



Downend School

8 June 2009

Parents Newsletter

Dear parents and guardians

It has been a busy and exciting time and I thought I would update you on a number of issues:

Future newsletters

As you know we now use the website for news and information which we are constantly updating and we have recently bought into a text alert system which proved to be really valuable during the swine flu episode. From September I would like to post my newsletters on the website and alert parents to this via text rather than issue hard copies for students to take home.

There may be a small number of parents who would rather receive a hard copy. If this is the case please will you sign and return the slip below to your daughter/son's tutor.

Staffing update

We are pleased to advise that Mr Graydon will take over as Deputy Head from Ms Cousins on her retirement in August. We are also pleased that Miss Heal has been appointed to the Assistant Head post.

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking Ms Cousins for all she has done for Downend during her time here and personally for helping me to settle in three years ago.

Mr Budd will also be retiring at the end of the year. We would like to wish both Ms Cousins and Mr Budd a very happy retirement. Mr Brockway is also leaving us after eighteen years. He is going abroad to work and we send our best wishes and hope he will keep us posted on life in Lucerne, Switzerland.

At the end of the year we will also be saying good bye to Mr Dansault, Mr Dart, Mr Davies, Ms Hayward, Ms Jeffrey, Ms Martin, Mr Ryan, Mr Smurthwaite and Ms Watson who are all moving on to other things. We wish them well in their new posts. We would also like to wish Ms Plaster and Mr Powell, Teaching Assistants, who are going on to train as teachers good luck for the future and we look forward to hearing when they qualify.

In September, we are also looking forward to welcoming back from their maternity leave, Mrs Elderton, Mrs de Nobriga, Ms Wilson and Mrs Walsh.

The Reading and Writing Circle/Uganda

Mrs Arnold paid a visit over half term to schools in Uganda. The Reading and Writing Circle put together a wonderful scrap book on 'life at Downend' for her to give to the Ugandan students. We are hoping they will send us a scrap book back. You can read Mrs Arnold's blog on http://blogs.tipd.org.uk/sglos_1/. The Reading and Writing Circle are now busy deciding on a new name and shadowing the Carnegie short-listed books. Following 'The Big Read' the group have received a reply from Downing Street which is displayed in the Learning Resource Centre.

Year 11 last day

We had a wonderful day with Year 11 on Friday 22 May. We had a special assembly where students practiced for the NRA assembly and enjoyed listening to the staff band. We wish them every success in their examinations.

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Excellence in ICT at Downend

We are delighted to be shortlisted for the Best Whole School category for the National ICT Excellence Awards. We are one of only three schools in the South West to be selected. On Tuesday 2 June four assessors paid a visit to the school to speak with staff and students and look at how we use ICT innovatively all over the school. Just to get this far is a brilliant achievement but we await the final results at the end of the month.

Specialist School News

Firstly, we have just been successfully redesignated as a Technology College for the next three years.

Secondly, it is a very busy time for our Science Primary liaison programme which has included visits to Downend and several trips out.

A Visit from Highgrove

On Thursday, 11 June the Head Gardener from Highgrove paid a visit to the school to look at the development of our allotment project which has GROWN over the last two years!

We have now been awarded a grant to create a bigger project – the Gallotment – where we want to grow fruit and vegetables from across the world. You will be hearing more about this in the future when we will be asking for your support.

Tesco and Sainsbury's Tokens

The promotions are now ending so if you find any tokens lying around and would like to send them in they would be gratefully received.

Events this term

Duke of Edinburgh Award Bronze Expeditions take place during June

Thursday	11 June	Year 7 Parents' Evening
Friday	12 June	Cross Phase Primary day
Wednesday	24 June	4 pm Keyboard Concert
Friday	26 June	Year 13 Summer Ball
Monday	29 June	Year 10 Work Experience commences
Tuesday	30 June	Year 7 Head for Heights all week Year 8 Sports Day
Wednesday	1 July	Primary Transition Day Year 6 Parents' Evening
Thursday	2 July	Year 9 Sports Day
Friday	3 July	Year 11 NRA Day
Sat/Sun	4/5 July	Duke of Edinburgh Award Gold Expedition
Wednesday	8 July	6.30 Musicians in the Making Concert
Monday	13 July	Year 7 Sports Day
Tuesday	14 July	Year 10 Sports Day
Wednesday	15 July	Diversity Day
Friday	24 July	Inset Day – End of Term 6

Achievements and Initiatives

These are just some of our recent achievements. Please keep the good news coming.

Well done to those students who completed the **Ten Tors Expedition** – Stuart Sheath and Alex Brook, Year 12 completed 55 miles – Alice Bird, Laura Palmer, George McFadden, Year 11, Chris Harcombe, Sam Wheeler, Year 12 completed 45 miles – Sam Kantor, Rudi Girgensons, Flora Began, Catrin Thomas and Dan Broad all completed 35 miles. What an achievement.

The Film Club got off to a great start with several films including 'Jaws'. Dominic Foale appeared in Never Forget Musical at the Bristol Hippodrome.

Thomas McCullough has been invited to the **UWE British Architecture Summer School**. The school is hosting **Science Weeks** for local primary schools this term.

Congratulations to Hannah Short for being selected for the **Arsenal Ladies Football Academy**. This is the top team in the country - an amazing achievement.

Well done to the girls' football team who are again County Champions this year – a fantastic achievement. They are Lottie Dean, Hannah Short, Rosie Harris, Rosie Sanders, Kyra Millard, Louise Wilkins, Emma Steel, Megan McGill, Shelley Cousins, Jennifer Stadden, Alex Day, Ella Neale and Holly Smith.

Scott Wilson has been playing for the **Gloucestershire Schools' Football Association under 16s team** and was involved in matches in the Wessex Shield/the South-West Inter-Counties competition and the ESFA Inter-County Trophy.

Matt Parker, Brett Halliwell, Lucy Atkins and Dan Parker were all selected for the **Avon School's team** to compete in the English Schools' Cross-Country Championships, and all performed well.

Also one of our ex student's, Jake Payne is **Downend Schools' first Jockey** and has just won his first race at Chepstow. This is on the website.

Junior Maths Challenge – Well done to:

Year 7 - Gold to Ben Hubbert; Silver to Kristian Goodchild, Tai Jarman, Umminderjeet Bikhu, Matt Snell, Matt Kirby; Bronze to Hayden Watkins, Sean Jones, Jake Horwood, Laura Phelps, James Hede and Syefun Noor.

Year 8 – Best in school and Gold to Lucy Kenyon; Gold to Elliott Hastings, Jack Hibbs; Silver to Tesni Thomas, Angharad Thomas, Emilyn Pratt, Jake Reed, Nilloy Howlader, Sam Ryan; Bronze to Joe Spilman, Ciaran McWilliams, Travis Brown, Katy Hayhurst, Louisa Heliker, Nicola Mildon, Arnold Monteith, Thomas Vanraalte, Liam Hendeson, Becky Croft, Ella Kirby, and Gemma Mulvaney.

Victor Mbogo, and Oliver Sharp worked with two students from Mangotsfield School, ably representing the schools in the **Engineering Education Scheme** with the Royal Navy.

As part of the **Bristol Design Festival** schools from across Bristol were asked to enter the **Envired Eco Competition**. There were three winners, chosen for their imaginative designs and inventive approach to reducing a product's impact on the environment. We are delighted that James Stephens, Year 10 **won first prize** in the Key Stage 4 category for his re-design of fair-trade chocolate packaging.

Finally, **Jake Bunce in Year 12** has been selected to represent Great Britain at the **Junior Archery World Championships** in Utah, USA in July.

End of Term Arrangements

Summer term ends on Thursday 23 July when we will finish at 12.25pm

Start of Year Arrangements

The new year starts on Friday 4 September for Years 7, 10 and 12 only and Monday 7 September for the rest of the school.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Tamryn Savage
Headteacher

Term Dates 2009 – 2010

Term 1	Thursday	3 September	-	Friday	23 October 2009
Term 2	Monday	2 November	-	Friday	18 December 2009
Term 3	Monday	4 January	-	Friday	12 February 2010
Term 4	Monday	22 February	-	Thursday	1 April 2010
Term 5	Monday	19 April	-	Friday	28 May 2010
	* Monday	3 May		Bank Holiday	
Term 6	Monday	7 June	-	Friday	23 July 2010

Inset Days and Start of Term 1

Term 1	Thursday	3 September	Inset	
	Friday	4 September		Years 7, 10 and Year 12 ONLY
	Monday	7 September		Whole school in
	Friday	23 October		Inset
Term 2	Friday	12 February		Joint Kingswood Partnership Diploma Inset
Term 4	Thursday	1 April		Inset
Term 6	Friday	23 July		Inset

Future Newsletters:

* please delete as appropriate

I would / would not * prefer to receive a hard copy of the newsletter.

Signed: _____ Student's Name: _____ TG: _____

Return to Mrs A Palmer, Head's PA