

Dear parents

Warm up

Write this question on the board:

What do students do at school apart from attend lessons?

Students work in pairs or small groups and make a list of their ideas – as many as possible in, for example, 2 minutes.

The group with the longest list reads it out to the class. Other groups then add any other points not mentioned. If appropriate, you can then focus on particular activities that are not directly to do with lessons:

At school do you / did you ever ...?

play in a school sports team against other schools

have any periods of work experience in local companies or organisations

have after-school clubs (what kind?)

take part in musical or theatrical productions (= concerts or plays)

go on educational trips and excursions

have fund-raising activities

Confident students can then go on to compare the value of these different activities and even to consider the meaning of the word *education*: does it mean more than going to lessons and doing homework; what does that 'more' consist of?

Main activities

Students can do these activities in pairs or small groups.

1 Give out the activity sheets.

Explain the idea of a school newsletter: it is a letter, addressed mainly to the parents and families of school students, sent out regularly to inform them of what is happening in the school as a whole and sometimes asking them to respond to certain issues, e.g. the use of mobile phones.

After students have read the text, check that they have understood key vocabulary, particularly: *fortunate, carers, queries, requested, waiting list, drop out, disrupted, audition, costumes.*

Students complete the dialogues by writing what B said to contradict A's incorrect statement.

Suggested answers

1 None. We're not allowed to take money on the trip.

2 No, there aren't. I'm afraid all the places are taken. (But you can put your name on the waiting list.)

3 That's not true, actually. If someone wants to call you they have to phone the school office first.

4 But you don't have to have a performing role; you can help with sound, light, costumes or publicity.

5 You're wrong, actually. They've won five times in a row.

2

Answers

1 **Incorrect** They are going to do short work experience placements.

2 **Incorrect** Paper and pencils will be provided.

3 **Incorrect** The poster competition is open to the whole school.

4 **Incorrect** They are allowed but they must be switched off during lessons.

5 **Correct**

Follow up

Ask the class to produce a newsletter for their own school or college. First, students choose two people to be the editors. In discussion, the items to include are agreed by the class and allocated to pairs of students to write. The results are submitted to the editors who then do the page layout and – where possible – photocopy the finished result so that everyone can have a copy.

EXAM PART

Reading Part 3

EXAM SKILLS

Reading a longer information-based text

Selecting the important (relevant) information

Answering true or false questions

TOPIC

School life

TIME

50 minutes

KEY LANGUAGE

Vocabulary of school subjects and activities

Sentence

transformation

PREPARATION

One photocopy of the activity page for each student

Dear parents

1 Read the newsletter carefully. Then read these conversations between students or teachers at Hunter's Park School. The first speaker is always wrong about the news, and the second speaker corrects him/her. Complete what the second speaker says.

Example:

A: Have you heard the news? Mrs Bolney is going to write to our parents about our work experience placements.

B: No, you're wrong.

She's already written to our parents.

1 A: It's our Art Gallery trip on Wednesday, Sally. How much money are you going to bring with you?

B: None! We're

2 A: If you hurry up, there are still a few places in the Green Club for this term.

B: No, there aren't. I'm afraid

3 A: You shouldn't make phone calls while you're in class, but it's OK to receive a call on your mobile if it's something really important.

B: That's not true, actually. If someone wants to call you

4 A: I'd love to get involved in the school drama production next November, but I can't because I'm no good at singing or dancing!

B: But you don't have to

5 A: The school basketball team won on Saturday – for the third time in a row this season!

B: You're wrong, actually.

2 Read these sentences about the Hunter's Park School Newsletter. Are they correct or incorrect? If they are incorrect, correct the sentence.

1 Year 11 students are leaving school soon to get jobs in local companies. **Incorrect** They are going to do short work experience placements.

2 Year 8 students need to bring paper and pencils with them on their school trip.

3 Only members of the Green Club can take part in the poster competition.

4 It is now forbidden to bring mobile phones to school.

5 If students want to take part in the musical, they should see Mr Marchant.

Hunter's Park School Newsletter

29th March

Dear parents and carers,

Year 11 students have now been told where they are going for their work experience placements in June. We are fortunate that five new local companies and organisations (including a restaurant, a software company and a travel agent) have offered our students places for the two weeks. Parents/carers of Year 11 students should have received a letter giving details about your child's placement. If you have any queries, please contact the head of year, Mrs Bolney.

Next Wednesday (5 April), Year 8 students will be going on a visit to the City Art Gallery. Children must bring a packed lunch and water to drink. Paper and pencils for drawing will be provided. The bus leaves at 8.30 am, so they need to be at school half an hour early. Children are requested not to bring money on this trip.

GREEN CLUB has proved as popular as ever. Apologies to those who were too late to get a place – don't forget you can still put your name on the waiting list, in case anyone drops out. This month the club members are organising a competition, open to the whole school, to design a poster entitled Save Our Planet – with great prizes for the three best designs.

Please remember that mobile phones are only allowed at school on condition they are switched off during lesson times. This is still proving a problem, and lessons are being disrupted by unnecessary calls. In the event of an emergency, where it is necessary to contact a student during lesson time, the school office should always be called first. We ask for parents' support in enforcing this rule.

The school drama production next autumn will be a musical, *Rock and Roll Holiday*. As well as actors, we need a lot of energetic singers and dancers. If you would like to audition for a performing role please see Mr Marchant after school this week. If you are interested in helping with sound, light, costumes or publicity, please get in touch with Ms Williams.

Congratulations to the school basketball team on their 12-3 win against Margaret Mead School. This means they've had five fantastic victories in succession this season – a record for Hunter's Park.

Deborah McCarthy
Headteacher

