

## Headteacher's Newsletter

February 2012

Dear Parent or Carer

### **Mr Steve Tose**

As you will all be aware, the school and its community has been coping with the premature death of Steve Tose. In 1978 he was appointed as an English teacher at Hetton School. In 1992 he became Head of English and in 2007 became a Senior Leader. He had many, many friends. He was 57 years old and leaves a family including two young sons.

Steve Tose has given 33 years of service to Hetton School and its community - whether it was his engaging classroom teaching, department leadership, exam board work, the many school productions that he directed or simply supporting and being there for students and staff alike.

We will all miss him. Not only our current staff and students but also ex-staff and ex-students who are now parents themselves. Steve was not only part of Hetton School – he was part of Hetton-le-Hole itself.

We have been overwhelmed by the tributes to Steve. There is an official Facebook page called “Official Hetton School Memorial for Mr Tose” if you would like to read these tributes.

### **Memorial Event for Mr Steve Tose**

We are planning a Memorial for Steve Tose on *8<sup>th</sup> March at 6.30pm* at the Rainton Meadows Arena. All members of the community are welcome.

### **Curriculum for Year 8**

Parents will be aware of the national uncertainties regarding changes to the curriculum especially with regards to Key Stage 4 and qualifications. The latest announcement regarding vocational qualifications was on 31<sup>st</sup> January. Obviously, we need some time to plan an appropriately broad, balanced and valid curriculum that meets the needs of all students.

Last year, Year 8 students were offered some degree of limited option choices whilst retaining a broad and balanced curriculum. This will not happen for current Year 8. Thus, next year in Year 9, they will continue to follow the National Curriculum for all subjects to complete a 3 year Key Stage 3. They will be offered GCSE option choices next year in Year 9 to start in Year 10. The main reason for this move is the curriculum and assessment changes announced by the government which now mean all GCSEs (or equivalents) will be assessed by terminal exam at the end of Year 11. Therefore, there are no modular exams that can be spread over the course of study and coursework is now much reduced or non-existent.

## **Curriculum Year 9**

Students will be continuing or studying GCSE or equivalent qualification.

They will be asked to reduce the Options they chose in Year 8 by one subject to allow for greater specialisation and more time to cover subjects in depth.

They will also have the opportunity to take up one or two courses at Sunderland Futures such as Construction or Hospitality.

Options Evening for Year 9 is Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2012

Parents Evening for Year 9 is Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> March 201

## **Mobile phones and MP3 players**

Many of our students received new mobile phones or MP3 players as Christmas gifts. Now is an appropriate time to remind students and parents of what is and is not allowed. Mobile phones are allowed in school but must be kept switched off and in bags or pockets. They are not allowed to be seen or used, especially during lessons! If a student has a mobile phone out for the first time then they will be asked to switch it off and put it away. If they do not immediately comply then the phone must be handed over for safe confiscation by the teacher. If a student refuses then there will be a range of other sanctions ranging from the Inclusion Room to possible fixed term exclusion.

MP3 players such as iPods have the same rules applied. Students should not be seen with ear phones in or even hanging over their collar ready for use.

## **Winter weather – closure before school opens**

During bad weather, a decision is taken each morning as to whether the school will open. The school will only close when one or more factors come into play, with health and safety being paramount. For example, untreated roads may mean many staff are not be able to get in (unlike other workplaces, there have to be sufficient staff to supervise children). Or, the site itself is inaccessible or dangerous until it is cleared and made safe.

We will always endeavour to remain open. If there is a possibility that we may be closed, please do not ring school. We cannot cope with the amount of incoming calls – you are likely to receive an engaged tone at peak times.

Instead, please do one of the following

- Provide us with your correct and up-to-date mobile phone number – we will text you
- Check on our school website <http://www.hetton-school.co.uk/>
- Listen to any of the local radio stations or check their websites
- Follow us on Twitter @hetton-school

### **Winter weather – possible closure during the school day**

In rare cases, the snow fall may become so unexpectedly bad that we take the decision to close during the school day itself. In doing so, I would need parental permission for each individual student. If you have not already done so, please return the reply slip enclosed.

### **Uniform**

A reminder that the compulsory uniform for Hetton School is as follows:

- School Blazer with House badge
- White or light blue school shirt
- Clip on tie
- Black school trousers or skirt
- Royal blue V-neck jumper with school badge for Y7-9
- Black V-neck jumper with school badge for Y10-11
- All black footwear

There are no variations to these requirements, except in very icy weather when we would allow other footwear until the ground improves. Please help us by checking that your son or daughter is dressed appropriately.

### **Punctuality**

Please be reminded that school starts promptly at 8.45am. This is the start time for registration and assembly. It is recommended that all students are on-site by 8.35am at the latest to ensure they are not penalised for being late. For those Year 11 students allowed to go off-site at lunchtime, afternoon lessons start promptly at 1.00pm. Students who are late will now have to complete a break time detention that day. If lateness continues then further detentions will be issued.

### **Forthcoming dates**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>
20/02/12	School re-opens
21/02/12	China Meeting for parents
27/02/12	Online Safety and Cyber Bullying Presentation for parents—5pm
06/03/12	Year 9 Parents Evening

08/03/12	Steve Tose Memorial Event
21/03/12 + 22/03/12	Centenary Performances
30/03/12	School closes Easter holidays
30/3/12	Ski Trip

P. Keay

Headteacher