

Silverdale *news*

Updates for parents and carers of students at Silverdale School

Issue 1- April 2017



School receives national praise for achievements

Silverdale has received national recognition recently. In November we featured in the Sunday Times Top 250 schools list. We were at number 17 for the top comprehensive schools.

Last month the then Minister for Schools, Nick Gibb MP, wrote to the school congratulating us for “the very high standard of achievement of your school in the English Baccalaureate in 2016”.

The E-Bacc is a school performance measure that allows people to see how many pupils get a grade C or above in core academic subjects in GCSE and equivalent qualifications.

The month before Alps, who analyse student data across England, Wales and Northern Ireland, sent us a certificate for being in the ‘top 25%’ of the 2,580 schools they analyse for A-level data. ■

You can follow us online!

See the latest artwork from students, catch up on their achievements and ensure you never miss out on key school dates again—all by following Silverdale School on social media.

We have both a Facebook page and a Twitter account with the same name: **@SilverdaleSch**

You can also see our students’ artwork on Instagram: **@silverdale_art**

Please like and follow our accounts.

We have also set up a Facebook page for Silverdale alumni, **@silverdalealumni**, where former staff and students can get in touch and share memories. ■



Students talk live on BBC about winning eco-project

Year 9 Geography students have been in the media spotlight recently, talking about their triumph as Yorkshire winners in the **Bright Ideas Challenge**—for which they designed a rotating solar panel system. They spoke live on BBC Radio Sheffield and were also filmed to inspire students to enter the competition this year. ■



Welcome from the Headteacher...

Welcome to the first edition of our regular newsletter for parents and carers. Our intention is to ensure you get to hear about all the latest news from our school—from the key dates you won’t want to miss, to updates from our Trust and, of course, the achievements of our students.

The newsletter is part of a raft of measures we are bringing in to ensure you feel more connected with the school. You’ll see below the details of our website and social media accounts, which we are updating regularly. So please do like and follow us.

These are challenging times in education, as you’ll read about in this issue. However, we are doing everything we can to ensure that Silverdale remains an accessible, inclusive school that strives for the highest achievement for all our students. I hope you find this newsletter useful and, as ever, if you have any comments or questions, please do get in touch with me. Contact details are on the last page.

Roisin Paul, Headteacher

Follow the school online: www.silverdale.sheffield.sch.uk



Uniform reminder—and changes to skirts for next academic year

With the summer term starting and—hopefully—some good weather on the horizon, it's a handy time to refresh your memory on the school's uniform policy.

In summary, the uniform consists of:

- Black polo shirt with school logo.
- Black sweatshirt with school logo.
- Black cardigan with school logo.
- Black tailored trousers (loose fitting).
- Black tailored loose fitting shorts (mid-thigh length or longer).
- Black loose fitting skirts (mid-thigh length or longer).
- Plain black flat shoes/boots.
- Black or white religious headdress if appropriate.
- Pupils in Y10 and Y11 may wear a black hoodie with school logo.
- Piercings: one small pair of ear studs only. No facial piercings.
- Jewellery: one wrist watch and one ring.

If any inappropriate clothing is worn in school, it may be confiscated and held by the appropriate key stage office. If it is a coat, it can be picked up at the end of the school day by the pupil. If it is any other item of clothing it must be collected by the parent.

Changes to school uniform from September 2017

From September the policy is changing so that **all skirts must be knee-length or longer.**

If you are about to purchase uniform this term please ensure it is in line with school policy from September 2017.

Most shops have a schoolwear range with appropriate trousers and skirts, such as Tesco, Next and Marks and Spencer.

Branded school uniform can be bought from our supplier: www.stitchfactory.co.uk

Thank you for your co-operation. ■



Ski trip success

Students from Y7 to Y10 travelled with staff to Alpendorf in Austria for our annual ski trip over Easter. The students had five days of skiing, plus evening activities. ■

6th former reaches Biology comp final

Sixth former, Mark Withers, beat over 7,000 students to reach the finals of the **2017 Biology Olympiad**. He made it through to the final 14 students in a competition that was dominated by independent schools. ■

Want to train to be a teacher?

Are you, or someone you know, interested in training to be a teacher? If so, consider applying through our Teaching School: www.sheffieldtsa.org We are also running a new teacher training course for modern languages in partnership with the independent sector: www.nationalmodernlanguages.com ■

Could you be a school governor?

We will soon have vacancies for Parent Governors at Silverdale. Do you want to make a difference? You need to commit to a couple of meetings a term and have an enquiring mind and commitment to raising standards, as well as enjoy working as part of a team. Contact us for more details. ■

Dates for your diary

- **Wed 26 April:** PTA meeting, 6pm. All welcome.
- **Wed 3—Fri 12 May:** Y10 mock exams.
- **Fri 5 May:** GCSE Art deadline.
- **Thurs 11 May:** Y7 parents' evening, 4.30—6.30pm.
- **Sun 14 May:** Silverdale Stampede (see advert on last page).
- **Mon 15 May—Mon 5 June:** Y12 study leave.
- **Mon 15—Fri 19 May:** Y7 Porter Valley trip.
- **Tues 23 May:** Y9 Meningitis/TDP jabs.
- **Fri 26 May:** Y13 leave.
- **Mon 29—Fri 2 June:** half term holiday.

School funding: what it means for Silverdale

Some local schools have recently written to parents highlighting their challenging financial position.

It is certainly true that, whilst costs have risen, school funding has decreased. **In 2017-18 we will receive £715,000 less revenue than we did in 2013-14. That is roughly £545 per pupil less.** This significant cut is being experienced by secondary schools across the city; we are not alone. Therefore, schools have had to think creatively about how they can make savings.

The main issue remains that **the overall funding pot for education is insufficient** for the rising number of pupils in the system and the base cost to educate them per pupil. Additionally, the unprecedented changes to both GCSE and A-level exams and curriculums has added significantly to our costs.

At Silverdale we have always tried to manage our budget responsibly, ensuring we have long term financial stability for the school—without impacting negatively on our students' education.

However, along with other schools, we are increasingly having to make difficult decisions. Therefore, we wanted to brief you on the situation, let you know what action we are taking—and ask you to consider ways in which you can support us.

New school funding formula

The government has been consulting on a new funding formula for schools. The formula has not been finalised and its implementation has already been delayed, and it is still the subject of controversy.

The consultation promised that the new formula would remove the unfair differences in how schools are funded. However, indications of the

predicted formula are that it will not make a significant difference to our school's income in 2018-19 and beyond. This is despite us not being well funded compared with other schools both locally and nationally.

Expensive PFI contract

Our school, along with many others in Sheffield, also has the challenge of being locked into an expensive Private Financial Initiative (PFI) contract for our buildings. Although this gave us beautiful facilities in 2009, we face 25 years of an expensive agreement that was signed by the local authority, encouraged by the then government, and agreed in a very different financial climate.

What have we been doing to ensure a sound financial future for the school?

In anticipation of this difficult financial situation we have taken the following action over recent years:

- Ensured efficient staffing structures and cost-effective class sizes.
- Restructured the Senior Leadership Team and middle leadership of the school to ensure they are more efficient.
- Increased teachers' contact time (ie. teaching time) with students.
- Reduced the amount of money departments have to spend on educational resources such as books and materials. We continue to look for more efficient, electronic ways of working.
- We only run trips that are essential curriculum trips or are financially viable.
- Created Silverdale Multi-Academy Trust, which will allow us to introduce economies of scale across a number of schools, as well as sell central services to schools.

■ Expanded the work of our Teaching School, which brings in additional income by training new teachers and providing professional development to teachers across the region.

■ Investigated further income generation opportunities.

We take pride in our broad and balanced curriculum and aim to deliver a full breadth of subjects at all stages of school. Whilst other schools have chosen not to provide certain subjects, we have tried to offer not just the academic core of subjects (as represented in the new Ebacc at GCSE level), but a rich mix of creative, technical, arts and PE based subjects.

What you can do to help

■ **If you can spare half an hour:** write to the candidates standing in the General Election, so that all political parties know that school funding is an important issue to voters. Once the list of candidates is known we will share this information with you.

■ **If you can spare an hour:** talk to your employer to find out if they are willing to help the school. Many larger companies have 'corporate social responsibility' programmes, where they put money and resources into the community. But even if it's a smaller, local business they may be willing to offer support in other ways.

■ **If you can spare an evening a month:** join our PTA (Parents' and Teachers' Association) who are regularly fundraising for the school and need more volunteers. Email: SilverdalePTA@silverdale.sheffield.sch.uk

■ **If you can spare two evenings a month: become a School Governor.** We have vacancies coming up for Parent Governors. This is a highly rewarding way to support and strengthen the leadership of our school. ■

Y10 students win enterprise award



Congratulations to our Y10 students who picked up first place in the Key Stage 4 category at Sheffield's **Big Challenge Awards** just before Easter. They created Maylenbeth Candle Company and had to present their business ideas in a ten minute presentation to a panel of five entrepreneurs at DLA Piper law firm. ■

First Charles Cantor writing award winners



This year we ran the first ever Charles Cantor Writing Competition, created from a bequest in the name of a former student. It was open to Year 10s and prompted writing that the judges described as “fascinating...intriguing... showing control and capacity”. ■

Homework survey

If you haven't yet completed the homework survey emailed to parents and carers last term, please try to submit it in the coming week. You can find it [here](#). ■

Growing Silverdale Trust for the future

Recently parents and carers have been sent letters updating them on the development of Silverdale Multi-Academy Trust (MAT). Below we summarise these changes and how they will affect the school.

As previously explained, Silverdale School has recently established Silverdale Multi-Academy Trust (MAT). A MAT is a single entity established to undertake a strategic collaboration to improve and maintain high educational standards across a number of schools.

Currently Silverdale is the only school within our MAT but gradually other schools will join us. One of the first schools to express an interest in joining is Westfield Secondary School, located in the south-east of Sheffield, near Crystal Peaks. Following the departure of their Headteacher last month, we are providing interim support to their leadership team in the form of our Headteacher, Roisin Paul, and a Consultant Headteacher, Ian Gage.

Until the end of this academic year that means that the Silverdale Deputy Heads, Mr Ponsford and Mrs Sims, have taken on an increased leadership role to ensure the school continues to run smoothly.

Mr Ponsford has also announced that he will be retiring at the end of this academic year. This provides us with the opportunity to restructure our leadership team within the school—whilst also taking account of other developments.

These developments include the growth of our MAT, the leadership of our Teaching School and the need to ensure we are on a solid, long-term financial footing. As explained in this newsletter, these are challenging times for school funding. Therefore, it is vital

that we ensure our organisation is financially viable in the long term.

To this end, we will be seeking to grow the number of schools within our MAT. We see this as a positive move as we believe it provides us with the chance to collaborate and share best practice with colleagues across the education community. Working together, we believe we can create an organisation that provides the very best education for children in this part of the country.

Advice from the Department for Education also points towards larger MATs being the most sustainable financial model. Whilst Multi-Academy Trusts may not be everyone's preferred structure for providing education, it is the reality. Our Board of Trustees are therefore working hard to ensure that we find a way for Silverdale to continue to flourish within this environment.

However, to grow the MAT and Teaching School we need to devote the necessary time and energy. This is needed to both develop our relationships with other schools, but also to ensure that all of our schools are making vital progress.

Therefore Mrs Paul will be continuing as Executive Head within the MAT and we are recruiting two Heads of School for September: one for Silverdale and one for Westfield.

These people will be responsible for the day to day running of the schools, with a clear focus on school improvement. Mrs Paul will be responsible for the strategic running of Silverdale—and other schools within the MAT. She will still be based in Silverdale, providing support to the new Head of School and ensuring Silverdale continues to be a success.

We will keep you updated on any further developments. ■

Could you help the PTA?

Silverdale School Parents' and Teachers' Association (PTA) organises events and fundraising for the school. All parents, carers and staff are welcome to get involved.

The next meeting is on **Wednesday 26 April at 6pm** in the school—just come to reception. Even if you could take on just a small task—like managing our email account—your help would be hugely appreciated. **We are particularly looking for volunteers to be stewards on the day of the Silverdale Stampede.** All you need to do is stand still and look good in a hi-vis vest! We can only make it happen if we get enough volunteers.

Email: SilverdalePTA@silverdale.sheffield.sch.uk

Silverdale Stampede: Sun 14 May, 11am race start.

Silverdale Car Boot Sale: Sun 9 July, 11am—1pm.



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Contact us

Silverdale News is published six times a year- after each half term and school holiday.

If you have any questions or comments about the publication please contact our PR, Communications & Marketing Manager, Nikki Belfield:

nbelfield@silverdaletrust.org 0114 235 7982

If you wish to contact the Headteacher or any other member of staff please email:

enquiries@silverdale.sheffield.sch.uk

Or call 0114 236 9991.

All editions of this newsletter are available on the school website: www.silverdale.sheffield.sch.uk

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