

WH/RNM/JUNELET

10 June 2011

Dear Parent/Carer

### **JUNIOR MATHS CHALLENGE SUCCESS**

I would like to start the June Newsletter by congratulating five young people from Year 7 Maths classes for achieving Gold Certificates in the Junior Maths Challenge. Well done, Ben Ireland, Mitchell Pogue, Hannah Binstead, Joshua Jennings and Richard Mawson. They have all done very well, especially Richard who has earned a place in the Junior Maths Olympiad.

### **MULTI SPORTS TOUR IN FRANCE**

I was delighted to hear of the success of our annual multi-sports tour to Club Correze during the recent holiday. Seventy-Six students from Years 7 and 8 took part, ably supported by five Year 10 buddies Ethan Foster, Polly Orton, Lucy Binsted, Jack Hodgson and Emily Holden, who did a brilliant job. The event was fantastically led by Miss Blakey, Mr Potter, Mr Pratt, Miss Horgan, Mr Keens, Miss Hamblett, Miss Elias, Miss Grainger, Miss Mallinson and Mr Hill. They visited several beauty spots around the Dordogne River and the sport included water sports, mountain biking, target sports, climbing, abseiling, gorge walking, fencing, team sports, and high ropes, as well as problem solving activities. Congratulations are due to all involved, the staff tell me they were so proud of the young people, their excellent attitude, positive contributions and supportive spirit.

### **WORLD CHALLENGE EXPEDITION TO CROATIA**

Another pleasure was to hear of the success of the Year 9 group who went on the World Challenge Expedition to Croatia. Their preparation was long and thorough, but it paid off with an excellent adventure, superbly led by Mr Adkins and Miss Clarke. Once in Croatia they put their preparation to the test, working together, each taking turns in leading the whole team for a day, budgeting for their shopping, cooking all their meals, as well as carrying all their own tents and equipment. The expedition included canoeing down the Adriatic coast, 3 days trekking up a mountain from sea level to heights of over 1100m, then 2 days kayaking down a most beautiful river, going down rapids and walking round the waterfalls. Highlights will have been camping under the stars or the chance meeting with the President of Croatia in the airport! At each stage of the trip our staff were approached by members of the public to congratulate them on the conduct, work ethic and attitude of the young people. I am very proud of a team who worked together so well.

### **UNIFORM FOR SEPTEMBER**

One of the great features of this week has been the positive conversations I have had with so many young people about the new Uniform.

The three most frequently asked questions are about footwear, jumpers and skirts. In the next couple of weeks we will post on the website clear and detailed guidance for families about the new uniform expectations, including footwear, but the jumper is optional. As for the skirt, the most frequent answers have been, yes it is of fixed length to the knee, yes it does have a slit up the back, yes it is lined, no it is not pleated and yes you can wear black trousers if you prefer.

The boys' uniform will be worn in full from 6th September, and our girls will be in blazer, collared shirt and tie. For just September and October, girls can wear either plain black trousers or a plain black knee length skirt. From 31<sup>st</sup> October girls can choose to continue to wear the plain black trousers, but the only skirt to be worn will be the new tartan plaid skirt. The two stage introduction of the uniform is because of the bespoke nature of the fabric design we have chosen for the skirt. Our young people and the Governors, who have seen the fabric, were unanimous that the school colours should be woven into the pattern and that we did not want to adopt a plaid worn in any other school. A mill in Otley has been commissioned to weave our plaid, and we hope that a group from our school might be able to visit the mill to see the fabric in production.

The delay with the skirt is not ideal, but we do want to make sure our uniform is the best it can be. I would want to reiterate my comment from my May Newsletter; where families are in particular hardship, and are in receipt of other financial support such as free school meals, we would offer support for the new uniform.

### **MUSIC INSTRUMENT TUITION**

We are at that stage in the school year where there is careful planning going on for the year ahead. In particular we are booking our peripatetic music tutors; if your daughter or son does not yet play an instrument, would you like them to?

We anticipate being able to offer lessons for the acoustic guitar, electric guitar, double bass, saxophone, bassoon, oboe, drums, cello, violin, piano, trumpet, trombone, and clarinet. The majority of our music tutors come to us from 'Artforms' who charge £46 an hour for 33 hours tuition over the academic year teaching groups of up to six students. In order to keep costs down we seek to maintain this group size, where this is not possible the group is charged accordingly. In a group of six the cost to parents for the year will be £254 which can either be paid in full at the start of the academic year or in three termly instalments. Individual Tuition is available for which Art Forms charge £46.00 for each 1 hour lesson. If you want to start music tuition please contact Mr Boulton, either by post with the envelope marked 'New Music Tuition' or email to [boultonpe01@leedlearning.net](mailto:boultonpe01@leedlearning.net) with the subject marked 'New Music Tuition', by Friday 17<sup>th</sup> June.

I would always want every one of our young people to take up new opportunities, so as with the uniform, if a family needs support with these costs we would want to help you.

### **MUSIC SUCCESS**

While on the subject of Music I would like to congratulate the latest group of young people to pass the ABRSM Music Exams. I am delighted for them, I know that it takes a lot of time, patience and commitment to move up the Music 'grades', and so I very much admire the achievements of Ellen Keag, William Davies, Anna O'Beirne, Alexander Williams, Chloe Guy, Anastasia Crossley, Jack Oxtoby, Jessica Guy, Grace Johnson, Emma Oxtoby and Isobel Reed.

### **SCHOOL HOUSES**

In the next few weeks all young people, staff and Governors will be allocated to one of our four Houses. Each House is named after a former member of staff, Gus Cooper, Robin Donaldson, Ruth Thompson and Elizabeth Bucktrout. Each of these colleagues had a life cut short prematurely, but held a set of values, principles and personal qualities that we believe all our young people should aspire to emulate. We are grateful to the families of these friends and colleagues who have agreed that we can use their names in this way. The Houses will be lead by Mr. Brennan, Miss Hibbert, Mr Potter, and Mr Lynskey; at the start of next year each young person will be given a pin badge, in the shape of our school statue, in one of four colours to denote which House they are in.

### **ON THE WEB SITE**

Over the next few weeks a variety of job vacancies will be published there; we are always glad to receive applications from our community. You will also find details of the vacancies on our school Governors, weekly news of the school through the 'Head's Blog' and details of the new school uniform. All our monthly Newsletters are published there too. It has been my practice to rely on the traditional 'pupil post' to distribute these, but while they continue to include details of the uniform changes I will post them.

### **HEADSHIP APPOINTMENT**

I have been touched by the many kind comments from parents that I have received since the letter from the Chair of Governors; thank you. I am really pleased to have been given the opportunity to continue building on all that has been achieved over the last four years. We have a great staff team, professional and dedicated, who are working with fantastic children who have great potential. It has been my privilege to lead our school for the last four years, and it remains so as we look forward to further challenge and reward.

Yours faithfully

CHRISTOPHER WALSH  
Headteacher