



Sir John Cass's Foundation and Red Coat CofE Secondary School & Sixth Form College

We will achieve excellence and inspire generations the Cass way

Headteacher: Mr P. Woods

March 2020

Dear parents and carers,

We are coming up to the halfway point of the school year. For our Year 11 and 13 students this means the start date for their examinations can now be counted in weeks and the need to be focused and working hard is never more important. Year 11 have been undertaking further practice tests in all subjects. They are not alone, however, as in March Year 7 students will also be sitting examinations. Other year groups will follow.

Safer Internet Day

Technology and the ability to use the internet are key parts of modern life, but awareness of the risks and how to avoid them are essential. Safer Internet Day 2020 was celebrated globally on 11th February with the theme: Together for a better internet. Consequently, students in Years 7-11 have all had lessons to mark the event. Students in Sir John Cass Red Coat worked on issues ranging from cyberbullying to critical thinking and fact checking. Please visit our website and social media feeds for parental advice and ideas for conversation starters to ensure that your children are using technology safely.

Swimming Pool Update

You will share my pride in the fact we have a swimming pool on site and that we use this as part of our PE curriculum. This is a huge privilege and asset to the school. There have, unfortunately been some issues regarding the pool's state. There are currently ongoing investigations into a significant leak in the pool. We are also looking to renew the air handling system and install a dedicated boiler to heat the swimming pool. As a result, unfortunately the pool will be out of action until further notice. As part of core PE, students continue to follow the National PE Curriculum Programme and have been participating in a range of timetabled sporting activities including football, netball, dance, basketball, rounders, hockey, cricket, trampolining, fitness, handball, badminton, softball, athletics and gymnastics.

There are also a number of extra-curricular sporting clubs available for students to participate in, details of which can be found on the school website.

We hope to complete all maintenance work as soon as possible, and will keep you updated as to when we can expect to be offering swimming lessons again.

Year 9 Options Evening 2020

I would like to remind parents of students in Year 9 that their Options Evening will take place on Tuesday 10th March. At this event all subjects will be represented by members of staff who will provide information about the curriculum studied in each area and will offer guidance on how to approach selecting courses for further study.

Parent Survey Results

At the Academic Review Day on 7th January we asked parents to complete a survey covering a range of issues. The feedback we receive is important to us and helps to shape future planning. The results of the survey can be found on the school website.

In response to the survey, we are working to develop our use of the SIMS parent app so parents/carers can monitor progress and behaviour further facilitating communication. In addition, we are launching the Trailblazers Project (wellbeing + mental health) which will include parental sessions as well as work to highlight where support can be sourced within and outside of school. A letter has recently gone out to parents with full details. A copy is also posted on the school website.

Pest Management

You will appreciate that the issue of vermin and pest is common in the vast majority of public sector buildings, and we continue to take steps to address the situation at Sir John Cass Red Coat. The reports of pests are minimal given our large school population, nevertheless we do engage in the services of a contractor with weekly treatments

throughout areas of the school. This takes place outside of school hours. As part of the programme the entire premises is treated during school holidays, this includes during the recent half term holiday, and is followed by a deep clean of all areas. I would like to reassure parents that this is, and will continue to be closely monitored. I must also stress that health guidelines and hygiene around the canteen and kitchen areas are never compromised. As a community it is essential that we work together to minimise the development of any such issue. Students should be very conscious of where they eat food and should never leave food lying around. We will be reiterating this with both students and staff.

Sports Events

I would like to congratulate a number of our students for achievements in sports over the past term. Year 7 boys won their first football match against George Green School 6th February (1-0); Key Stage 3 girls placed 1st in the Tower Hamlets dance competition; Year 8 boys came runner ups in the Tower Hamlets futsal championships out of 13 teams; Year 9 girls handball team came 2nd in the Tower Hamlets championships; the year 10 girls beat St Paul's Way in a handball fixture and KS3 and KS4 girls' badminton teams were runners up in the Tower Hamlets championships. These are just some examples of the magnificent achievements of our students since January. Please encourage your child to take part in enrichment activities such as sports clubs as the benefits are considerable. The programme of clubs on offer for this term can be found on the school website.

Coronavirus Information

You will be aware that the situation with respect to Coronavirus is a fast moving one. We have been receiving information from the DfE on how to manage any situations with respect to staff and students at the school and we have been tracking the government advice website to monitor the situation. This website will update as new information is received. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>

Current advice is that there is NO requirement to self-isolate if you have recently returned from travels abroad UNLESS

- you have symptoms (then you should call 111) OR
- you have just returned from one of the areas listed on the government website - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-specified-countries-and-areas/covid-19-specified-countries-and-areas-with-implications-for-returning-travellers-or-visitors-arriving-in-the-uk>

We will continue to monitor the situation and keep parents/carers and staff up to date with any changes to the advice. If you have recently returned from one of the areas identified, please call the school for further advice before sending your child to school.

Attendance

Good attendance at school is essential for academic progress, social interaction with peers and the opportunity to participate in clubs and try new activities. As I have stated previously at Sir John Cass Red Coat we have a clear expectation that students should aim for 100% attendance every year. We have been rewarding tutor groups with the best attendance as well as individuals throughout the year.

I would like to congratulate the following tutor groups who have the best attendance for the spring term so far. These are 7D, 8E, 9S, 10E and 11T and the group with the highest across the school is 11T. Well done!

Key Events for this term

Below are key events coming up this term. Please check our website and social media feeds for updates.

Spring Term

Year 9 Options' Evening	Tuesday 10th March
Year 7 examinations	From Monday 23rd March
Year 12 Parents' Evening	Wednesday 1st April
Last day of Spring Term	Friday 3rd April
First day of the Summer Term	Monday 20th April

This is a busy time of year for all of us, however I would like to highlight that on Wednesday 26th February the period of Lent commenced. This is one of the most important times of year for many Christians around the world. Lent calls us to slow down, to take time to reflect, to pray and to take a good look at our lives and how we are living them. With this in mind, I would like to wish you all the best in the run up to Easter and I will be writing again in the coming weeks.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Woods
Headteacher