



### Head Teacher's Welcome



I hope that you had a lovely half term break. We now have a fairly long haul up to the summer holidays but, as ever with us, it will be busy and I hope enjoyable and successful!

*Richard Culham*

### Y5 and London Residential



41 of our Year 5's and several staff spent 3 very busy but extremely successful days in London last week. I believe that it is important that everyone in our school community are aware of just how successful the trip was and in particular how absolutely brilliant our children were (always are!). They were a delight to take away and their positivity enabled us to do a huge amount in our 3 days – including many 1000's of steps each day.

It was also lovely of the Queen to throw us a party on Horse Guards parade on Thursday evening!

My huge thanks to Mrs White for her brilliant organising and to all the staff who went – we are on duty 24 / 3 on these trips so it is exhausting!!

Yesterday we received a lovely message from the Manager of the Youth Hostel at St Pauls where we stayed ... *"I also have to say I was working throughout your stay and your group were an absolute delight and the pupils so well behaved and polite. Please pass on my gratitude to your group, they were a credit to you. We look forward to welcoming you back at St Pauls in the future."*

### Erasmus



While I am highlighting "Birchy on tour" Mrs White, Miss Walker and I spent 4 days in Sweden over half term. We were lucky enough to spend several days in a Swedish school looking at their systems and organisations. The other 8 Erasmus countries were there too so it made it a great opportunity to discuss teaching in some depth.

One interesting factor is that compulsory education doesn't start until children are 6 years old (Year 2) but there is no evidence of lower standards by the time the children reach 11 (our Year 6). It is also no wonder that they are a "design centre" in Sweden as the quality of their woodwork and metal work for children as young as 9 was very impressive! The area that we visited, Lund, is also the "home" of the invention of both Skype and Bluetooth!

### Speaking to Teachers Before 8.55 am

We are very aware that sometimes there is an urgent need to speak to teachers before school to pass on important information and my staff are always very accommodating. Can I please remind everyone that once the bell is rung my expectation is that the teaching day has started and we need to "get cracking". A very quick message can always be passed through the school office or for a more important message I try to be on the playground most mornings – or Mrs Parker in my absence – and of course we have our wonderful PFSA's Danielle Barter and Debbie Schroetter.

Many thanks for your support with this!

## Term Time Absences

I am becoming increasingly alarmed by the number of lengthy term time absences being taken this term. Obviously if a child is genuinely ill then that is unavoidable although we are still obliged to ask for evidence.

It is very clear that many of the absences are holidays. I would be failing in my duty as Head Teacher if I didn't take every opportunity to point out how important education is and how difficult for children catching up can be. We are expected to chase these absences and I am afraid that prosecutions have resulted.

Please avoid term time holidays for the sake of your child's learning. Thank you.

## Birchfield Fete

### Saturday 30 June

### 12 noon – 2.30 pm

This is fast approaching! This is a lovely event which raises a lot of money to support our work with the children. One particularly important contribution has been FoBs being able to support our educational trips. Coach travel has especially rocketed in price in recent years and we have worked hard to keep the cost per child as low as possible and the FoBs financial contribution has been key here.

If you are able to help in the setting up or running of the fete in any way we would really appreciate it. Please contact the committee via their Facebook page if you can help in any way. Thank you.

*Our fete Friday non-school uniform days have changed from the original published dates:-*

**Friday 22 June** is now for contributions of "Luxury items"

**Friday 29 June** is now for Bottles (non-alcoholic and not glass please!).

In addition, during that last week if you have any "nearly new books" we would be delighted to receive them.

## Dates for your Diary

**Sat 16 June:** Country Dance Festival @ Wells

**Fri 22 June:** Non School Uniform in lieu of luxury gifts for the school fete

**Mon 25 June:** School photo orders to be back by today  
3GS trip to Gore Farm

New Reception parents and children visit –  
Group 1: 2 pm – 3 pm

**Tue 26 June:** Y4 trip to Stonehenge  
Gryphon School Induction Day for Y6

**Wed 27 June:**

3LA trip to Gore Farm

New Reception parents and children visit –  
Group 2: 2 pm – 3 pm

**Thurs 28 June:** Swimming Gala @ Goldenstones

**Fri 29 June:** Non school uniform in lieu of bottles for school fete

**Sat 30 June:** School Fete from 12 noon – 2.30 pm

**Mon 2 July:** New Reception children visit –  
Group 1: 2 pm – 3 pm

**Wed 4 July:** Pre-School INSET

Y6 Transition Day for Yeovil schools  
KS1 Sports morning from 9.30 am

**Wed 4 July continued:**

New Reception children visit – Group 2: 2 – 3 pm

**Fri 6 July:** KS2 Sports morning from 9.30 am

School Disco – further details to follow

**Tue 10 July:** Y4 Stone Age Day

**Wed 11 July:** Y6 production (evening) – further details to follow

**Thurs 12 July:** Y5 trip to Taunton Museum

**Fri 13 July:** Y6 production (evening)

School Reports to be sent home

**Tue 17 July:** Y1 trip to Weymouth

**Wed 18 July:** Meet the Teacher. 3.30 pm parents able to meet their child's new class teacher for September 2018

**Thurs 19 July:** 'Reserve' KS1 Sports morning from 9.30 am  
**(PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF DATE of 'reserve' event)**  
Y6 swimming (last one)

**Fri 20 July:** 'Reserve' KS2 Sports morning from 9.30 am

**Mon 23 July:** Y6 trip to Crealy

**Tues 24 July:** Last day of term

Y6 leavers assembly – 11 am

Y6 leavers BBQ – time to be confirmed

**Mon 3 Sept:** INSET

**Tues 4 Sept:** School re-opens after summer hols