

8<sup>th</sup> April 2008

## **Beginning of Term, Summer 2008**

Dear Parents and Children

What a mixed bag of weather we have had this holiday, every thing from balmy spring sunshine to winter wonderland snow! We intend to reflect this variety in the activities we are offering the children in the coming weeks. It is indeed going to be a very exciting term, not least because we shall be celebrating Vinehall's 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a school.

### **70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations**

We are very keen that the children benefit from these events and that they will serve to enrich the current curriculum. We hope the celebrations will make the children feel part of the wider Vinehall community and see their place in its' ongoing history. As a Pre-Prep we are all working towards a display of children's work, which will be on view later in the term. Visitors at our Summer Ball will have the opportunity to see what the children have discovered. We begin our studies by going back in history and we will be encouraging all the children to participate in our dressing up day, the theme of which is 1938. I shall send out some ideas for costume later, but to inspire you, we could have street urchins as well as pupils from the upper echelons! As a matter of fact I don't think the boys' uniform has changed a great deal. We have a number of books in our newly enlarged Pre-Prep library, which should assist your research. Mrs Chaplin has also been persuaded to talk about the early days of the school and I would hope that the children have some questions about Vinehall prepared for her visit.

### **Arts Festival**

Our aim this year is to give our Festival an historical flavour so that it links with the anniversary celebrations. We have planned puppet workshops in which all the children will make puppets and there will be a professional performance for the children to watch. We shall look at the history of puppets and compare with the Punch and Judy performances of the early twentieth century.

In addition I hope to be able to host a number of *Open Assemblies* for parents, as we have in the past, and to invite in groups from the music department.

### **Staff**

Congratulations to Miss Sander who is expecting a baby; she hopes to be with us until the end of term. We wish Mrs Nicholls well with her final teaching practice this term. Mrs Wells will assist Miss Plant with 2LP in her absence.

## **Traditional Events**

As usual we have planned a number of outings and performances, in addition to whole school events such as assemblies and our end of year picnic. We look forward to the Year 2 Assembly for parents, as well as their informal concert. Year 2 also have an outing to Wilderness Wood while Year 1 is visiting Battle and Hastings.

The Reception classes are returning to Bedgebury Pinetum as it has proved to be such a good venue for minibeast hunting and pond dipping. More details will follow from the class teachers.

The Nursery and Kindergarten children will be delighting us with a concert, as will the Reception classes with their end of term performance.

## **Sport**

There is a Year 2 swimming gala and *Watch Swim* weeks for Year 1 and the Reception classes. The Pre-Prep Sports Day will go ahead whatever the weather, as our sports hall is quite big enough to accommodate us. We hope however, to enjoy Sports Day in the open air this year. There will be a *Watch Dance* week as usual and the Years 1 and 2 Gym Display.

## **Transition**

During week 11 all the children will change classes for one afternoon and meet their new teacher. We have arranged for *Meet the Teacher* sessions for current Year 1 and Reception parents to be at morning drop off time and hope that this will be more convenient. Current Year 2 children have a planned programme of activities to introduce them gradually to the Prep School. Parents will be invited to a Year 3 introduction on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> May and this will be an opportunity to meet the Prep School staff. The Early Years children and parents have a separate induction programme during weeks 4 and 5 when we hope to welcome some new families to Vinehall. If you have any queries about the next steps, please don't hesitate to contact your class teachers or myself.

## **Reminders**

Please be reminded that we need to take a firm stance on children returning to school after sickness, **they should have** 24 hours at home following any such symptoms. Other areas of perennial angst include car parking and the drive as well as collection times from classes and clubs. Please follow our previous guidance.

I was disappointed to read inaccuracies in the national press about the FOV Cake Sale. I find it inconceivable that anyone in the Vinehall community would give stories about other parents (or the school) to the Press. I expect us all to be acting in the best interests of the children and our school.

We very much look forward to an exciting term ahead as there are a broad range of activities planned. The children should all be able to find something to inspire and motivate their interests. We hope that they share their enthusiasm and enjoyment with you. Please see the published calendar, class letters and notice boards for further details.

Best wishes for summer 2008,

Tessa Richardson