations and Events

Outdoor Education



Our Duke of Edinburgh Silver expeditions have been very successful in East Devon and on the Quantocks, with 16 participants and we are looking forward to supporting them in completing their other three sections of the Award next term.



Congratulations to our Year 10 students who are steadily completing all sections of their Bronze Awards, some have completed already! New starters in Year 9 are just getting started on their Bronze Awards and we wish them lots of luck as they make progress throughout this year.

Ten Tors Training has started with 70 participants this year! It is very competitive for our 35-mile team places. So far, we have had two day walks in November, and our camping expeditions start in January. The weather has been kind so far, fingers crossed this continues!



Millionaire Readers

Congratulations to two of our students who have read in excess of a million words! Bert in Year 7 has already exceeded the one million mark and Shannen in Year 8 has read over 3 million words!

Performing Arts



Congratulations to Ally and Amber in Year 11 who have made it through to this year's [Powderham Live](#) mentoring program. Last year's Powderham Live event features Violet, Rianna and Ally from Year 11 and Mya and Felia from last year's Alumni. [You can see the whole event on YouTube here.](#)

This year's celebration of performing arts talent is being filmed this evening and will go [live on YouTube](#) on the 22nd December, please put your feet up and enjoy the show!

Rehearsals are on track for our school production of Matilda and our students are having a great time preparing for what will be an amazing performance on the 5th- 7th of April 2022. The talent in our cast is incredibly impressive and we can't wait for you to see the show.

Fundraising

Students raised nearly £400 for a range of personally selected charities including Cancer Research, MacMillan Cancer, Cats' Protection, SOCO, British Lung Foundation, Battersea Cat and Dogs' Home, Force, Climate Coalition and Black Lives Matter. The students chose their own charities and worked on their own projects to create a wonderful festive experience for the Isca Academy Community of students and staff. Stalls included crafted items, cookies, a book stall, lucky dip, candy cane delivery service and a drawing competition. The students showed great skills in planning, independence, resourcefulness, resilience, coordination, cooperation and communication, together with marketing and selling. Well done to our Year 8 iLife group!

SPORT IS BACK!

And what a start it has been.

X-Country

The term started off with one of Isca's most successful years ever at the Exeter and Area Inter Schools Cross Country. A total of 60 Isca students represented the school at the event with 18 making it through to the Exeter & East Devon round and an amazing 6 made it further into the Devon round. A particular mention goes to Tom (Year 11) who finished in the top 3 and is hoping to impress at the next round in January.

Netball

This year the Ted Wragg Trust of schools has set up our own league, with teams playing at central venue tournaments. The U13 girls have been represented by A and B teams at all of the tournaments with both teams playing incredibly well. The A team are undefeated and the B team have performed brilliantly against the other schools with a couple of wins and many draws. The U15

girls A team have had a fantastic season so far and remain undefeated! The B team, who are also very strong, have also played really well and many of the girls are pushing for a place in the A team.

Football

Like the netball, the Isca football teams are also playing in a Trust wide league this year. So far it has been a brilliant start for all year groups with A and B teams being represented across years 7 to 11.

Year 10 Boys football team:

Isca 2-3 St Luke's

Isca 4-0 QE

Year 9 Boys football team:

Isca 6-1 St James

Isca 0-4 St Luke's

Year 8 Boys football team:

Isca 2-1 St James

Isca 0-3 QE

Isca 0-0 St Peters

Isca 1-2 St Peters

Year 7 Boys football team:

Isca 1-1 St Luke's

Isca 0-1 QE

Extra-Curricular Clubs

Extracurricular sport is finally back and it has been great to see so many of our students coming along and enjoying themselves across a range of clubs that we offer including boys and girls rugby clubs, football, multi-gym, basketball, netball, badminton and trampolining. Please keep checking the school website for updates of new clubs. All students are welcome and will receive 2 merit points every time they attend.

iLeadership

iLeadership in sport is a new offer this year, initially to students in years 8,9 and 10. This is an opportunity for students to come and learn skills such as organising events, how to lead sessions and to develop communication and confidence with the aim of hosting our local primary schools for sports events over the year. This has been an application-based process, with interviews currently taking place. Good luck to all of those who have applied.

Updates and Information

Year 11 Mock Exams & Mock Results Day

Our Year 11 students have been fantastic throughout the last two weeks where they have undertaken a full mock examination series. They have shown great maturity, resilience and an impressive work ethic that we know will stand them in good stead as they progress this year. Well done Year 11.

Our Year 11 students will receive their mock examination results on the afternoon of Thursday 6th January 2022. Although teachers are currently going through the papers with students and telling them where and how to further improve, we have asked them not to reveal their grade at this stage. Mock results' day can be a very powerful motivator for our students and we know that this will also be the case this year.

On the evening of the **6th January**, we will be hosting an evening for families where we talk through a number of strategies for you to help and support your child in the lead up to the summer examination series. This will be a virtual event and more details will follow in the New Year.

Year 11 parents' evening will take place on **Thursday 13th January**. This is a really good opportunity to meet with your child's teachers and discuss their performance in the mock examinations and how best to support them with subject specific revision in the forthcoming months. At this stage, we are hoping that this will take place face to face, but we may need to change our plans if our guidance changes.

Introducing Sparx Reader for Year 7 Students

At Isca, we are really proud to be a reading school! We believe that reading can be transformative of students' lives. In order to ensure that students in year 7 are reading as much as possible, we are dedicating English homework solely to reading. That is why we are excited to let you know that we have partnered with Sparx to start using their new reading platform, Sparx Reader. Sparx Reader helps every student to achieve regular independent reading, which is incredibly important for building vital literacy skills.

Students can choose from a range of eBooks. As they read, they will see quick questions to check they are reading carefully. Careful readers earn points so they can track their progress and climb the league table! Motivated readers who demonstrate consistent, careful reading will unlock Gold Reader, meaning they can read any paper book from the library or from home by scanning in its barcode.

Students can log in using their Sparx Maths username and password. Search 'Sparx Reader' to find the login page. Any internet-connected device with a web browser can access Sparx Reader. If your child needs support with a device to access this, please do contact us.

Sparx Reader adapts to each student's reading level, so it is important that you don't help by answering questions for them. If you help them, Sparx Reader might think they are a very strong reader and show them books that are too difficult. The best way to support your child is to ask them about the book they are reading; what aspects they are enjoying, or what characters and events they have recently read about.

Autumn Term Reports

We will be sending out our autumn term reports to parents in the week commencing the 3rd January. These reports will give families a full update on the progress, effort and behaviour for your child in each subject, as well as their attendance and the number of merits / demerits they have accrued so far this year. We have a new reporting package and as such the format of the reports will look slightly different to previous years. We would like to know what you think about this new format and would welcome your feedback [through this parent questionnaire here](#).

Homework

All students will receive their new Knowledge Organiser upon their return to school in January. Students in Years 7-10, will also be issued with a new homework booklet.

Students in Year 11 will continue to complete homework in their exercise books, as their set tasks in Knowledge Organisers are set around examination questions. Their teachers will continue to direct the tasks and feedback to students weekly, so that their revision remains focussed on the areas where they need to improve.



Last Day of Term

Don't forget, it's Christmas jumper day tomorrow for anyone who would like to participate.

We will finish our day with a whole school assembly (virtually, of course) to celebrate some of our student's achievements and **school will finish at 1pm.**

School Uniform

As we enter the Christmas holidays, please can we ask you to check that your child has all the correct uniform they require ahead of the Spring Term? Please contact us if you will struggle to do this and we will be happy to help you. We wish you a peaceful and happy Christmas.

Plans for returning in January

We will be closed to students on the 4th January, to allow us to test those students with consent before returning to school. This process remains voluntary and parental consent is needed before we can proceed. Where we already hold consent, this will continue to be valid. If you have not given consent in the past or if your child has joined the school since the start of term, please complete the consent form if you would like your child to take part in the onsite testing: [Student Testing Consent Form](#).

Testing will take place as follows:

Year group	Time
Year 7	9.00am to 10.00am
Year 8	10.00am to 11.00am
Year 9	11.15 to 12.15am
Year 10	12.15am to 1.15pm
Year 11	1.45pm to 2.45pm

Students should enter the school via the PE entrance. Testing will take place in G86, the movement space, and students will exit via the same door.

If your child has COVID symptoms they should not attend school site for a LFT, instead please [book a PCR test](#).

If you are an essential worker and require support for your child on Tuesday 4th January [please let us know via this form](#) and we will accommodate students undertaking self-study on-site.

School will be open to welcome all students back on Wednesday 5th January.

Thank you as always for your continued support. We hope you have a restful break and we will see you all in the New Year.

Yours sincerely,



Aimee Mitchell

Headteacher