

HEADMASTER'S NEWSLETTER TO PARENTS, February 2010



Dear Parents and Guardians,

As we come to the end of this term, it would seem that spring has come rather later this year and we all hope that summer is around the corner. I know that almost all staff and children will be pleased to rest a bit over the Easter holidays, although these are shorter than usual.

Most recently, we have just finished our first Arts Festival. I know that many of you came to the various music, drama events, plus of course the fabulous art exhibition. I think it has been a great success and I would like to thank you those of you who came to support the various events. If you did not manage to come this year, then I recommend you do so in the future!

ACADEMIC MATTERS

Exam Study leave

Year 13 - week commencing Monday, 26th April.

Year 11 - week commencing Monday, 17th May.

The summer term represents a very busy time for all the key examination groups. Year 13 and Year 11 need to return to school having undertaken a serious period of revision and of course we wish all these students the best of success in their public exams.

Year 13 students begin their real examinations in the week beginning Monday, 3rd May, and so there is hardly any time at the start of next term before they start. It is expected that these students make the most of the revision programmes provided.

Year 11 students will have their examinations throughout the term, although the first real bulk of exams start during the week beginning Monday, 17th May.

Those students who have indicated they will be staying to join the IBDP programme in September 2010, will have received a letter confirming their subject options. You should also have received a copy of this letter. It is important that students and parents look carefully at these subject choices and notify Mrs Pengilley of any changes they wish to make by Tuesday 13th April at the latest. If you have not received this letter, please contact Mrs Pengilley immediately.

Year 12 students have internal IB examinations during the week beginning Monday 26th April and they will last for a week. It is from these exams, and a student's ongoing academic performance, that predicted grades will be derived for their University application forms. It is therefore extremely important that students seek the highest possible grades from these exams.

Year 10 students have their examinations during the week beginning Monday 24th May. Years 7, 8 and 9 also have their examinations during this week, but theirs will be done in class time.

We expect all students to take these examinations seriously and the results help us place students in the correct teaching groups for the next academic year. All year groups have had study skills courses which have addressed the issue of revision. The strategies they have been taught need to be implemented rigorously in preparation for these exams.

By now all students who are taking (I)GCSE exams this summer will have been given an examinations timetable together with a booklet 'Examinations Guidance for Students & Parents'. Just in case your child has not shown you this booklet (!), you can find it on the Parents' website. It contains the Boards' Notices to Candidates which every student should be encouraged to read, paying particular attention to the 'no mobile phones' rule. It is important for them to understand that if they are found with a mobile phone (or any other electronic equipment for that matter) on their person they are liable for disqualification, whether the phone is switched off or not. The booklet contains lots of useful information and should answer any questions you may have. Additionally a full (I)GCSE timetable is on the Parents' website and is also displayed on the examinations notice board outside the staff room in Dalewood. However, if you have any concerns at all, please feel free to email or call the Examinations Officer, Ms van Clute, on 01372 385042, or email her at examsec@boxhillschool.org.uk

Students in Year 9 will have put in their (I)GCSE option forms for Year 10. There is still some work to do on this and we will contact parents individually if we foresee any problems (e.g. we will not be running Mandarin in Year 10 as there is hardly any demand).

IB Information Evening – 10th May 2010

We are holding two information sessions; 6:15pm and 7:15pm in the 6th form common room. This is an opportunity for Year 10 parents to find out a little more about the IB Diploma Programme. Year 10 students will have had an introduction to the IB on April 15th at school. There will be time for a Q&A Session at the end of each presentation. Refreshments are provided.

BHSA Matters

It was an enormous pity that we had to postpone this term's main BHSA event, the Race Night. This was due to the fact that so few of you had signed up to come. We have rescheduled the Race Night to Friday, 12th November. Put it in your diaries!

The BHSA, our Parents Association, run a variety of social events during the year which have a two fold purpose. First to have some fun, and secondly, to raise some money for the school. At the moment the BHSA is funding another new minibus, and recently grants have been given for new expedition tents and new equipment in various areas of the school.

Their next event is the summer "bash" on the evening of Speech Day (22 May), so please come with your friends and support the occasion. If you would like to help in any way, I know that Dona McNiven would love to hear from you. Thank you!

Art Prize

Reiko Sudo won first prize for her drawing which was entered into a recent Art competition and exhibition at the Dorking Halls involving all the schools in Mole Valley. Her splendid achievement was documented in the local newspaper. Some of you may have seen her work on display in the front hall of Dalewood and in the McComish Hall during our IB Art exhibition in the last week of term.

World Maths Day

On Wednesday 3rd March, many pupils in the school competed in World Maths Day where they played against other pupils around the world, in one minute challenges. It was wonderful to see all the practice that took place in all spare moments in the preceding few weeks. Special mention should go to Matthew Alvisse (Year 8) who had a high score of 69 sums in a minute, which was the best performance in the school. Fantastic!

Year 7 and Year 8 Summer Expeditions

Full details, consent forms and kit lists for the Year 7 and 8 expeditions (held in the last week of term - week beginning Monday 21st June) will be circulated early next term when all the final arrangements have been completed.

This year the summer expeditions' week runs from 21st to 24th or 25th June. Parents of pupils in Year 9 should have already received information about the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Information and medical forms will be issued very soon for Years 7 & 8. If you do not receive information by the end of April, please contact the school.

Year 10 will either be doing their qualifying silver expedition (information already issued) or taking part in daily activities from Monday to Thursday. When this multi activity programme is finalised you will receive details in the post.

Any queries regarding expeditions should be addressed to Mr Monk at the school. Mr Monk is currently away on sick leave and we hope to see him back at the start of next term. If you have any immediate queries please contact Mrs Sunter.

Madrid Trip 2010 – Years 7-9

We are taking 24 students to Madrid on a Spanish language trip on Thursday 29th April until Sunday 2nd May 2010. You will receive a detailed information pack after the Easter holidays.

You son/daughter will be expected to come to the school as normal on Thursday 29th April in their own clothes and with their entire luggage for the trip. The school mini buses will then drop the students and three staff off at LGW.

Please note that you will be expected to collect your son/daughter from LGW on Sunday 2nd May in the evening. The Monday is a Bank Holiday and therefore, they will not be back in school until Tuesday 4th May 2010.

If you require any specific information at this point, please contact Miss Peddle or Mrs Esparza at the school (Peddle@boxhillschool.org.uk Esparzac@boxhillschool.org.uk)

Performing Arts

We have our Summer Soiree on Thursday June 10th at 6 pm. This will take place on the back lawn using the new cloisters as a stage. Pimms and Strawberries will be provided. Audience members are encouraged to bring their own picnic supper.

The second half of term is very busy but I look forward to seeing you in school for many events. Please do support your children here in school (despite what they may say!) and do come and support the Junior Production Arabian Nights. Tickets will be on sale from Reception.

School Buses

Please note that the school buses do their last runs on Friday 18th June. There will be no transport provided during Expeditions week (21 - 25 June). If your son or daughter is school based and normally uses one of the buses we provide, then you will need to make your own arrangements or contact Mrs Sunter who may be able to help.

Cyber Safety

On Box Hill Day (February 5th) all pupils in year 7 to 9 attended a presentation on the subject of staying safe in cyber space. Some parents were also in attendance. It was well received and gave valuable and useful information. In the light of recent publicity and increasing concern over young people and their use of technology, Mrs Sunter would like to open this opportunity up to more parents to find out more.

We are offering you up to three presentations at the start of next term. If you would like to attend one simply email Mrs Sunter at sunterm@boxhillschool.org.uk or call Reception stating your preferred date and time. The venue will depend on the number of people who attend. The presentation with questions is a little under an hour. These dates and times will also be published in the summer term calendar:

Friday 16th April at 3.30pm

Monday 19th April at 6.30pm

Monday 26th April at 5.30pm

The school is against any form of bullying and everyone in the school is responsible for helping to fight against it. We are aware that there is a growing trend among young people to bully using modern technology (cyber bullying). We believe that this is a particularly cowardly form of bullying and will do everything we can to stop it happening in school. Our anti bullying policy is clear: all pupils sign an anti bullying contract and we also have in place an Acceptable Use Policy covering use of computers and mobile phones in school. Sanctions exist to deal with breaches of these policies.

Parents and guardians need to keep a check on what young people are doing with computers and mobile phones. There is good advice for parents on www.thinkuknow.co.uk. Abuse can also be reported to Child Exploitation and Online Protection – for information please look at their website www.ceop.gov.uk .

If events that occur out of school impinge on school time we would wish to be informed. We may be able to offer advice and/or support.

Active Kids Vouchers

We are now collecting for Sainsbury's Active Kids programme 2010. At Box Hill School we promote healthy eating and fitness amongst our students and staff. Through the Active Kids scheme we will hopefully be able to acquire a wide range of equipment and experiences for your child if enough vouchers are collected. So if you shop at Sainsbury's then please ask for the Active Kids vouchers and then drop them into the collection point in main reception. Thank you.

Hair and Dress

May I please ask that students return to school with their uniform clean and tidy... and repaired if necessary! As for hair, our guidelines are really clear with regard to colour, style and length...but boys must be able to see out clearly and not through a mass of hair covering their eyes (!). Please support us to make our students look smart and to be proud of our school.

Notice to Leave Box Hill School

May I respectfully remind you that if you intend your son/daughter to leave Box Hill at the end of next term, then you must give us a term's notice in writing, otherwise you will be liable for a full term's fees in lieu of notice. Any such written notice should be received by us on Tuesday 13th April. I do not require such notice from any Year 13 students, but I do for a student in any other year group. Thank you.

Clarion Call and E-mail

This is an excellent way for us to keep you informed. If you have not been receiving any clarion call messages on your mobile phones, please let the school know. The same applies for e-mails. If you change your address or phone number or e-mail contact, please let the school know immediately. Thank you.

Some Key Dates For Your Diaries

April

Tues 6th	Netball Tour to Malta (returns 11th)
Mon 12th	INSET
	Boarders return by 8pm
Tue 13th	Start of school; 8:20am
Friday 16th	Cyber Safety presentation to parents; 3:30
Wed 21st	Year 7 Parents' evening 6:15pm
Fri 23rd	Year 13 Leavers service; 12:00
	Year 13 Leaver's lunch; 12:30
Mon 26th	IB Internal Exams – Year 12

May

Tue 4th	IB External Exams – Year 13
Thurs 6th	Year 10 Parents' Evening; 6:15pm
Sat 8th	Open Morning
Mon 10th	IB Information Evening
Thurs 13th	School at Work Day

May (continued)

Fri	14th	Year 11 Leavers' Service, followed by Lunch; 12:00 Study leave begins for Year 11
Mon	17th	Main written public exams start
Sat	22nd	Speech Day and Prize Giving (compulsory for all students); 10:30
Mon	24th	Internal Exams Week – Years 7-10 Valedictory Dinner (Sixth Form only); 7:30pm
Fri	28th	Half Term begins (departures from 4:15)

June

Sun	6th	Boarders return by 8pm
Mon	7th	School starts 8:20am
Thurs	10th	6th Form Experience Day (Year 11)
Fri	11th	Technical rehearsal for Arabian Nights
Mon	14th	First Dress rehearsal for Arabian Nights
Tues	15th	Final dress rehearsal for Arabian Nights (invited audience)
Wed	16th	Sports Day
Wed	16th	First performance Arabian Nights (7.30pm)
Thurs	17th	Second performance Arabian Nights (7.30pm)
Mon	21st	Expeditions Week Commences
Fri	25th	END OF TERM

Summer Term 2010

Please note that we end the summer term quite early this year and the second half of term is very short indeed, as a result of a late bank holiday on Monday 31st May. Please rest assured that the number of teaching weeks over the year has not been reduced. In fact we have a very long first half of term this year.

Leave of Absence

There have been an increasing number of requests for early leave of absence and I would welcome your co-operation with the school on adhering to term dates. Given that we publish our term dates well in advance, at least a year in fact, I see very little justification for not keeping to them. Absence in term time is disruptive to individual students as they will miss valuable lesson time. Additionally, a student's absence affects the teaching staff in their lesson planning and delivery and adds to their workload.

Please keep to the published term dates; it is very frustrating for my colleagues. Thank you!

May I wish you a very Happy Easter.

Yours sincerely



Mark Eagers
Headmaster