



Weekly Newsletter from the Headmaster

Dear Parents,

I wish you all a very Happy and Healthy 2017.

In Assembly yesterday I gave the follow message to pupils:

"I remind all of you that as we start this New Year, while we can look back with pleasure at our past achievements, and some of us might look back with some anxiety about things that didn't go so well, we all start the New Year by turning over a fresh page and that fresh page is blank.

I ask all of you to ensure that by the end of 2017 the blank white page has been transformed by adorning it with the many achievements you hope will come your way in this New Year.

As usual this will not happen by accident but will only occur as a result of sustained hard work. I hope that you continue to enjoy the process of learning new things and are as excited as I am and inspired by all of the great things to come.

I mentioned to your teachers earlier today about the sense of urgency which infuses this term with a sense of purpose.

Including today, there are only 52 working school days to Easter (five Week 1s and five Week 2s) and you will be as aware as I am about how much academic study needs to be packed into the short time available.

I say this not to frighten you, or to fill you with a sense of foreboding, but to emphasise just how important every minute of every lesson is. There really is no space for timewasting or any lack of direction and purpose. You and all who teach you are working together to ensure the very best outcomes for you.

So time, is short, and there is much to be done, but I hope you also maintain the genuine excitement and thrill of learning new things.

Enjoy this term; build on your successes of last term, learn from your failures, and aim to improve in all that you do – a little improvement across the board in every subject leads to a massive overall improvement."

News about Staff

Mrs Lawes has resigned from her position as Head of Sixth Form and, at this stage, we have taken the opportunity to consider the way we ensure the best outcomes for our Sixth Formers. For the time being, Mrs Lawes is not being directly replaced but we will retain a structure of Heads of Year in each of the Lower and Upper Sixth Forms to ensure a continuity of experience for each Year Group. Dr Tiffen and Mr Prest, therefore, will remain as Heads of Lower and Upper Sixth Forms and Mr Barfield retains his leadership of the International Baccalaureate Diploma. Mrs Newby continues to support all Sixth Form students in her role as Pastoral Manager.

The New Year brings with it new members of staff and we welcome Mr Willingham (Head of Religious Studies), Mr Shearman (Head of Hough House and Teacher of Geography), Mr Cleaves (Teacher of Drama – Maternity Cover) and Mrs Bowley (Teacher of English).

2017 Parent and Pupil Surveys

We do not rest on our laurels and are always looking at ways to make improvements to the School. Those of you who have been with us for a little while will remember the paper questionnaires we have previously sent out which ask you how you think the School has performed in a number of different areas over the past year. This year we are going digital and an online questionnaire will be emailed to all Senior School parents and pupils and all Preparatory parents and Key Stage 2 pupils during the week of 16th January. The email will include links and passwords and all responses will be returned directly to Kirkland Rowell Surveys.

Please could I ask you to spare ten minutes to fill out your responses and help us make our School the best that it can be for your child. You will have two weeks to complete the survey, all your answers are anonymous and will be treated in the strictest confidence. We value your opinion and thank you in advance for taking part in this important survey.

GCSE OPTIONS MEETING

On Monday 9th January, we will be holding an options event for all Third Year pupils and their parents. This event will provide an excellent opportunity to discover more about our diverse and exciting range of GCSE courses. The evening will supplement the information contained within the courses booklet which will be distributed to pupils shortly.

The evening will commence at 7pm in the Wessex Auditorium with a short introductory talk. We will explain the mechanics of the process and discuss the rationale underpinning the important decisions that need to be made. We want all pupils to benefit from a holistically coherent curriculum which they will find accessible, challenging, and inspiring. This will be followed by visits to departmental areas, and teaching staff will be available to answer questions specific to the nature and content of particular GCSE courses. We envisage that the evening will conclude by about 9pm.

The evening will be organised informally and we will not be using an appointments system on this occasion, as the intention is for you to visit different subject areas. Pupils need not wear uniform when attending. Please note that this evening is not a consultation evening with your son's or daughter's subject teachers (this occurs on Thursday 26th January). The purpose of this evening is to begin the process of selecting GCSE subjects.

I very much hope that you will be able to attend.

Junior Colloquium

This term will see another exciting and enriching programme delivered at Junior Colloquium and JSABs (Junior Sir Antony Browne Society). The programme for the term can be viewed on the School website. Sixth Form student Ella Watson will start the year for the Junior Colloquium on Monday 9th and JSABs on Wednesday 11th exploring issues of equality. Both presentations will begin at 1.20pm and will be fully interactive with pupils encouraged to ask questions and share their views. All First and Second Year pupils are warmly invited to attend Junior Colloquium and all Third, Fourth and Fifth Years are invited to JSABs on Wednesday.

Sport

Congratulations to Maddy Gale for being selected to represent England in the Under 15 Foil Fencing Competition. Maddy will fly to Poland in March to compete in the Challenge Wratistavia event at the ORBITA Sports Centre. We wish you the very best of luck Maddy and we look forward to finding out how you get on.

These letters are located in the Letters Home area of the Parent Portal for which there is a link below for parental use:

Folder	Title	Uploaded
3rd Year	Third Year GCSE Options Meeting 9th January	03/01/2017
3rd Year	Third Year Parents Evening Letter	06/01/2017
5th Year	GCSE / IGCSE Mock Exams Jan 2017 Instructions to Candidates	04/01/2017

> [Click here for the Parent Portal](#)



Yours sincerely

Ian Davies
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