

April 2007

Dear Parents,

Your summer term calendar provides a guide to the main events of the term. Mr Whitehead's letter about this term's theatre events is enclosed. Please ensure that you book tickets as advised.

Pupils

Congratulations to James Mannion who has won the prestigious National Townsend Warner History Competition this year. It is the third time that a Viinehall pupil has won this high profile competition (our team won the shield last year) and we are immensely proud of James's achievement. He came first in a field of over eight hundred pupils, representing the best historians of their age in the country.

We look forward to having a total of 369 pupils across the prep school and pre-prep this term, of which 66 are boarders. New pupils this term are Hannah Manton who joins us as a Year 6 boarder and Jules Bretillot who is coming from France as a Year 7 boarder. We are also welcoming back for the summer term James Harmer and Ignacio Moreno into Year 8 and Gonzalo Sunyer into Year 4. Lucy Mannion and Tilly Aylott are starting in the Nursery this term.

Events

There are parents' evenings for Pre-Prep, Year 3 and Year 6 parents and plenty of activities and outings for the pupils, as usual.

It is an especially important term for our Year 8 pupils and we wish them all the very best for CE in the first week of June, straight after half term. This will also be Pre-Prep Arts Week.

There will be a voluntary Eucharist in the Children's Chapel with Fr John from 6.15 p.m. on Thursday, May 18th and we trust that all communicant pupils will come along to this. May 18th is also the day of our whole school photograph and Prep School pupils need to wear white shirt and tie on that day.

The plays and orchestral concert will be highlights and Camp Weekend across 15th, 16th and 17th June is an annual speciality in the calendar. Most Prep School

pupils have a special activity across that weekend and it therefore deserves special attention when planning your family diary.

Following the Prep School sports day on Saturday, 23rd June, there will be no school on Monday, 25th.

Vines' Weekend includes a summer evening picnic on Saturday, 30th June and that has become a popular social event with families. Pupils who are to leave us at the end of this term are all invited along with friends and family to our Leavers' Service on Vines' Day in the theatre. The Vines' Day fete on Sunday 1st July is a grand annual celebration for all to enjoy with extended families and we are always grateful to the Friends of Vinehall committee for organising a wonderful family day. Please mark Vines' Weekend in your diary and we look forward to seeing you there.

Open Day

We are full at the top of the school next academic year but there are some spaces in the lower years. Please let your friends know about our forthcoming open days on May 11th and 12th. The Open Day is an opportunity for current parents, Pre-Prep parents, grandparents and extended family as well as friends to see Vinehall. Please contact Mrs Lambourne if you would like to bring or send visitors. All will be welcome.

Friends of Vinehall

With exciting social events planned and lots to do in preparation for Vines' Weekend, the FoV parents' committee will welcome your support. Class Representatives meet this term on April 24th and the AGM is on June 4th. Please do come along if you can. Contact details for Mrs Todd and the Committee are in the back of the Calendar. We hope that all Vinehall families will join us at Vinehall for the Pet Show on Sunday, 20th May (unless involved in IAPS swimming that day).

Staff Changes

We have appointed new Houseparents to take over the boarding house when Mrs Marris becomes Head of RS in September. They are Mr and Mrs Caithness. Mr Magnus Caithness is currently Head of Science, Co-ordinator of PSHCE and boarding tutor with evening and weekend duties caring for boarders at Catteral Hall (the prep school to Giggleswick). Mrs Caithness currently runs a childminding business from home. Both are well-qualified and experienced teachers.

Mr Caithness will teach science and games-his specialities being hockey, rugby and athletics with experience in soccer and swimming and Mrs Caithness will take just one class of mathematics. She is experienced in Key Stage 2 as a Maths Co-ordinator and enjoyed much success in teaching, prior to having their children. Within the boarding house, Mrs Caithness aims to consolidate the

'home from home' environment that has been built up and she is experienced in listening to children and providing pastoral support which she sees as a vital role. They have two children, Archie who will be in Reception in our Pre-Prep, and Elizabeth, who is one. Mr and Mrs Caithness will share leadership of the boarding house, working very much as a team and developing the boarding house as an extended family environment. They will live in a flat in the centre of the boarding house.

Mr Caithness will be Head of Boarding and will be very involved with boarders' activities. He enjoys running clubs, being active and getting involved. Mrs Caithness will be Deputy Head of Boarding and will organise and oversee the matrons' rotas, spending some time in dispensary and taking charge of administration of the boarding, as Mrs Marris does now. Mr Hudspeth will continue to be an integral part of the boarding house with duties and will be closely involved with developments.

This is an exciting change for the boarding house which is already running very successfully under Mrs Marris's and Mr Hudspeth's management. The Caithnesses are aware of the strengths of Vinehall's boarding community and have enormous enthusiasm, a positive, nurturing approach and much relevant experience that they can bring to Vinehall. Their attitude is very much in line with Vinehall's ethos and I look forward to introducing the Caithnesses to boarders and parents.

Another important appointment that has been confirmed this Easter is that of our new Head of Drama. Vinehall has an impressive dramatic tradition and the drama teaching is closely linked to the English department while performing arts work in tandem with the music department. We have been fortunate to find a new Head of Drama on our doorstep! Mr Phil Young of Salehurst (BA, MEd) will be our new Head of Drama from September when Mrs Gearey becomes Head of English. He has experience in the professional theatre, has run drama courses and has earned accolades as a director and playwright. He will teach all the class drama along with some English from September, as well as directing and producing our Prep School productions. Mr Young's current teaching post at Coulsden College will allow him to visit us regularly on Mondays so that he can get to know us well in the interim period. He has immense experience and great enthusiasm for his subject that will inspire the pupils at Vinehall to continue to participate in this confidence-building subject that benefits our children's communication skills.

Congratulations to Miss Annie Dron who has a place to study for her PGCE at Cambridge. As planned, Miss Dron will leave us over the summer so that she can begin her PGCE in September.

Within the support staff department, we will be saying farewell to several staff over the course of this term. Chef Symon Moth will be replaced by Mr Jon

Hawley, who comes to us with ten years' experience at Bedgebury School. Mr and Mrs MacDonald are returning to Shropshire to be closer to family and Mr Mac's minibus will be driven by Miss Sally Waters. Monica Cervickova and Vladimir Strom are moving to Hastings.

Minibus Service

We are able to offer a minibus to school from the Eastbourne area, covering villages such as Pevensey, Herstmonceux, Hailsham areas through Hellingly, Boreham Street, Windmill Hill and Catsfield. If you would be interested in your child/ren using this service, please let the office know so that we can start planning the exact route.

Security

At the beginning of term we will change the code to the school door keypads. The Prep School children will be told the new code and staff will be happy to let parents know what it is. Please continue to support us by keeping the new code between members of the school community.

Clothing Check

As usual, form teachers will be checking uniform next Monday.

Looking Forward

This time next year we will be looking forward to a special Summer Ball to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Vines' Society and the 70th anniversary of Vinehall. It will replace the summer picnic on the Saturday of Vines' Weekend in 2008.

I join with all the staff in wishing you and your children a very happy summer term ahead. Do stay in touch with us over any suggestions or concerns that you may have.

Yours sincerely

Julie Robinson
Head