



Downend School

Downend School

Newsletter 8

May 2011

Dear Parents and Carers

I would like to thank you all for your support in ensuring students arrive for school suitably dressed in the correct uniform. There has been a great improvement across the school and we wish to continue this over the forthcoming weeks. Students are also adhering to our updated mobile phone policy which means students are able to enjoy lessons undisrupted.

We were very busy with the appointment of my successor during the last week of term. We are all delighted with the news that you see below.

Mrs Savage

Governors News

The governors are pleased to announce that Mr Will Roberts, currently Deputy Head at Writhlington School in Radstock, has been appointed Headteacher of Downend School with effect from September 2011. Mr Roberts greatly impressed the whole school community and we look forward to welcoming him to Downend School over the coming months.

Mrs Sue Sheath, Chair of Governors

Message from Mr Roberts

"I am delighted to have been appointed as Headteacher at Downend School. I spent three days at Downend during the interview process, and was really impressed with the way the school came across. I met many enthusiastic students who had lots of ideas about the future of the school. The commitment of the staff is very clear, and the range of activities on offer at Downend is highly impressive. I met with a number of parents, governors and friends of the school, and it is clear that Downend has lots of supporters in the local community.

I will be spending some time in the school over the next few weeks, working with Mrs Savage to ensure a smooth hand-over, and I am looking forward to meeting students and parents alike in September.

I have four children of my own, and know how important it is for schools to offer the best possible experience for every child. I think the future is very exciting for Downend School, and I am delighted to have been chosen to lead the school in its continued journey of improvement."

A new look for the Post-16 Centre

Over the Easter break the Post 16 common room has been completely refurbished. It is bright, bold and functional, and the students themselves had much involvement in the design and layout. We are delighted that the current Year 13 will see the fruits of their ideas and we are hoping to give Year 11 a tour before they leave.

PTA Plant Sale Saturday 14 May 10.00am – 12.00noon

The PTA is holding its first plant sale at Downend School and would appreciate your support by attending on the day or by donating any plants/seedlings. All donations can be brought into school on Thursday 12 and Friday 13 May. Please invite your friends to come along. Refreshments will also be available on the morning.

Next PTA meeting
Monday 9 May 6.30pm in
the LRC.

Exams

We wish all our students the best of luck over the busy examination period ahead. A letter will be posted to Year 11 to inform them of final arrangements for Terms 5 and 6.

Downend Parent/ Carer/ Student Survey

I mentioned last term that we will be conducting a survey to students, parents, carers and staff to gain an insight into what we are doing well and what we need to do to improve. The school will be using a nationally recognised company to analyse our results which we will feedback towards the end of the summer term. Students will be completing their surveys during tutor time between Friday 6 May and Monday 16 May.

Parents/carers will receive theirs on Monday 9 May. I would be very grateful if you can complete the surveys and return to the school by Monday 23 May

Cycle Event and Safety Awareness Week 3-9 May

On Thursday 28 April Downend School welcomed Andrei Burton to school to perform a series of shows to Year 7 and 8 students. Andrei is one of the United Kingdom's top elite trials riders and also joined us in opening the new cycle shed. We were also joined by Patrick Birch (Dr Bike) who worked with students servicing and checking their cycles. He will be returning later in the year to run some 'Bikeability' Level 3 courses for Years 7 and 8.

Following on from this we are holding a 'Bike Safety Awareness Week' from 3 – 9 May. During the week students will be looking at all aspects of road safety in tutor time and the plans for cycle use around the school and the surrounding area. As a celebration of this week any students using the bike sheds on Monday 9 May will be able to get a healthy breakfast in school at 8.00am.

From Monday 9 May any students in Years 7 to 11 who bring their bikes to school must use the entrance in Garnett Place.

Downend's Got Talent Semi Finals

This took place on Wednesday 26 April and showcased some amazing talent. The following students will go through to the finals in July.

Year 7, Tenesha Mc Garvie 7P *Singer*

Karin Fizerova 7L *Dancer*

Year 8, Vandross Cox-Durant 8H *Dance*

Gabbie Ward-Jefferies & Charlotte Lovell 8W *Singers*

Reuben Jenkins & Lily Konteh 8L *Singers*

Year 9, Michaela Pickford 9R *Singer*

Year 10, Eloise Skidmore 10D *Dance*

Year 11, Rachel Hooper 11T *Singer*

Travis Alabanza- Behard and Holly Manning were our guest performers this year and went down a storm.

A huge thank you to our Judges Miss Williams, Mr Brockwell, Miss May & Miss Yeates.

Good luck in the Summer everyone.

Fairtrade Friday

On the 4 March we were lucky to have a visit from Gioconda, a Nicaraguan coffee producer. This involved students from Years 9 to 13 in a mixture of workshops and discussions and design packaging for coffee.

Year 12 Envision Volunteers

Year 12 have been working with the charity Envision on Friday mornings. One of the teams have been selected to be a case study for a national charities website. They have been tackling the issue of negative stereotypes of young people towards the elderly and have been spending time with people in a local residential home.

Film Club

On Monday 23 May Downend Film Club will be showing 'Fire in Babylon'. This will be followed by a question and answer session with members of the cast/ production team.

Achievements

Below are just a few of our the many individual successes our students and staff have achieved.

Mr Smith, Second in English was one of a team of three that recently completed the Ridgeway National Trail Run. He ran 90 miles over three days and raised £3000.00 for Wiltshire Air Ambulance.

Miss Morgan recently gained a distinction in her Masters Degree.

During the last two weeks of term we were treated to two amazing drama productions. **The Witches** based on Roald Dahls story was performed by our younger students and supported by Year 10. A **Pantomime** was created by Year 10 GCSE students and performed to Year 7 students, family and friends. Both productions were fantastic.

Martha Kirby, Year 9 will be performing at Bath Theatre Royal in Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat during June.

Tom Hodges, Year 9 took part in 'Thoroughly Modern Milly' at Chipping Sodbury Town Hall

Important Diary Dates

Thursday 5 May – Year 7 Parent Consultation Evening
Monday 9 May – PTA meeting LRC 6.30pm
Saturday 14 May – PTA Spring Plant Sale 10.00-12.00
Friday 27 May – End of Term 5

Monday 6 June – Start of Term 6
Monday 6 June – PTA meeting 6.30pm LRC
Saturday 11 June – Mangotsfield Festival
Saturday 25 June – Page Park Event supporting Help for Heroes
Thursday 30 June – Year 6 transition day
Friday 8 July – Post 16 Ball
Monday 11 July – PTA meeting 6.30pm LRC
Thursday 21 July – last day for students
Friday 22 July – INSET Day

Examination results

Thursday 18 August - AS and A Level
Thursday 25 August - GCSE