



NATIONAL CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY

Advent Newsletter

Christmas address from Mr Brailsford – Headteacher

It was fantastic to have met so many of you at our parent forum recently. The parent forum gives us the opportunity to seek opinions and involve parents directly in the work of the Academy. I took the opportunity to share our full school improvement plan and talk through our main priorities for the year, also taking questions and advice from parents. As part of that group, I also wanted to gather feedback on this newsletter and without a doubt it has been well received and parents have appreciated seeing all of the positive things taking place at National.

Mrs Stones, our SENCO, has also been inviting parents in to themed parent network meetings. This week was our second and this time was around Autism. There will be further meetings promoted to parents via parent mail next year. It is great to see parents coming in, supporting each other, sharing thoughts and ideas and working with our team.

This has been an exciting term, and year and you will see from this newsletter that we are very proud of all of our students. We had the Christmas concert this week and the attitude and positivity shown by our students was incredible. There were too many memorable performances to mention and again, this was the perfect opportunity to speak with parents and students over a tea or coffee afterwards. A huge thank you to Mr Blundell for organising the event so well and supporting students to enjoy their music and in developing their confidence.

Finally, as Christmas approaches and the year comes to a close, I would like to sincerely wish all of you a very happy Christmas and New Year from everyone at National. See you in 2023!

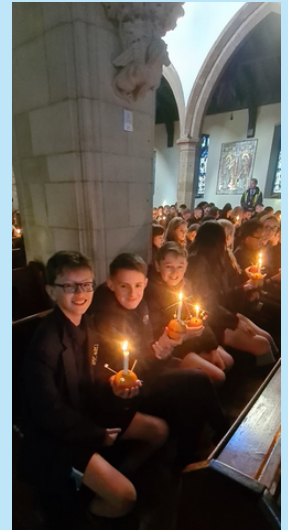
God bless.



'Life in all its fullness' John 10:10

Christingle Services

Our year 7 students attended a Christingle service on Wednesday 7th and Thursday 8th December. The students have been learning about a range of festivals in Religious Studies and have really tried to empathise and understand why the festivals have such an impact on the life of a believer. Our students made their own Christingles and then walked to St Mary's Church where they were able to participate in a service. Reverend Helen and Keziah, our academy chaplain, explained the origins of Christingle, while students were able to have some moments of stillness to reflect on the world. They all also participated in a quiz in order to learn more about the service. We finally lit the candles so all students could appreciate the light provided by them, just as many Christians see the light being a symbol of Jesus. In this type of experience, we really are helping students to consider what "life in all its fullness" really means, and to consider our Arch values of respect for our world and to consider being charitable to those not as fortunate as ourselves.



Mrs R Halfpenny - Head of Faculty Social Sciences

Christmas Concert



Our annual Christmas concert was held on Thursday 15th December, and I was delighted to be able to welcome students, parents and staff to this year's concert. It was lovely to be able to hold this at St Mary's Church again this year. It was a chance for some of our talented students at National, from year 7 through to sixth form, to showcase their musical abilities. For some of them, it was the first live performance in front of an audience, so a big well done to all students who performed. I would like to thank all supported the planning of this year service especially to the Rev. Helen for hosting, and our Chaplin, Keziah for all her support with the readings, poems and her message during the service. We would not be able to enjoy the entertainment for the evening with their help.



Mr C Blundell- Teacher of Music and Musical Enrichment

Christmas Tree Festival

Some of our year 7 students helped prepare a tree for the St. Mary's Christmas Tree Festival. All of the decorations were made over two weeks by the year 7 students, following the theme of her majesty the Queen; thinking about her role as Queen of England, the leader of the Church of England, across the world in the commonwealth and the kind of person she was. The tree was on display at St Mary's Church.



Bookbuzz

Our year 7 students were all very lucky this year to be able to participate in Bookbuzz. Bookbuzz is a reading programme from BookTrust that aims to help schools inspire a love of reading in our students. All of our year 7 students had the opportunity to choose their own free book from a selection of 17 exciting titles including quick reads, non-fiction and graphic novels. Then during the last full week of term the books were given out to the students to take home and keep, ready for some lovely Christmas reading!

Mrs J Prestwood - LRC Lead



Year 10 Theatre Trip

On Tuesday 11th October, year 10 ventured to Derby Theatre to see an amazing performance of Jekyll and Hyde. It was well adapted for the stage and used a female doctor alongside Utterson's character to tell the story without detracting from the original text. The performance was engaging and used a range of engaging techniques as part of the staging. The character of Jekyll, played by Nicholas Shaw, was superb and it cemented the narrative and the theme the duality of man, while the students were able to fully understand what Stevenson was wanting to achieve.

The students were a credit to the school and presented themselves well, and it was lovely to leave the theatre listening to them talking about the performance and their experiences at the theatre.

Miss C Hunt - Head of Languages



Year 7 and 8 Theatre Trips

340 Year 7 and 8 students took a trip to Derby theatre for a performance of the timeless classic novel, The Wind in the Willows. This fantastic adaptation of the novel followed Ratty, Mole, Toad and Badger through some fun filled adventures and ultimately rescuing Toad Hall back from the creatures of the Wild Wood. The production showcased amazing talent with actors playing all their own instruments and both acting, singing and dancing their way through the performance. As always, it was a pleasure to see so many students in attendance and to see them represent the academy in such a positive way. A fantastic end to a busy term.



Miss C Hunt - Head of Languages

Year 9 Battlefields Trip

A 3am alarm was a shock to the 49 Year 9 students who blearily set off by coach for a 3-day tour of the WW1 battlefield sites on Tuesday 11th October. After a ferry crossing we headed for Zonnebeke, Belgium and the fantastic Passchendaele War Museum. The dugouts here are maintained from the First World War, and a chance to appreciate the living conditions on the front line. In this museum, we took a look into the lives of the fighting soldiers living in the trenches and developed our knowledge from the classroom in a really practical and interesting fashion.

The following day's itinerary focused upon the fighting around the Ypres Salient. We took a trip to Sanctuary Wood and discovered the horrors of trench warfare. We were shown pictures of soldiers in the war that had inflicted wounds, these pictures cannot be seen anywhere else in the world. The preserved trenches were a real eye opener into the unique conditions of the muddy waterlogged battlefield. We were then taken to two contrasting cemeteries. The Tyne Cot Memorial was a vital part of our trip. It really helped us appreciate the gravity and scale of loss. The attitude to mourning in this British graveyard was completely different to anything we'd ever seen before. A square mile of white headstones, most without names, resembled angels ascending into the heavens. Many of our students were personally touched by the sight of these thousands of graves. In sharp contrast, the German cemetery at Langemark was very dark and the gravestones were smaller and less obvious as they see remembrance in a different way.

In the afternoon we arrived in Ypres's beautiful market square. From that point, a large chocolate shop was our next destination. As the school goes here every year, we got a special offer on the chocolate (parents I hope you got a present!). Some free time was followed by another dive into trench warfare at the In Flanders Fields Museum. A large museum with the purpose of commemorating the many men that fought in the war. We then joined in the Last Post Ceremony at the Menin Gate; a granite arch that commemorates the journey of British soldiers as they left the safety of Ypres for the front line. In sombre mood, we watched the ceremony which was very touching. Some of our students laid a wreath on behalf of the school.

Our last day took us south along the old front line to the river Somme. We had studied this battle in our history lessons but to see the scale of loss in such a small area was sobering. Newfoundland Park preserves a section of the battlefield as it was in 1916. It gives you a great insight into why the losses were so significant.

The conduct of the students was exemplary. We are exceptionally proud of the studious and respectful attitude of Year 9. A credit to our Academy.

Mr M Jones - Head of Humanities



Year 7 and 8 Oxford Trip

When we arrived in Oxford, me and my friends were amazed by the outside of Magdalen College. We were met by two students, one who was studying History and the other was studying PPE (Politics, Philosophy and Economics), both in their second year. They were able to answer any questions we had, such as 'how hard was it to get into Oxford?' or 'how many hours do you study a day?' After we had asked our questions, we had an exclusive tour of the Magdalen college. Once we had seen all of the breathtaking sights, such as their very own deer park and the glorious dining hall, which was considerably set for us. We all sat down in surprise and a couple of minutes later a magnificent chicken leg, chips and broccoli was bought out. After we had eaten our amazing lunch, a professor of History taught us a really interesting lesson about medieval punishment in schools, like how students would be hit with a birch (a tree branch) if they misbehaved. After we were met by another second year who showed us around Hertford College. At the start of the tour, we went to the music hall where a pianist was playing a lovely piece. We made our way around the quad where most students live, and we were shown the Bridge of Sighs, (a close resemblance to the one in Venice). Then we had a look at a rather interesting piece of architecture, their spiral staircase which actually spiralled on the outside.

I thank Mrs Wall, Mr Jenkins and Dr Bardell for taking us, I had an amazing time and I will now definitely consider university in the not so, but near future.

Zachary B - year 7

Year 9 Personal Development and Careers Day

On Tuesday 22nd November, our year 9 students took part in a variety of exciting workshops as part of Personal Development and Careers Day. We welcomed visitors from ITP Aero and the Royal Navy to the academy who provided excellent insight into team work and decision-making skills. Additionally, members of staff led informative First Aid sessions, providing our students with invaluable skills for any situation they may find themselves in. Our year 9 cohort represented the academy with a fantastic attitude and were a credit to themselves all day. A huge thank you to all!

Miss O Hyde - CEIAG Lead and Teacher of English



Year 7 Academic Transition Evening

On the 7th December, we were able to invite our year 7 parents into school as part of our academic transition programme.

Parents were provided the opportunity to look at elements of the academic structures we have in the academy, such as progress, homework, enrichments of the curriculum, reading and careers.

The evening was attended by around 100 parents and carers with exceptionally positive feedback.

It was wonderful to be able to invite parents into the academy and celebrate the ways in which our students engage with their learning!

Mrs C Stones - Assistant Headteacher - SENCo

Year 10 Religious Studies London Trip

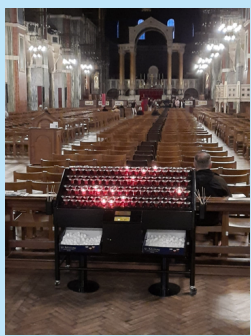
Our year 10 students embarked on their Religious Studies trip to London on Thursday 30th November. The students visited a Buddhist temple and The East London Mosque on the first day. In the temple they explored the grounds, had a talk from a Buddhist, tried some mindfulness and meditation and got to ask questions to a Buddhist monk. In the mosque, Samina showed us the prayer hall, the washrooms, where some students got to try out how washing is completed before prayers and were able to see the fourth prayer of the day (maghrib) before asking questions about Islam. They finished the day at Pizza Hut.

On day 2, students visited the Imperial War Museum, saw the sights of London such as Big Ben, the London Eye and the Houses of Parliament while on our way to Covent Garden to do some shopping. We had a tour around Westminster Cathedral, it was good to see the Catholic practices before the visit to a Church of England tomorrow to compare similarities and differences. The students ate dinner at the Hard Rock Cafe, and then went to the Apollo Victoria theatre to see a fantastic performance of Wicked (so good it received a standing ovation at the end).

Day 3 started with a trip to St Paul's cathedral. This was a great opportunity for the students to contrast the different Christian denominations and their places of worship. They got to see for themselves the emphasis, again, to the importance of baptism and eucharistic, and to contrast this with the lack of confessional booths. We took a climb to the top of the dome of St Paul's which is 528 steps to the top and another 528 to the bottom! One of our students was even determined to do this despite having a broken foot so huge credit to Astrid and her friends for supporting her!

The students were able to browse the Christmas Market outside St Paul's before making the journey back to Hucknall. The trip was a great success, enjoyed by all, and the students demonstrated all of our arch values during the 3 days.

Mrs R Halfpenny - Head of Faculty Social Sciences



Sporting Fixtures

Football

Under 12 girls - Excellent start to the National Academy football team. These girls are still in the South Notts cup and have a few more games to play in January. Keep up the excellent work ladies!



Under 13 girls - This amazing group of girls have made me so proud this year. We are still in the county cup, the South Notts cup and now the last 16 in the county in the English School's Cup having beaten a school from Walsall on Monday 5-1. They also won the Notts Central venue league. The commitment, hard work and dedication of these students is second to none. Have a well-deserved rest over Christmas girls, we have more games to win in January!



Year 9 boys - This year has seen a few new members join the squad which has led to some strong defensive performances. Our first fixture of the season saw us up against Outwood Academy. 2-0 up at half time we conceded 2 quick goals at the start of the 2nd half. A formation change and a strong defence performance saw National soak up lots of pressure and played well on the counter attack and grabbed a winning goal to win the match 3-2. Our second game took us to the Carlton Le Willows. We put up a commanding team performance to win 5-0. Our last game this term took us to Minster where we came up against a talented team who proved too much on the night with National losing 3-0.



Year 10 boys - Have had a fantastic season across both county cup and English Schools Cup. Across the numerous games the boys were an absolute credit to the academy and produced some good performances against some excellent opposition, including a 7-0 win at home. We still have a fixture against Kimberly in the South Notts cup to play. So are hoping to make a positive end to the year.

Netball

Our under 16 girls netball team attended the netball tri - event with Selston and Ashfield schools. Our amazing National team won all three games.



First MITRE sports event National vs Minster

On Tuesday 8th December, The Minster School held the first MITRE sports event. We took 40 of our students to Minster to compete in a range of events.

Year 7 boys football: lost
Year 7/8 girls football: won 10-0
Year 9 girls netball: won 11-1
Year 10 girls netball: won 30-8

Our National teams won 3 out of the 4 events.
It was a great evening, well done to all involved and a big thank you to Minster for holding the first event.



Mrs M Jones- Head of PACE and Associate Leadership Team



Head of Year Highlights

Year 7

What a fantastic first term year 7 students have had at National. Myself and Mrs Soltysik are very proud of how well they have transitioned into life at secondary school. It has been a busy term, with many different opportunities from welcome services, theatre trips, achievement assemblies and Christmas services. Our achievement assembly was a brilliant opportunity to celebrate all the wonderful things our year 7 students have been up to. We have 132 students in our year group who have never received a single negative behaviour point! Our top achiever for positive behaviour points was Edith J, second place was Rosa B and joint third went to Joel H and Eling L. Well done!

Year 7 have also been getting creative in their Modern Foreign language lessons. They were given the task of researching either a German, Austrian or Swiss recipe to bake or bake a cake or biscuits and decorate it with a German theme. How exciting! The competition was judged by our deputy heads and the head of Languages. I got the opportunity to have a look at some of the creations and wow, the effort that our students went to was incredible. All students who took part received five achievement points.

We are looking forward to what next term brings, and we wish you all a merry Christmas.

Mrs E Hopkin and Mrs K Soltysik - Head and assistant head of year 7



Year 8

Our year 8 girls football team are progressing superbly in the Cup and are our star team whilst our year 8 boys football team has recently got back up and running and is representing the academy brilliantly.

Year 8 have done exceptionally well this term by reducing their late marks and having the second lowest amount of late marks in the school. There are 40 students in year 8 with no late marks and 100% attendance this term, a huge well done to all of those students.

There are 11,122 positive achievement points throughout the year group and 53% of year 8 students have had no behaviour points logged all term.

Well done to all of our students in Team year 8 and we are looking forward to another term of excellence.

Mr J Gilham and Mr A Richardson - Head and assistant head of year 8

Year 9

Congratulations to Bethany W, Alice D, Betsy R, Jasmine R, Kyra K, Eloise R, Lillie I and Simone E, all of these pupils have 100% attendance, more than 50 achievement points and not a single debit, a fantastic example to all other pupils in year 9. Our top three credit earners for the half term are Holly R with 95 achievement points, Holly R with 87 achievement points, and Ella B with 82 achievement points.

Finally we have had some amazing fundraising going on in year 9. 9E raised £100 for Haq, one of our sponsored children, through donations and a bake sale, their original target was £30! All of our other year 9 tutor groups have also raised well above their fundraising targets for their sponsored children.

Well done year 9, let's make our push into the new year even better.

Mr K Mistry - Head of year 9

Head of Year Highlights

Year 10

I am extremely pleased with Year 10 as a community for working so hard to make such a positive start to their GCSEs.

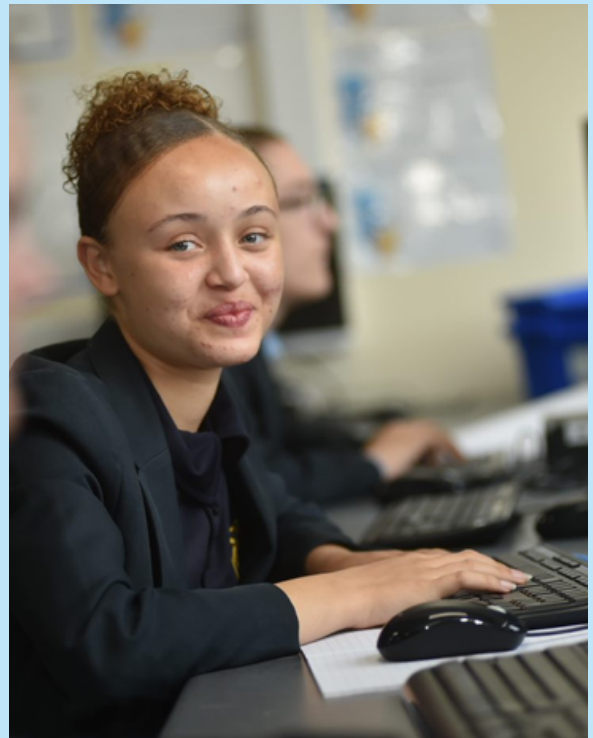
This has been reflected in the number of achievement points gained as a year group – as it stands at the time of writing Year 10 have accumulated 13,447 achievement points – this is an outstanding achievement and I am extremely proud of them as a year group.

Every student in Year 10 has some positive achievement points and of the 208 students in the year – a fantastic 99 of these have no negative behaviour points at all...

41 students in Year 10 also had the opportunity for a residential trip this term to London. The feedback from staff leading the trip was that they were a credit to the Academy, once again demonstrating our ARCH Values in the wider community.

May I take this opportunity to wish you a happy festive season.

Ms S Craven - Head of year 10



Year 11

Year 11 have made a wonderful start to their most important year. They have been focussing well and working hard during their mock exam period. This can understandably be a stressful time, but our pupils have taken this seriously, behaving well during their exams and taking the extra time to revise outside of their lesson times. I'm sure their hard work will be rewarded on their results day in January and hope they have an enjoyable Christmas in return for all their hard work in these final weeks.

Congratulation to James H, Charlie B, Alicia H, Freya J and Cordelia F for being the highest credit earners in the year group. Well done to all of year 11 for making such a fantastic start to their GCSE year. We hope you have a restful break and come back refreshed and ready to work hard again in the new year!

Mrs L Newns - Assistant head of year 11

HSFC London Residential Trip

On Friday 4th November our year 12 and year 13 artists and photographers visited London for a residential trip. The students walked over 20 miles around London, exploring historical buildings, beautiful cityscapes and a wide range of Artwork. They took a visit to the Tate Modern Gallery and took a nighttime walk to photograph the illuminated bridges and skyline. The students were a credit to HSFC with how they conducted themselves throughout and how enthusiastic they were right through to the bus journey home.

J Cliffman - Head of HSFC



HSFC Mock Interviews

On Friday 11th November, year 13 took part in their mock interview day. A plethora of employers kindly gave up their time to help year 13 with this task. They were able to provide a personalised and realistic interview experience and then able to give feedback to the students to help them as they move forward in their own personal journey. The take up for the interviews was extremely high and the students were buzzing once they had completed their slot.

Comments from employers on the day

"All the students I saw were polite and treated the opportunity of an interview with respect"
"It's obvious they all have hopes and dreams and are working hard to achieve them, particularly the ones with jobs to support themselves"
"The majority [of students] know their career path"

Comments from students on the day

"I'm glad I dressed up, the interviewer said I looked really smart"
"They were really nice and not scary at all"
"I didn't want to go but I have changed my mind now "
"I really enjoyed the experience, thank you "

Well done to our students, they did themselves proud.

J Cliffman - Head of HSFC



SEND Parent Network

As part of our commitment to supporting students with SEND, this year we have launched our SEND parental network group. The intention is for parents to meet together to build a supportive network that can provide a space to share experiences with other parents.

Our first two sessions were held on 6th October and 15th December and focused on ASD and anxiety and ASD and interoception. We welcomed Simon Bentley (specialist teacher for the communication and interaction team) who led the sessions. The aim is to promote discussion and collaboration.

Next term we will be focusing on promoting positive emotional wellbeing for key stage 3 and positive emotional wellbeing in preparation for exams for key stage 4.

If you would like to be involved in future events, please email either our SENCO, Mrs Stones: cstones@nationalacademy.org.uk or Mrs McDowell our SEND administrator: amcdowell@nationalacademy.org.uk

Year 9 Options

As pupils near the end of year 9 and move into year 10 they have the opportunity to shape their learning in light of their abilities, interests and future aspirations. At the National C of E Academy this process begins in earnest on Monday 20th February 2023 when students will take part in a series of assemblies and PD lessons as well as receiving the options booklet. Please encourage your son/daughter to read through this booklet carefully. On Wednesday 8th March there is an opportunity for parents and pupils to learn about our key stage 4 curricular structure in more detail as well as explore all subject courses with the relevant teachers at our options evening. The deadline for option choices will be Friday 24th March 2023.

Advice to current year 9 students:

Do

- Get as much advice as you can
- Talk to your teachers
- Talk to your parents
- Talk to older students who have been through this process in the past
- Do research into any possible career paths you may be considering
- Choose subjects which will help you progress into post 16 education and onto university or employment
- Choose subjects in which you have an interest
- Choose subjects in which you are successful
- Choose a balanced group of subjects

Don't

- Choose a subject because you like the teacher
- Choose a subject because your 'mates' are choosing it
- Choose a subject because you think it will be easy



Social Sciences Faculty Blog

Social sciences have been trialling the use of 'Big Questions' in lessons and encouraging students to think really deeply about issues from the moment they enter the classroom. As Religious Studies and Personal Development are discussion based subjects, this is a good strategy to challenge students with as soon as their lessons start. It engages their thinking and seeks to find out what their opinions are on a range of subjects. This enables staff to find out what students already know and are familiar with, and ensures the students have the opportunity to share their thoughts in a safe space.

The intention of Social Sciences is to develop young people with enquiring minds, so ensuring they have time to reflect on their opinions and hear the views of others is vital to this process. The year 8 students have been challenged this term in Religious Studies with 'Big Questions' about whether God exists, if God can be good if there is evil and suffering in the world and if science really holds all the answers to why we exist at all. This is culminating in the annual artwork competition where the students are all creating their own artwork entitled 'where is God'. This competition will be judged by Mr Brailsford and Keziah, our school chaplain. In order to really celebrate the success of the students, the finalists' artwork will be displayed in school for everyone to see the different perspectives on the question 'Where is God'?

The faculty has also been trialling the use of visualisers to really celebrate good work in lessons. Several students have now offered to have their work displayed in the classroom, particularly the GCSE students when completing an exam response to see how the teacher will mark their work. This might sound daunting, but plenty of students have offered to have their work shown to the class. In one Religious Studies GCSE lesson this half term, some students were set the challenge to mark the work of the student next to them and feedback what mark they thought the answer should receive and why. This exercise helped the teacher to see what the general understanding was of the mark scheme and in turn was able to give feedback to the student whose work was under the visualiser, but also to the students offering to mark the work to let them know if their understanding of the mark scheme was accurate. This method really helps to celebrate the successes of students but also to support all students in their understanding of the criteria we use for marking in assessments.

Mrs R Halfpenny - Head of Faculty Social Sciences





Staffing Update

We are sorry to say Mr Blundell is leaving us in January to take up a new position elsewhere. Mr Blundell has been a fantastic addition to the PACE faculty, teaching music across KS3 & 4. His support of boys' football in the academy has also been greatly appreciated. Mr Blundell's permanent replacement will be joining us from September.

Mr Wheat is also leaving us in January. He has been working in the science faculty for the last two academic years and helped ensure our students' enjoyment of the subject. His leaving coincides with the welcome return of Mrs Kelly after her maternity leave.

We wish both colleagues all the very best for the future.

Dates to remember

Wednesday 4th January 2023 - INSET Day

Thursday 5th January 2023 - return to school for all year groups

Thursday 12th January 2023 - Year 12/13 mock results

Monday 16th January 2023 - Year 11 mock results

Thursday 19th January 2023 - Year 13 AMP evening

Thursday 26th January 2023 - Year 11 AMP evening

Friday 27th January 2023 - Year 13 Geography field trip to Nottingham

Wednesday 1st February 2023 - Year 12 AMP evening

Wednesday 8th and Thursday 9th February 2023 - Academy Show

Friday 10th February 2023 - INSET Day

Academy holiday - Monday 13th February 2023 - Friday 17th February 2023

Wednesday 22nd February 2023 - Year 10 AMP evening

Wednesday 8th March 2023 - Year 9 options evening

Tuesday 14th March 2023 - Parent forum meeting

Monday 6th March - Sunday 12th March 2023 - Ski trip

Tuesday 28th March 2023 - Year 8 AMP evening

Friday 31st March 2023 - Year 12 Geography field trip to Yorkshire Coast

Academy holiday - Monday 3rd April 2023 - Friday 14th April 2023

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

The National Church of England Academy
Annesley Road | Hucknall | Nottinghamshire | NG15 7DB
Phone: 0115 9635667

Email: adminoffice@nationalacademy.org.uk
www.nationalacademy.org.uk



Minster Trust
for education



NATIONAL
CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ACADEMY