



Downend School

Downend School

Newsletter 1

September 2011

Dear Parents and Carers

I would like to start by thanking you for making me feel so welcome during my first two weeks at Downend School.

We have had a very positive start to the year with students rising to the challenges ahead of them.

Mr Roberts
Headteacher

Governors News

Welcome back to a new school year and to those students and parents/carers joining our school in Year 7.

We have had some changes to our governing body this year with Mr Dave Chapman, community governor, and Mrs Julia Walker, parent governor, standing down. Mr Ian Cooper has been appointed to the community governor position. He lives locally and works for Friends Life.

A letter is now on the website under the governors section asking for nominations to fill our parent governor vacancy. Please take the time to read the information and if you are interested please complete and return the form by the closing date. An information sheet also accompanies the letter from myself giving you some information about what being a governor involves.

Downend School is a large and complex organisation with 160 staff and a budget of £6.5million. We would particularly encourage parents with professional experience in similar organisations to consider putting themselves forward as governors.

Sue Sheath
Chair of Governors

Early Closure 22 September

Our Open Evening is on Thursday 22 September. To enable students and staff to prepare for the open evening school will close at 1.25pm for students in Years 7-11 inclusive. Lunch will be available in the dining hall at 1.25pm for students who wish to stay for lunch. Post 16 lessons will continue until 3.05pm.

Open Evening Thursday 22 September and Open Mornings

Open evening for prospective Year 5 and Year 6 pupils will take place between 5.45 and 8.00pm with headteacher presentations every half hour. The whole school will be open with many exciting activities to participate in.

In addition there will be open morning tours during September and October. These will be conducted by the headteacher, followed by an opportunity to ask questions. To book your place please contact the head's PA.

Uniform

As you know we have been speaking to students regarding expectations in terms of uniform. We have seen a vast improvement with students in all year groups wearing the correct full school uniform. We would like to thank you for your support in this matter.

Examination results 2011

Many students achieved considerable success in this summer's examinations.

'A' level: These were the best ever results at Downend, with a number of students achieving outstanding success. Eight students obtained three or more A*/A grades, with two securing places at Oxford University.

GCSE: A number of students achieved excellent results; in particular, twelve students obtained eight or more A*/A grades.

The number of students gaining five or more grades A*-C was the highest in the school's history.

Congratulations to our students for their fantastic achievements.

Contact Details

Please can you ensure that all your contact details are up to date with the school, particularly contact telephone numbers in case we need to contact you in an emergency.

Therefore if you have changed address or telephone number please let the school know as soon as possible by phoning 01454 862300 or by email admin@downend.com

Parent curriculum information evenings

We would like to invite you to our curriculum information evenings that we will be holding in September. The aim of these evenings are to give parents and carers an oversight of what each student will be studying in their subjects over the next academic year. Letters will be going home with students with further details. These will be held in the main hall on the following dates:

Tuesday 27 September 6.00-6.45pm – Year 8
Tuesday 27 September 7.00-7.45pm – Year 9
Thursday 29 September 6.00-6.45pm – Year 10
Thursday 29 September 7.00-7.45pm – Year 11

Privacy Notice

Please see the updated version of our Privacy Statement under the policies section of the school website.

PTA News

The PTA will be holding their AGM on Monday 12 October at 6.30pm in the LRC. Please do come along - we welcome new parents to attend.

Our next event is the craft fair on Saturday 19 November 11.00am – 3.00pm in the school hall/gym. There are still a few places left if you wish to book a stall.

Please do come along and support us - there are over 30 stalls including home-made crafts/cards/ cakes/ sweets, pottery, paintings, photography, cosmetics, Body Shop, tombola and a raffle. Refreshments will be available on the day.

For more information contact Louise Williams on 01454 862393

Mrs Jen Clark
Chair of PTA

Awards Evening

This took place on the evening of Thursday 8 September. Twenty Four students from Year 11 (who finished end of July 2011) and Years 12 & 13 were rewarded for their achievements throughout the last academic year.

Well done to all of those who received an award.

University of Bristol

The University of Bristol are holding student funding information evenings on Tuesday 11 October and Monday 14 November at 6.30-8.00pm for parents/carers and prospective undergraduate students. The sessions will cover what financial support is available nationally, what Bristol is doing to support its students, and what scholarships and bursaries are available at the University.

For further information please visit www.bristol.ac.uk/study to book your place email: schools-colleges-liaison@bristol.ac.uk

Aid Ukraine – Christmas Gift Boxes

We are once again supporting this charity to send filled shoe boxes to Zhorane in North West Ukraine where they will be distributed to those most in need as well as to orphanages and homes for the elderly. In order for the gifts to be distributed in time for Christmas the boxes will need to be brought into school by Friday 21 October.

We will be running this as a House Competition and the House donating the most shoe boxes will win 500 House Points, therefore please mark the box with the house your child represents or with a coloured sticker. Last year we sent 120 boxes to the Ukraine.

Items that are welcome in the boxes are stationery, hats, gloves, soap, toothpaste/brushes, socks, small toys and sweets (**not chocolate**). Please mark who the box is for and suitable age group this can range from a baby through to an adult.

Thank you for your support.

Achievements

Ms L Ball, Mrs L Carter and Mrs A Hewson have passed their NVQ Level 3 Diploma – Support Worker in School.

U16 girls football – In the first round of the EFSA (National cup) against Chipping Sodbury School the girls won 8-0.

Under 16 boys football also played their first fixture in the EFSA National Cup unfortunately they lost 2-3.

Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Assessment – Silke Moxon-Riedlin, Angharad Thomas, Raffaele Buchanan, Elliot Wooles, Omar Chowdhury, Mark Ward all took part in a 17 mile trek across the Mendips carrying all their own kit earlier this month as part of their DoE assessment. Well done!

Important diary dates

Thursday 22 September – Open Evening 5.45-8.00pm

Tuesday 27 September – Parent Curriculum Information evening – Year 8/9

Thursday 29 September – Parent Curriculum Information evening – Year 10/11

Thursday 6 October – Year 12 Parent Induction evening

Monday 10 October – PTA AGM – 6.30pm LRC

Thursday 13 October – Post 16 Open Evening

Friday 21 October – END of TERM 1

Monday 31 October – TERM 2 BEGINS