



Looe Community Academy

Specialising in the Performing Arts,
Maths and Computing
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Headteacher: Mrs H R Jenkins BSc

Our ref JOW/ASP

2 October 2015

Dear Parent/Carer

Magistrates' Court Mock Trial 2016

Your child has volunteered to become part of the team for the 2016 Magistrates' Court Mock Trial Competition. Last year the team from Looe Community Academy won the local heats and went on to compete in the regional heat. Now in its 22nd year, the Magistrates' Court Mock Trial Competition involves over 4,000 students from 300 schools and 1,700 legal professional volunteers at 50 courts.

Over 95 per cent of criminal cases (more than a million every year) are dealt with by magistrates, yet many people know very little about what they do.

The Magistrates' Court Mock Trial Competition is part of the Law in Schools programme which helps improve young people's life skills, their understanding of the justice system and the legal system, and helps them to understand that the law touches every aspect of their lives.

The competition creates the foundations for the students to develop into legally capable young people and aims to introduce the legal system to young people in an exciting way that has a lasting impact on all those involved, whilst developing student's soft skills that will be of use throughout their lives. The students who take part in the competition are from many different backgrounds and walks of life. State schools, free schools and academies from around the country participate in mock trials that take place local to them.

For many students, taking part in the Magistrates' Court Mock Trial Competition may be their first experience of learning in depth about the legal system and so the Citizenship Foundation makes sure it is an enjoyable, memorable and engaging experience.

The students, aged 12-14, take part in mock trials inside magistrates' courts and crown courts using specially written cases, in the roles of magistrates, defendants, witnesses, lawyers, legal advisors and ushers, giving them a unique opportunity to gain knowledge and awareness of the legal system and how it works.

The heats they take part in are supported and judged by experienced and practicing magistrates, legal advisors and other legal professionals.

What's involved?

The teams are made up of 13 roles and the competition generally involves around 15 hours of preparation time for the students. The students take on carefully written witness statements that they will prosecute and defend. The meetings will take place after school on Fridays at 3.15pm until 4.15pm in room 112.

In the local heats, which are held in March, the teams will defend and prosecute the case provided over two rounds. Those who find success in their local heat go on to compete in a regional heat of the competition, held in May; they are given a second, different case to work with.

The final stage of the competition for the winners of the regional heats is the national final of the competition which will be held at the Royal Courts of Justice in London in June 2016. We will be arranging a visit prior to the completion to a local magistrates' court, where students will be able to observe real trials. The competition may take place on a weekday or on a Saturday; either way, the Academy will arrange the transportation.

Please note, there is no cost to parents for entering this competition. I hope that you will support your child with after school collection on Fridays and any practice they may wish to do at home.

Should you have any questions please contact me on jowen@looe.cornwall.sch.uk

Yours faithfully

Mrs Jan Owen
English Department

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(Please return to Student Services)

Magistrates' Court Mock Trial 2016

Name of Student..... Tutor Group.....

I would like my child to participate in the Magistrates' Court Mock Trial event.

I will make arrangements for my child to be collected from the Academy at 4.15pm after each of the Mock Trial meetings.

Signed.....
(Parent/Carer)