

October 2007

Dear Parent

The long Michaelmas term is flying by and very soon we shall be concerned with preparations for Christmas. We have been fortunate with the weather over the past half term and our children have enjoyed opportunities to be outside and to play sport regularly. They have worked hard and now need a week's holiday to sleep, rest and recharge.

Saturday School

After half term, we shall trial a slightly amended Saturday morning programme in the Prep School. Following discussion with parents, pupils and staff, we have decided to start Saturday assembly at 8.40 a.m. allowing for a slightly later start to the day. Morning break will be a little shorter so that collection time can remain the same at 12.35. I shall let you know at Christmas whether this has been successful or whether we intend to revert to our previous routine in the New Year. If you have strong views on the subject, do let me know.

Uniform

The children all revert to winter uniform after half term. Please ensure that you have a full set of uniform, named clearly. If your children have a haircut, please ensure that it is short enough to last through to Christmas!

We are keen to ensure that our uniform shop is meeting your needs and would be very grateful if you would take the time to complete the attached customer satisfaction survey and return it to the Domestic Bursar, Mrs Perry, c/o the school office.

Medical

Please check your child's hair for nits before returning him/her to school after half term and note that 'flu vaccinations will take place on Tuesday 30th October.

Calendar

You should already have tickets for the Friends of Vinehall Bonfire and Fireworks Evening. If you have requested tickets for either 'The Scary Play' or 'Hansel and Gretel' you should find them enclosed. If they are not, please contact the office. I enclose further information about our Carol Service (parking is always an issue so please do read the instructions carefully). Please note the dates of Piano Evening, the Carol Service, Gift Service (to which children are invited to bring unwrapped gifts), Year 8 Dinner, non-uniform day, plays and other events as advertised in this term's Calendar.

Academic

School exam week for the Prep School is in Week 11 and our Years 6 to 8 children will be coming home with revision lists to help with examination preparation. You might like to check your child's locker from time to time if these do not appear!

There is a notice enclosed for all Prep School parents regarding touch typing.

Confirmation

Following a well-attended confirmation in Mountfield church earlier in the year, we can offer confirmation preparation next term if there are enough takers. I enclose a letter from Father John. Parents should bear in mind that there will not be an opportunity for confirmation next academic year.

Christmas Cards

Following last year's highly popular Christmas card, the Friends of Vinehall have again published a lovely card incorporating artwork by many of our pupils. A sample card and order forms can be found on the noticeboard in the Front Hall.

Inspection

Our Lead Inspector will come to school twice this term for preliminary visits prior to the full school inspection next February. As part of the inspection process, parents will receive a similar questionnaire to the one the school sent out last term. We very much hope that the inspectors will enjoy visiting the school of which we are so proud.

Safety on the Drive

The drive at Prep School pick-up time is often affected by double parking. Please park in the car parks, without blocking the staff car park, and walk up to school to collect your child from the main entrance. Please do not ask your children to wait in other places as it is so important for their safety that we can see them.

Please also remember not to leave handbags in parked cars.

Book donation

Pre-Prep is holding a Book Week after half term and in order to promote reading and sharing books we are inviting pupils to bring in a book for the Pre-Prep children to add to their library collection. We hope that you will see this as an excellent opportunity to promote books and at the same time clear some shelves! Thank you in advance for supporting this project.

Review

You should have already collected your complimentary copy of the latest school review magazine and further copies are available from the school office at a cost of £10 per copy. We hope that you will enjoy sharing the review with your extended family and friends.

Sponsored Walk

Thanks to your generosity and support of sponsorship for our walk at the beginning of term, Mr. Yeats-Brown has been able to pass £3,900 to Bishop Barham towards the Lawrence Barham Memorial Trust. Anyone still wishing to make a donation may leave a cheque (payable to the Lawrence Barham Memorial Trust) in the front office.

Mrs. Whaley's film and photographs from a recent trip to Rwanda will be displayed soon and Mr. Chaplin will update us on the progress of the appeal at our first Saturday assembly in January. In the meantime, Bishop and Mrs. Barham will join us for the Christmas Sale in December.

The Foundation

You are no doubt already aware that the Vinehall Governors are in the process of establishing the Vinehall Foundation. The specific objectives of the Foundation include developing a comprehensive database of all those who have an interest in Vinehall, past present and future, and establishing good communications with our extended Vinehall family. The Foundation will explore potential sources of funding to supplement fee income in developing the Vinehall with capital projects and awards.

The Foundation is in its very early stages and plans are in hand for a major fundraising exercise. Later this academic year there will be several occasions at which parents can receive details of the Foundation's objectives, giving parents the opportunity to make a fully informed decision on the merits of supporting the Foundation in some way.

Parental Support

We are very fortunate indeed to have a wonderfully supportive Friends of Vinehall Committee along with class representatives to aid communication between school and parents. Thank you for all your help with special events such as our Harvest Festival collection. If you missed the relevant week's *Vinelines*, you might not know that, thanks to the tremendous spirit of generosity and support after our abandoned summer fete on Vines' Day 2007, the FoV committee received enough donations to cover the costs of cancelling the fete so that there was no net loss.

For weekly news updates, please check *Vinelines* which is available by email and on the school website each Friday.

With best wishes for an enjoyable half term,

Julie Robinson
Head