

**Friday 31 March 2023**

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I am pleased to report a school in very good heart. There has been an invigorating energy and a great deal of enthusiasm all round at Northampton High. The second term of the academic year 2022/2023 drew to a close today and it ended in grand style, although I sensed a collective sigh of relief after the intensity of activity that has taken place over the past three months.

You will know that it has been a very busy and productive term with a plethora of co-curricular events to augment everything that takes place in the classroom. Just listening to the range of certificates and awards that our students received in the celebration assembly today really brings home how busy we are as a school and it is a joy to see how our young people achieve so much over such a wide range of disciplines, as well as their strengths in the intellectual characteristics that we prize at Northampton High, namely collaboration, curiosity, independence, perseverance, and risk-taking. As ever they have done us, and you, proud!

Just the past three weeks, we have enjoyed the wonderful Science Week celebrations where our brilliant science teachers hosted a series of bespoke masterclasses during lunchtimes, with many students buzzing about their love of science and participating in hands-on activities and experiments that explored various scientific concepts. We also loved Neurodiversity Week which provided a special opportunity to celebrate the strengths and talents of students in our school with learning differences. The Year 8 students enjoyed an action-packed, educational adventure in Normandy where the special memories from the week-long trip will be treasured for many years to come! Our drama students exhibited creativity, talent and resilience and took to the stage to perform 'Tuesday' by Alison Carr; the entire cast worked very hard to refine the National Theatre Connections play which allowed the audience to explore themes such as friendship and family, and how humankind might cope with a terminal catastrophe. Our Eco-team led the Energy Switch Off Week with characteristic gusto and encouraged the school community to save energy and form positive habits to help take care of our environment. Our students learned about the importance of sustainability and taking action to reduce our carbon footprint.

During the past week, we have witnessed some exceptional performances that have been touching and uplifting in equal measure. We had a fabulous Dance Festival where we were left in awe of the inspiring performances and the range of formidable talents and abilities that exists across the school. It was a vibrant celebration of dance, music and creativity where our students showcased their choreography and dancing skills in a range of styles.

Their hard work and dedication shone through in every moment of the performances, and it was truly a feast for the senses. The stunning Music Examination Recital which left the audience captivated by the dedication to music that our senior students possess, and their ability to push themselves to build their confidence and to perform some technical and expressively challenging pieces. The Year 7 Showcase which consisted of speeches, poetry and song celebrated the impressive start that students have made since joining the Senior School at Northampton High. They presented their work to the audience, providing details about the different skills they have developed and knowledge they have acquired; an achievement in itself, as this was the first time many students will have presented to such a large audience!

There is indeed so much more I could have highlighted, but the opportunities to develop so many varied talents and passions outside of the classroom is down to the exceptional team of teachers we are so lucky to have here, and we are all very grateful for all that they do. As such, I would like to thank students and staff for their hard work and dedication this term. Every day at Northampton High is busy, but even amidst the work and bustle of study, people go out of their way to live by our Northampton High values of being 10% braver, respectful and inclusive of others, as well as thriving to achieve. I thank all of our staff, teaching and support, for all they have done to provide the range of rich and fulfilling opportunities our pupils enjoy.

Every day I find myself more impressed than ever by the quality of the performance of our pupils and their capacity to achieve so much. They work hard in lessons and in private study to ensure they capitalise on their abilities. Beyond the classroom pupils of all ages offer a courteous and enthusiastic welcome to our many visitors, they represent us valiantly on the sports field, perform with aplomb on stage, tackle competitions with flair and face the physical and intellectual challenges they encounter with courage and grit. I am immensely proud of them and of the teachers and support staff who make such a wealth of opportunities available to them.

As this term ends, we say goodbye to just one member of staff. We bid farewell to Mr Matthew Watson, our Subject Leader Spanish who has been with us since September 2009 and he leaves the Spanish department ship-shape. Mr Watson's time in post has been notable for his insistence on high standards, his belief in the central role of modern foreign languages in the lives of young people and the range of enrichment opportunities he has introduced and implemented. We thank him for the generous contributions he has made to the life of the school; he has certainly made his mark and we will miss him. Mr Watson leaves us to embark on an exciting new opportunity and he goes with our thanks and best wishes for a bright and fulfilling future.

We are always very sad when young people leave the school before the end of their secondary education, but understand that a variety of dynamics can drive such a decision. It is the time of year when I have to remind you that parents of all pupils, other than those in Year 13, who will be leaving at the end of this academic year need to give us notice of this on or before 20 April 2023.

Looking ahead to next term, the Spring Arts Collective will be held at 7pm on Wednesday 26 April and the Speech Day and Prize Giving will be on 12 July. As ever, the summer term embraces the challenges of public examinations and this break, in turn, will encompass some serious work on the part of our senior students. However, the final term of the year also brings a great deal of fun. A myriad of events will be open to you across the term and I hope you will be able to join us at several. I look forward to seeing you then.

All that remains for me is to say do have a restful and hugely well-earned Easter break, whether you are visiting far-flung places or staying closer to home. Whilst I know our Year 13 and 11 students will be focusing on their revision, I also want to say take time out to rest and relax. Remember that even those little breaks can be extremely refreshing - take them and enjoy them. The biggest spoiler of rest is worrying about the end of rest. So when you get the chance to rest, take it, grab it and do it your way.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead staff, first, Miss Kneen and second, Miss Hair, will be contactable by email throughout the Easter holiday for safeguarding concerns via the [safeguarding@nhs.gdst.net](mailto:safeguarding@nhs.gdst.net) email. This is for safeguarding only. Alternatively, you can complete a form hosted on our school website to disclose safeguarding concerns and the form can be accessed from [here](#).

With best wishes for a happy holiday and a peaceful Easter,

**Dr May Lee**  
**Head**