

23 May 2008

Dear Parent,

Vinehall is celebrating a bumper collection of twenty three 13+ scholarships this year, ranging from art, music and sports to academic and special Headmaster's Awards. A full list of awards is attached, posted on our website and will be published in the Review of the Year at the end of term.

Vinehall pupils have featured in the local press regularly this term and our school news has been published weekly in *Vinelines*. Please help us to celebrate the success of our youngsters by letting me know of personal triumphs! I am always happy to receive your reports by email (jrobinson@vinehallschool.com) and with your help, I can include all important events and I am less likely to miss them.

Forthcoming Events

Your tickets for Calamity Jane will be available early next half term.

Sports Day is to be on **Saturday 21st June** for the Prep School, weather permitting. Please ensure that your child has the correct sports kit for sports day. Sports day will be followed by an exeat including Monday 23rd June. Boarders are required to sign out before leaving for the exeat and we ask that all families stay until the end of prizegiving at the end of sports day (around 3 pm at the pavilion). It is a special Prep School occasion and we have developed a sports day programme which allows every pupil to collect points for his or her house.

There are still a few tickets remaining for the Anniversary Ball on **28th June**. Please see our website for further details.

Family events include Vines' Day on **29th June**. The fete will begin at 3 pm and the day will end this year with a disco – please see the enclosed Friends' newsletter for details.

I hope that Prep School parents will join us for our prizegiving on **Friday 4th July**.

Details of all these events are enclosed and/or available on our website.

Friends of Vinehall School

Our grateful thanks are due to Friends of Vinehall Committee members and class representatives who have worked so hard and with great success across the academic year 2007-8. Mrs Elliott's Committee has been a highly successful and well-organised one and we are all grateful for the social, in-school and fundraising events which have been so much enjoyed by our children. We are looking forward to the fete on Vines' Day which this year leads into a disco.

The work goes on next year with a new Committee and we wish them all the best for the year ahead.

Staff

Mrs Bingham is to retire at the end of this term. She has been a truly wonderful SENCO at Vinehall and we will miss her very much. Happily, we are able to follow her work on through an in-house promotion and so continuity is safeguarded with Mrs Atkins's appointment as SENCO with effect from September 2008. Mrs Atkins, Cert.Ed (Salisbury), Dip RSA (SpLD), has been with us for four years and was SENCO for ten years at her previous school.

Miss Taylor-Langley, BA, PGCE, an ex-pupil and Vine, has accepted the position of full time French teacher to replace Mme Consul. Miss Taylor-Langley impressed us with her energy and enthusiasm and her pupil-centred approach to teaching and learning. She says that returning to Vinehall is 'like coming home'. We are delighted that she will be able to rekindle our Spanish club on Wednesday afternoons. Miss Taylor-Langley is currently French teacher and Gifted and Talented Co-ordinator at Northfield Technology College in Kent.

Mrs Hoffmann, MA, PGCE, will be a full time English and junior drama teacher from September, taking over Mrs West's English teaching. Mrs Gearey will be taking on senior drama. Mrs Hoffmann has an MA in literature and has many years' teaching experience. She is currently a Year 5 teacher at St Mary Magdalene's Catholic Primary School in Tunbridge Wells and taught English and drama from junior drama club level through to A Level English and drama at Rougemont School in Wales where she also developed the school magazine, took several clubs and was involved in the development of ICT. She will direct the junior musical at Christmas (with Mrs Glossop) and will edit the annual Review.

Health/Medical

Please ensure that your child's hair is cut and checked for nits over half term. If you have any updates for our medical records, please let us know.

On sunny days, please will day parents apply sun cream to children before they come to school.

Music practice

Almost all of our Prep School children learn at least one instrument and half-term week is a good opportunity to get plenty of practice done. This is especially important for those children

who have Associated Board examinations coming up. Please will all children take their instruments home at half-term...and use them!

Exams

The School exams take place during the second week after half-term which leaves plenty of time for us to resume normal teaching up till the end of term. Years 6 and 7 should feel increasingly serious about School exams and they should do some revision over half-term. The children have been given guidance by their teachers. Plenty of rest and sleep should be timetabled in, too, and there should be space and time for recreation.

Please remember to stock up your pencil case over the half term break.

Year 8

Our CE candidates have received briefings and guidance towards their revision. We cannot emphasise enough how important these last few weeks are. The children are under instruction to revise for at least four hours per day over half-term, with regular breaks, healthy meals, plenty of water and early bed-times. They will need to return ready and refreshed for CE straight after half-term (they all have copies of the CE timetable) and with a full set of stationery and a wristwatch, clearly named. Your children will not regret the extra effort that they put in!

The post-CE timetable begins on Friday, 6th June with photos, preparations for shields, and rehearsals. Mrs Redstone is co-ordinating the Post-CE timetable around rehearsals and it will include visiting speakers as well as continued subject-based lessons. A highlight of this is, of course, the trip to the Lake District. The programme culminates in our annual Leavers' Barbecue, *Calamity Jane* and Prizegiving. As soon as the Lake District Trip returns, *Calamity Jane* will take priority and the actors and actresses must ensure that they attend all rehearsals and fully engage in the work set by Mr Young so that the play can be the triumphant team-building experience that we traditionally achieve. I hope that parents will support us in ensuring that all the children take their parts in the plays seriously. Most importantly, the children must learn their words thoroughly!

Good Manners

I would be grateful if parents would continue to support us in maintaining appropriately high standards of behaviour, in particular good manners, during the last weeks of term. We have clamped down on kindness towards others and mutual respect in Year 6 recently. Naturally, our Year 8s are starting to outgrow us, but we still expect high standards in all areas.

Boarding

Please will parents of boarders ensure that the Boarding House has details of your children's plans for each exeat and, in particular, Ball weekend.

You will have seen all the exciting things that boarders have been doing this term in our weekly Vinelines (if you do not receive Vinelines by email, please access past issues via Parents' Zone on the website). If you have not yet booked your boarding place for next

academic year or would like your child to have a taster boarding night in the next half term please email houseparents@vinehallschool.com.

Supper and supervision

Collection at the end of the day is 5.20pm for Year 4 and 5.40pm for years 5 to 8. There is supervision in the Rec Room for the younger siblings of older children from 5.20pm until 5.40pm. Duty staff are present on the drive until 6pm to assist the safe collection of your children.

May we remind parents that all children should be collected by 6pm, at which point the responsibility of supervision transfers to the boarding staff. If for any reason you are unable to collect your child by 6pm please call the school office and your child will be booked into supper and prep where the duty staff will supervise them until they are collected - this can be no later than 7.00pm as the younger boarders will be getting ready for bed. The cost of supper and supervision will be added to your bill.

Please also remind your children that if they are being supervised outside normal school hours they must remain with the duty staff and not roam around the school.

Early Drop-off

All Prep School children should arrive at school between 8am and 8.15am for registration. Should the occasional need arise for an earlier drop-off, please contact the school in advance to arrange for your child to be booked in to breakfast at 7.30am, which is the only area of the prep school where there is supervision prior to 8am. To arrange this please email the boarding staff on houseparents@vinehallschool.com.

Finally

The staff and I look forward to seeing you at school events across the remainder of the summer term.

With best wishes,

Julie Robinson
(Head)