



Downend School

Downend School

Newsletter 4

20 January 2012

Dear Parents and Carers

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all of you a very Happy New Year and share information about what we are doing at Downend School over the next few weeks.

Mr Roberts
Headteacher

Governors News

In November our parent governor – Mrs Renuka McWilliams attended the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust Conference in Birmingham where she met with other staff and governors from across the country.

Mrs McWilliams found the whole event inspirational, she also took part in workshops and came away with many ideas to share with the governing body – she was even featured in their National Conference Magazine!

Over the forthcoming weeks Governors will continue to focus on planning the immediate and long term strategic direction of the school with Mr Roberts.

Mrs Sue Sheath, Chair of Governors

Downend School 2020 Survey for Change

As part of our continual drive to improve all aspects of the school's work, the staff and governors are considering a wide range of plans to strengthen Downend School and prepare our students for the rapidly changing world of the future.

We would be grateful if you can take ten minutes to complete this short survey to help us develop our ideas further (surveys were given to all students last week). The return date has been extended to Monday 23 January. Please return completed surveys to the student or main reception.

Students will also be taking part in activities over the next two weeks during tutor time in order to contribute their ideas as part of this process.

Year 11 Parent Consultation Evening Thursday 26 January

All Year 11 students have been given a letter to invite you to attend the parent/subject staff consultation evening. This will be held on Thursday 26 January and will run from 4.00pm-6.30pm. Students will have the responsibility of making appointments with their subject teachers. Students have also been asked to attend with their parents where possible.

Your son/daughter's Profile (subject report) will be available to collect on the evening. As a result, please can I suggest that you plan to arrive 10 minutes earlier prior to your first subject appointment in order for you to collect the Profile and read this information prior to discussing issues with subject staff.

Year 9 Options Evening

This will be on Thursday 9 February and is an opportunity for parents and carers to hear about our new options system prior to Year 9 students making their option decisions. The evening will commence with a short talk followed by a chance to meet subject staff.

The evening will start in the hall at 6.00pm for tutor groups **9AB, 9B, 9C, 9M** and 6.45pm for tutor groups **9P, 9R, 9TB, 9W and 9YC**

After school Sports Clubs - Term 3

The following clubs will take place after school during Term 3 3.15-4.15pm

Tuesdays

Boys football – Y7,8 & 9

Netball – Y9, 10 & 11

Dance – Y8&9

Girls football – All Years

Wednesdays

Girls basketball – All Years

Sixth form rugby and football

Boys football Y10 & 11

Sports fixtures

Thursdays

Boys basketball – All Years

Boys Rugby – All years

Dance – Y10 & 11

Girls Tag Rugby – Y7,8 & 9

Boxing & Gym

Parking in and around the school site

Please can all visitors to the school site and surrounding residential area please ensure they park considerately and legally. During the run up to Christmas we had reports of parked cars causing a potential danger to pedestrians.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Music Department – performance exam successes

Emily Rowsell, Grade 2 Flute (Merit)

Gabbie Ward-Jefferies, Grade 3 Guitar (Merit)

Georgina Rogers, Grade 2 Piano (Merit)

Macy Kendall, Grade 3 Violin

Daniel Berndes, Grade 3 Saxophone (Merit)

Rebecca Brodie, Grade 5 Piano (Distinction)

Lily Konteh, Grade 5 Music Theatre, voice (Distinction)

Katherine Ellery, Grade 5 Flute (Merit)

Rachael Melhuish, Grade 5 Flute (Merit)

Lizzie Pople, Grade 4 Flute (Merit)

Isabelle Mullens, Grade 5 Flute (Distinction)

PTA

The PTA is holding a quiz night in the main hall on Friday 27 January. Tickets can be purchased in advance or on the night and are £2.00 each available from the finance office. Maximum of 8 people per team. The evening starts at 7.00pm with the first round of questions at 7.30pm. There will be a raffle during the evening and children are welcome. Please bring your own food and drink.

On Saturday 12 May we will be holding a Spring Craft Fair and Plant Sale to include refreshments. Further details to follow but please put this date in your calendars, any donations of plants will be greatly appreciated so please plant a few extra seeds for the PTA. If you would like to book a stall please contact Mrs Williams on 01454 862300

Thank you for your support.

Mrs Jen Clark, Chair of PTA

Downend Film Club

The film club run by Mr Smith and Mrs Hanks is held on a Monday after school and they are once again planning a fun and diverse programme of films during the forthcoming weeks. They will be starting the week of the Holocaust memorial Day with a showing of the French film 'Round Up' and to mark Charles Dickens' birthday will be screening Great Expectations.

The film club show free films and hold one off events throughout the year. If students wish to join they need to fill out an application form which is available from Mrs Hanks in the LRC.

Post 16 University Successes

A number of our Post 16 students have already had offers of University places, some destinations include Kings College London, Christ Church College Oxford, Exeter, Plymouth, Edinburgh, Cardiff, Swansea. We wish them every success when they enrol later this year.

Ms Wood

Design & Technology Department

The DT department have been asked to select 5 Year 10 Engineering students to attend a Rolls-Royce Apprenticeship day on the 9th February to participate in Engineering activities that will give them experience in working in a large engineering organisation.

Mr Williams

Year 7 English, Learning Support Group

Mrs Pearce, Mr Robinson and the Y7 English Learning Support Group have been 'Skyping' students in Georgia, USA. They make contact on a regular basis and talk about their different experiences in school and sharing ideas. The group plan to produce a magazine this year with what they have learnt from their American friends.

Space Odyssey comes to Downend

On 11 January, Downend Y7 and Y10 students went on a journey through space. They were joined on their adventure by students from Bromley Heath Junior School, Stanbridge, Barley Close and Staple Hill Primary Schools. This was all courtesy of the Space Odyssey Group who took the students from earth to the moon in their portable dome. Students now know what it would be like to be in space and spend time on the international space station. A huge thank you to the Science department for arranging this adventure.

Good news from the Maths Department

In December students took part in a competition hosted by BP as part of the Olympics education program. Students worked in teams, creating an oil trading company, traded oil to make as much profit as possible in the time limit. All students took part with great enthusiasm and energy.

On the Olympic theme, students are currently taking part in a national competition for the Olympics in their Maths lessons which will launch an exciting series of Olympic themed activities and projects as we build for London 2012.

Year 11 GCSE Results – 79 of our students achieved their Grade C in Mathematics in November. Congratulations to all!

Individual Successes

Natasha Burden, Year 9 has passed her National Level One in ice skating and has already started to practise for her Level 2.

Important diary dates

Thursday 26 January – Year 11 Parent Consultation Evening
Thursday 9 February – Year 9 Options Evening
Thursday 9 February - Post 16 trip to USA departs
Friday 10 February – End of Term 3
Friday 10 February – Ski Trip departs
Thursday 16 February – P16 USA trip returns
Saturday 18 February – Ski Trip returns

Monday 20 February – INSET day
Tuesday 21 February – Start of Term 4 for students
Thursday 23 February – Year 9 Parents Consultation evening