

28 May 2010

Dear Parent

Vinehall is celebrating a bumper twenty-two 13+ scholarships this year, ranging from music, drama and sports to academic and Head's Awards. A full list of awards is posted on our website and in the Front Hall. We are proud to be achieving scholarships to a range of senior schools, including top Public Schools, and by supporting such high standards we are lifting the achievement and aspirations of all of our pupils.

Vinehall events and 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 (headspa@vinehallschool.com) and with your help, I can include all important events and I am less likely to miss them. Every child can receive a special mention in assembly or a quiet "well done" in private if preferred.

Forthcoming Events

Please ensure that you have booked tickets for concerts and plays through the website booking form.

Sports Day is to be on **Saturday 26 June** for the Prep School, weather permitting (updated information will be recorded on the info-line as usual). Please ensure that your child has the correct sports kit for sports day. Sports day will be followed by an exeat including Monday 28 June. Boarders are required to sign out before leaving for the exeat and we ask that all families stay until the end of prizegiving, around 3pm at the pavilion. It is a special Prep School occasion and we expect all Prep School pupils to attend. We have developed a sports day programme which allows every pupil to collect points for his or her House. There is a separate letter concerning Sports Day which will be emailed to you in due course.

Family events include Vines' Day on **4 July**. The Friends of Vinehall fete will begin at 2pm and the day will end with a disco from 5.30pm till 7.30pm.

I hope that Prep School parents will join us for our prizegiving on **Friday 9 July**. Again, there will be a separate letter concerning this.

Details of all these events will be available on our website and the Pre-Prep publication *Nits and Bits* gives details of Pre-Prep events and meetings to support transition from one year group up to the next. We hope to see parents during Pre-Prep Arts Week straight after half term which is on the theme of 'Dreaming of India' this year.

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 2009-10. Ms McConnell's Committee has been highly successful in all areas and we are all

grateful for the social, in-school and fundraising events which have been so much enjoyed by our children.

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

Headship/Succession

There was a marvellous response to advertisements for my job. Almost one hundred potential heads asked for further details and there was a strong field of well over thirty applicants. The long-listed candidates have visited this week, meeting staff and touring the school and shortlisted candidates will be selected for a second round of interviews in June so that an announcement can be made before the end of term.

Staff

Miss Ault is to leave us over the summer break. She is emigrating to Singapore! We wish her very well indeed and she will be missed. She has been an extremely popular member of staff at Vinehall with great energy and enthusiasm.

Miss Dron will be married in the half term and her new name will be Mrs Kawai-Calderhead. We send our congratulations to her and her husband-to-be, Bill.

Ms De Vine is to have an operation on 21 June and will not return for the remainder of the term. We wish her well and hope that she will be able to convalesce over the summer holidays.

Mr Lewis, Financial Manager, intends to retire in October this year and his post has been advertised so that we can ensure a good handover period. Mr Lewis has been meticulous and careful in his work with the school accounts and we wish him very well indeed for his retirement when it comes, finally!

Extra lessons

I would like to remind parents that a full term's notice is required to end extra lessons. This includes Music and Learning Support.

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 arrival at school.

What Not to Bring to School

Please note that day pupils should not bring mobile 'phones, cameras, music systems or electronic games to school except with special permission. This includes match days.

Exams

Exams take place after half-term which leaves plenty of time for us to resume normal teaching up until the end of term. Copies of the timetables and revision can be found on the pupils' area of the website at <http://www.vinehallschool.co.uk/pupils/>. The children will be given guidance about revision 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 child's 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 this is. 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 and with a full set of stationery and a wristwatch, clearly named.

Your child will not regret the extra effort that he or she puts in! Please encourage positive expectations: many of our Year 8s are stronger academically than they think they are. They are peaking at the right time and will do themselves full justice if they remain calm.

Mr Yeats-Brown and Mrs Redstone are co-ordinating the Post-CE timetable around *South Pacific* 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 Year 8 summer term programme culminates in our annual Leavers' Barbecue, *South Pacific* and prizegiving as well as a special lunch for leavers on the final day of term. As soon as the Lake District trip returns, *South Pacific* will take priority and pupils must ensure that they attend all rehearsals and fully engage so that the play can be the triumphant team-building experience that we traditionally achieve. Please do not book the children for external appointments without checking with Mrs Gearey.

Years 6 and 7 pupils are expected to undertake some revision over the half term break in preparation for the forthcoming examinations. Teachers have set out their expectations and revision materials have been provided as appropriate. Whilst these internal exams are not crucial, they provide a helpful indicator of progress and retention.

Year 5 pupils might like to start getting into the habit of revising at home. Again, revision sessions will take place in class and these can be augmented with a little revision over the half term break, particularly in history, geography and French. Maths and English will not require formal revision at home but a little in the other subjects will not go amiss.

Years 3 and 4 should not worry too much about their forthcoming tests/exams. Revision will take place in class and there is no need to impose a revision routine on the youngsters during half term.

Boarding

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. Please note that boarding arrangements for Year 8 are across the entire year, to avoid disruptive comings and goings. We already have well over twenty booked in for Year 8 boarding next year.

Finally

Thank you for all of your kind wishes on my appointment to IAPS as Education and Training Director.

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

With best wishes

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "J. Robinson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

Julie Robinson
(Head)