



Downend School

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Newsletter 9

May 2011

Dear Parents and Carers

This is just a short newsletter to update you on events at Downend School. Please continue to let us know of students' successes. I hope you have an enjoyable half term break and look forward to seeing the students for their final term on Monday 6 June.

Mrs Savage

PTA news

Plant Sale

The PTA held their first plant sale at the school on Saturday 14 May. This was a fantastic event and very well supported so thank you to all of you who kindly donated plants. They raised over £300, plans are already being discussed for the same event next year!

Mangotsfield Festival

This year's festival is on Saturday 11 June at Cleve Rugby Club from 10.30am onwards. The PTA is hosting the Festival Café where they will be selling filled baguettes, cakes, strawberries and cream. As this will involve a great deal of work in terms of preparation they would welcome any volunteers of help on the day even if you can only spare one hour. **Please visit the school website and click under PTA to download the letter and form to volunteer.**

Christmas Craft Fair

In the past this has been a very successful event and the PTA hope to continue this in 2011. The date for this year's fair is Saturday 19 November 11.00am – 3.00pm. If you would like to book a table at this event again please visit the PTA section of the school website to download a booking form. Tables cost £15.00 or £25.00 for two tables.

Exams

Exams continue in Term 6 so please ensure students arrive fully prepared for their exams on time and with the correct equipment. All students are also expected to wear full school uniform.

Post 16 Registration

Staff will be on hand on the day of the results should students require guidance in light of their GCSE results. Post 16 registration and induction will start on Thursday, 1 September 2011.

Governors News

We welcome Mrs Carol Gould as a new governor and now have a full governing body.

I would like to wish all students taking exams over the next few weeks every success and good luck for securing your places for further education or in the workplace.

Mrs Sue Sheath, Chair of Governors

Year 11

All Year 11 students have now received a letter explaining the final arrangements for Terms 5 & 6. They go on study leave from Thursday 26 May.

Friday 15 July is the Record of Achievement Ceremony. This will start at 11.30am and students can arrive from 11.00am. This will last for approximately one hour and then there will be an opportunity for photographs in the gym.

Downend Parent/ Carer/ Student Survey

Most students have now completed their surveys during tutor time. Parents and carers should also have received their questionnaires which were sent home via students. I would be grateful if any outstanding surveys can be returned to student reception as soon as possible.

French Exchange 2011

Thirty four Year 9 and 10 students have just returned from their visit to their pen friends in Sezanne in France, a small town in the Champagne region about one hour south east of Paris. They enjoyed a full programme and went to the school for a day, visited Paris, said hello to the Mona Lisa and went up the Eiffel Tower, they also visited the medieval town of Provins and followed the Champagne route to Epernay where they visited the gigantic champagne cellars of Eugene Mercier. Both French and English students spent a day at Disneyland before a (tearful!) good bye was said at the airport.

For the teachers it was a delight to see their students gain in confidence using their French and making good friends in Sezanne. We think that some very close friendships have been forged and hope that they will last well into their adult life!

We have also had several letters from parents saying how much their children enjoyed the trip, here is one of the comments;

'I just wanted to send you a quick note to say thank you very much again for arranging the French exchange this year. Ben had the time of his life and he and Frank, who got on very well when they first met here last year, are now firm friends. I am already discussing with Frank's mum about when they can next meet. We would also like to meet up as families.'

Please pass on my thanks to your colleagues, Mr Dansault and Mrs Russell, for all they did for the exchange group. Ben thoroughly enjoyed the journeys and all the trips, thanks to their excellent organisation and supervision'.

Vacancy – School Crossing Patrol at Stanbridge Primary School

South Gloucestershire Council's Road Safety Team has a vacancy for a school crossing patrol at Stanbridge Primary School. It is for one hour per day, at £6.47 per hour, working morning and afternoon shifts, Monday – Friday, term time only. Job share will be considered. Training and uniform are provided. Please contact Wendy Feltham on 01454 863611 or at wendy.feltham@southglos.gov.uk for an application form.

Emersons Green Primary School is holding a reunion for past students to celebrate their 10th anniversary on Friday 8 July 4.00pm – 7.00pm. Full details and cost of tickets are available from Emersons Green Primary School office or by emailing Meryl Grimshaw and Alison Rawling EGPS-PTFA@hotmail.co.uk

Film Club

On Monday 23 May Film Club gave Downend School the opportunity to watch a new documentary film called 'Fire in Babylon.' The film is about West Indian Cricket, music and politics of the 1970's and 80's. The BAFTA-winning producer Charles Steele (*Last King of Scotland*) was also present to answer questions about his role as producer of the film.

Around fifty students from all year groups, from Downend Film Club, then had the chance to take part in a Q&A session with the production team and cast.

Film Club is a Government funded school activity which aims to make a wide range of films available to young people and to offer inspirational film industry visits and events. The Fire in Babylon event is currently touring secondary schools across the country and Downend School Film Club has been fortunate to secure this event.

Bikeability Cycle Training

Free school holiday cycle training courses May/ June half term. Please visit the website under 'upcoming events' for further information and times of the courses.

Sainsbury's & Tesco School Vouchers

Please bring vouchers into main reception before half term

Achievements

Bristol 10K run

Well done to a number of students and staff that took part in this event on Sunday 15 May. **Ben Squire** raised £156 in sponsor money towards the PTA funds. The PTA contributed towards the entrance fee for students to take part in this event.

Ten Tors

This took place in Dartmoor over the weekend of 14-15 May. Three of our students were in a team that came back to the finish line first – **Rob Harcombe, Jacob Cook** and **Jack Ryan**. They set off at 7.00am on Saturday morning from the Army's Okehampton Camp in Dartmoor and trekked 45 miles before crossing the finish line on Sunday morning. All three have appeared on the local radio and television to speak about their fantastic achievement. There was also an article published in the Bristol Evening Post on Tuesday 17 May.

Year 7 boys' football team recently beat St Bede's in the finals. Well done to them.

Important Diary Dates

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

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

Thursday 1 September – INSET day for **Years 7-11**

Friday 2 September – INSET day for **Years 7-11**

Thursday 1 September – Post 16 registration and induction

Friday 2 September – Post 16 registration and induction

Monday 5 September – Start of Term 1 for Years 7-11