

WH/RNM/JUNE2LET

23 June 2011

Dear Parent/Carer

### **PARENT GOVERNOR ELECTION**

We have three nominations for the role of School Governor. I am grateful to David Camidge, Steve Chapman and David Wallis for their willingness to serve our school in this way. For parents and carers already with a daughter or son in school I enclose statements from each candidate and a ballot sheet. This should be returned to school by Friday 8<sup>th</sup> July.

### **THE NEW SCHOOL UNIFORM**

Thank you for all the responses to the new school uniform. It was good at the recent Year 8 Parents' Consultation Evening to see some excitement as many tried on the new blazer. The uniform is now available for purchase.

Buying uniform online: The new Boston Spa uniform is now available for online ordering at APC Clothing. There is a link from our school web site in the 'Parents', then 'Uniform' tabs.

Buying uniform in person: From Monday 25<sup>th</sup> July you can go to the APC Clothing store in Tadcaster 9.00 am-6.00pm on weekdays, or 10.00 am until 2.00 pm on Saturday, where our new uniform will be a stock item. Here you can try the uniform for size and purchase all that you need. Should any families find these times inconvenient, please telephone 01937 833 449 and APC will do their very best to accommodate you outside these hours.

Year Six families: APC will be attending our 'Welcome Evening' on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> July, so you will be able to try on the uniform and place your order at the same time.

We will shortly have a variety of blazer sizes in school, for young people to try on, and then report home the required size. As our new school tie clips onto a collar, it is important to make sure, when you are sizing a white shirt, that your son or daughter is comfortable with the top button done up.

The most common uniform questions have been, 'when, or where, is it available?' After these the most repeated questions are not about the uniform itself, but are focused on other aspects of new dress regulations. I hope that you find the following helpful; these will be our expectations from September 2011, and will also appear in the new School Planner and on our website:

Coats: A waterproof top coat can be brought to school. Hoodies, sports jackets, track suit tops, denim jackets and similar items are not waterproof coats and must not be worn or brought into school. The waterproof top coats may be worn on the way to and from school and also outside at break and lunch. They will not be worn in school.

Accessories: We will not allow young people to accessorise their uniform with items such as jewellery, scarves, hats, caps, or decorative belts.

Piercings: Young people with piercings should only have studs or sleepers in their ear lobes. I appreciate that some parents will allow other piercings; if this is your decision, then please make sure it is done at an early stage in the coming school holiday, so that there is no necessity for any jewellery to be worn in order to hold a recent piercing 'open'. In particular facial or navel piercings should always be free of jewellery during the school day.

Hairstyles: We will not allow extreme hair styles or colours, or styles that are designed to draw attention to the individual. Plain hair bands can be worn were necessary.

Makeup: Discreet or modest make up is allowed; young people with excessive or inappropriate makeup will be asked to remove it.

Footwear: Plain black shoes should be worn. These should be without decoration, logo or a variation of colour. Boots will not be allowed. The 'Uniform' section of the school web site now has clear visual guidance for families about which shoe styles are, and are not, acceptable.

Skirts: I would like to remind families that for just September and October, girls can wear either plain black trousers or a plain black skirt. In my last letter I suggested 'knee length'; I have been reliably informed by female staff and Governors that an exact knee length skirt is a near impossibility. So, for the first half term (before we introduce the standard plaid skirt), a plain black skirt no more than 3cm above the knee is acceptable. From 31st October 2011 girls can choose to continue to wear the plain black trousers, but the only skirt to be worn will be the new standard plaid skirt.

Sixth Form: For September 2011, there is also a new dress code for the Sixth Form, of which Years 11 and 12 are already familiar. The details are also in the 'Uniform' section of the school web site.

I know that Mrs Moore has started working with a few families in hardship as regards difficulties affording our new uniform. Please contact her through Reception if you too would also like to talk with her.

Can I thank you again for your support for all these changes; I appreciate that this is a significant shift in our previous guidance, but I am really pleased with the response of our school community and excited by the impact this will have inside and outside our school.

### **RE-CYCLING OUR OLD UNIFORM**

We have a group of young people in Year 8 who are leading a new project for our school for Romania. As a part of their fund raising initiatives they have arranged an opportunity for us to re-cycle the old school uniform and to support the initiative the last day of term, Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> July, will be a non uniform day. Instead of the usual £1 donation we are asking young people to bring in at least one item of their old Boston Spa School uniform to be re-cycled. The Year 8s will collect, sort and pack all the old uniform that is brought in, and pass it on to a re-cycle company who will make a donation of 40p a kilo to the Romania project.

I do hope that you are able to support this initiative; it creates a 'rite of passage' or 'closure' for the old uniform, makes effective use of the material and at the same time supports a good cause.

### **SAFETY**

Last week one of our school community was hit by a car on the way home. We were very fortunate that the injuries were so slight, not least because it appears his school rucksack cushioned the initial impact. The young man concerned is now back in his classes, although it could so easily have been a very different story. I am sure you can appreciate that there were some very anxious moments for all concerned. Can I ask you please to take a moment to remind your daughters or sons of the need to take care when crossing the roads before and after school?

### **NATIONAL STRIKE ACTION**

You may be aware that the National Union of Teachers (NUT) and Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL) have voted to hold a national strike on Thursday June 30<sup>th</sup>. This action is being taken as part of a national campaign against proposals to make changes to pensions provisions. We have undertaken a risk assessment based on the number of staff that will be participating in the strike on the 30<sup>th</sup> June and regrettably a decision has been made to close the school to young people on that day. I am sure you will appreciate that the health, safety and wellbeing of our young people is paramount, and I am very sorry for the inconvenience that this will cause. It is a single day of strike action, and School will be open as usual on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> July.

I understand that a number of other unions are considering different dates for further strike action in the months ahead. Please do not assume that the whole school will close on every such occasion. It is my default position to always try to keep school open, with the intention of minimizing the impact of any action on the progress young people make. I will consider each situation on its merits, and undertake a risk assessment based on the likely number of staff available. If I cannot keep the school open for all, I will try to keep the school open for key exam classes. Only where I clearly have insufficient working staff to secure a safe school will I make a decision such as the one I have been forced to make for 30<sup>th</sup> June.

If we are put in a position where we have to close again due to strike action, I will always write home. If you are concerned that you might not have received a letter they are always placed in the 'Newsletters' section of the school website on the same day that they are printed.

Thank you for your continuing support for our school,

Yours faithfully



CHRISTOPHER WALSH  
Headteacher

**June 2011**

**Candidate Information for Election of Parent/Governor**

**David Camidge**

I have two children aged 14 & 16 yrs who both attend Boston Spa School and I view the school in a very positive light given their experience and progress whilst studying there. I have a wealth of experience in dealing with children from a wide variety of backgrounds in my work as a Solicitor dealing with criminal cases, particularly those involving youths. I act as the treasurer for the Association of Military Court Advocates and take part in a free legal clinic for a local branch of the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) and I am also an active member of the local tennis club. I would like to be a governor as I believe that I have a wealth of experience and sound professional judgment to bring to the role and have a good knowledge of the school and local community as I live a short distance away.

**Steve Chapman**

Originally from Leeds, although I moved around the country with my father's job. I returned to the Wetherby area in 1988. I am happily married to my supportive wife Amanda and have two boys James and Edward who both attend Boston. I have been employed by Lloyds Bank for over 30 years working in a variety of roles currently managing a portfolio of corporate clients in the North of England and Scotland. I am very conscious of my privileged position and have been looking at how to give back to society both through charitable work and working for community and feel this is a good starting position to achieve this goal. I would welcome the opportunity to help shape the future of the school to support the educational needs of not only my own children but others. Although involved in day to day banking, I do work closely with clients and projects to provide funding solutions to support their growth. I think that dealing with business people from all walks of life will enable me to add value to the school.

**David Wallis**

My business experience is as an operational manager both in the public and private sector. I am currently involved in an employee assistance programme and serve as a lay member on re-employment tribunals. Like many parents I work hard at trying to achieve a work life balance with much of my time away from work being spent on family activities. I am married with two children aged 11 and 7. I do get involved in local community activities and more recently I served two years as a parish councilor. I am keen to be a school governor at Boston Spa High School and I want to represent the views about the everyday issues and concerns we face as parents in our sometimes pressurized lives. I appreciate I am unknown to many of you but the strengths I would bring to the role of governor if selected would be a balanced approach, listening, being positive and constructive yet challenge with conviction in necessary. My main fundamental objective would be to have the children's best interests and safety at the forefront at all times.