

September 2009

Beginning of Term Letter, Michaelmas 2009

Dear Parents and Children

Welcome back to our new look Pre-Prep!

Our staff have been busy over the holidays creating a dedicated art room and separate ICT room for cookery, computers and programmable toys. We continue to improve the provision that we offer and are particularly keen to be seen as a forward thinking school, while maintaining traditional values and raising the standards of the children's class work.

There is a number of new children joining us, particularly in our Nursery and Kindergarten. I know they will be made very welcome and I thank all the class representatives who have organised welcome events over the summer holidays, it does help the children to settle in. If you have children in these early years, please think ahead to your 'days' requirements as there are a healthy number of children in these groups and we may need to increase staff hours over the term and particularly in January.

Whole School Events

We have changed the format of our Christmas performances this year. The staff are keen to present a whole Pre-Prep Nativity to include all the children from the youngest in Nursery to the oldest in Year 2. The children's roles will be adapted to be appropriate for their age, with Year 2 taking the larger speaking parts. We hope to include individual instrumentalists, soloists, traditional and modern carols – so something for everyone!

Further Events

As usual, the class teachers will be sending out letters informing you of areas of study and class events leading up to Christmas. We hope to see many of you at these occasions, as well as at our Pre-Prep parents evening on Thursday 15th October. Another notable date this half term is our Grandparents' Day and Harvest Festival on Thursday 8th October. Most of our events are listed alongside the Prep School ones in the Vinehall calendar for the Michaelmas term 2009 and can be found on our website.

There is an opportunity to raise issues or offer suggestions at the forum for parents on Tuesday 20th October at 7 pm.

Workshops for Parents

Mrs Aylott will be repeating the Numeracy workshop for parents on Wednesday 11th November. Mrs Hammond will also run a Reading Workshop on Thursday 24th September to support Reception parents with a new reader in the family.

Progress

Throughout last year, I was pleased to hear a number of parents comment on the children's improved handwriting within the department. This is an area that will continue to develop alongside our phonics work. We have invested in technology to support these areas and Mrs Ford has spent part of the summer developing a systematic programme to support this area.

Technology will increasingly play an important part in our children's lives. We are continuing to encourage the use of ICT within the curriculum and as a discrete subject. This year with our new ICT room we have increased the resources available and have 'Roamers' which make the teaching of logic fun and interactive. At the end of September Pre-Prep is hosting the Professional Association of Pre-Prep Heads. Part of the conference will focus on ICT and Mrs Aylott will be helping to demonstrate our new technology.

Staff and Pupils

Many of you may have heard the sad news regarding Annelous Igbokwe (2A). If any parents have any individual concerns or questions, do contact me.

Mrs Nicholls has been offered the post of Head of Nursery at DCPS near Cranbrook. We wish her and Ellie well as they move to their new school and congratulate Mrs Nicholls who studied hard while working as a TA and achieved qualified teacher status last year. I am grateful to our existing team of TAs who have agreed to cover the available hours.

I look forward to seeing you all at the start of term. Please contact the class teachers or myself if you have any further queries.

Best wishes,

Tessa Richardson