

December 2006

Dear Parent

Boarding

After a summery first half of term, Christmas seems to have sprung upon us very suddenly. With so many extra things going on during the last week of term including the Christmas party, dorm decs, school play, Christmas dinner, packing and general end-of-term tiredness, there has been a great deal of potential for over-excitement and frayed tempers. We are writing this two days before the end of term, so perhaps we're tempting fate, but so far the boarding staff have been impressed by the co-operative, happy and friendly spirit of the boarders during all the busyness of the past week. There can be no better example of this than the "dorm decs" competition, in which each theme is entirely created, planned and executed by the children themselves, and is a real test of community spirit – one which our boarders passed with flying colours!

Thank you to our judges Mrs Wingrad and Mrs Hogan for their contribution to the dorm decs competition. It was a difficult decision to make, but after much debate they awarded joint first prizes to Hurricanes for their rather too convincing "Christmas in Prison" theme and to Elephants for providing a lighter note with their busy and highly atmospheric shopping mall. Hearts and Rabbits were runners-up with imaginative and highly entertaining jungle and ghostly themes respectively, and Swallows were awarded the junior prize for creating a lovely sunny Hawaii. Well done, too, to those who did not win prizes; they were all of an impressively high standard.

There have been plenty of other busy times for the boarders over the term: a pool party at Tenterden, laserquest and bowling in Eastbourne, Startechz Rock and Pop Day, cinema trip and drumming workshop, as well as all the individual clubs' activities. Highlights have included a visit to the Tiffany's jewellery exhibition in London for Food, Fashion and Fine Arts, Underwater World for the Junior Boarders, Ready Steady Cook for Farrago and canoeing in the school pool organised by Sailing Club. We are always looking for new ideas for activities, so if you have a skill or interest that you would like to share with some of our boarders one Saturday or Sunday afternoon, we'd be delighted to hear from you!

Our matrons have been trying hard to encourage the boarders to be tidy during the term, and as a result things have certainly improved recently – so expect nothing less than 10/10 for neatness in your children's bedrooms over the holidays! The most consistently tidy dorm over the term, manfully led by George Whaley, was Rabbits, who won the dorm cup with a most impressive score. Karen Croft and Tanya Osborne-Brown have enclosed a letter about various laundry matters. Please read it carefully; if you follow their advice, it will help everything to run much more smoothly in the boarding house.

Our matron Mrs Mac has been ill for the some weeks, and we have been very grateful to Annie Dron and to Quelli Coles, our pottery teacher, for taking over until she is better. We will be saying a sad goodbye to our four gappers Miss Bateup, Mr Commens, Mr Love and Miss Reid, at the end of term. They have been great fun in the House, and we are grateful for all they have done for our boarders.

All the boarding staff wish you a happy Christmas, and look forward to seeing your children at 6 o'clock in time for supper on Tuesday 9th January.

With best wishes

Alison Marris and Craig Hudspeth