

26<sup>th</sup> February 2010

## HEADTEACHER'S NEWSLETTER – No 7

Dear Parents/Guardians

We are currently focussing on how we **communicate with parents**. On our INSET day last half term, all Horley Learning Partnership schools considered ways to improve our relationship with every parent. We understand that having warm, successful and clear communication between parents and school is the best way to support our children's learning. Attached is the flow chart reminding you who to contact if you wish to discuss any issue.

Our Parents Forum meets next Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> March 6.00pm-7.15pm, where we will discuss **praise and rewards**. Several parents would like us to give even more rewards, especially to those students who always get it right. Please come along – do bring a friend who is a parent too. We always act on feedback from the Forum and you will be made to feel very welcome.

In the last newsletter I wrote about the students who made such a **good impression** at the restaurant in Horley. I am happy to report all students were identified and duly given 5 House points for citizenship. Please keep sending me good news stories – our students deserve this positive recognition.

**This month's Good News** is that Ben Donovan in Year 11, after gruelling trials and stiff competition, has been selected to play for U17 Surrey County Cricket. He was described as "best seamer" in his age group. Congratulations to Ben who is working hard for his GCSE's so he can go to Reigate College to do his level 3 courses including BTEC National Sport.

We are focussing on the **quality of learning and progress** by checking the feedback students receive from teachers. Staff are working hard checking progress and removing barriers to learning. In Years 10 and 11 we are emphasising the importance of achieving 5+A\*-C at GCSE, including English and Maths. I am pleased to report our current Year 11s are showing a 10% improvement in this figure compared with last year. This is encouraging for all, we know success breeds more success and we are promoting an improved culture where we celebrate hard work and achievement, and the increased life chances higher grades bring.

**Attendance** – If your child has less than 95% attendance at any age, their chances of 5+A\*-C are significantly reduced. I am pleased to report all students with 95%+ attendance received praise postcards. I must remind you of your duty to ensure your son/daughter is in school. I have agreed to work with the County Council to support the issue of fixed penalty notices (an initial fine of £50) to parents who keep their son/daughter at home without a valid reason. I will explain how this will work under separate cover.

**GCSE Exams** - On Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March, Year 11 students will be bringing home information concerning their entries for GCSE exams in the Summer. These should be checked carefully as advised in the accompanying letter. In addition, may we remind you of the amended date for collection of GCSE results in August. This now takes place on the morning of Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> August 2010.

**Uniform** – We need to remind everyone that the correct uniform must be worn at all times. Details are shown in the student organiser. Ugg boots or similar are not acceptable. News on the uniform improvements for September will be in the March newsletter.

For your information we have been informed of recent Health service advice that students do not need to be off school with conjunctivitis, however they do need to observe a much higher level of personal hygiene (hand washing etc.) whilst they have the condition.

**It's World Book Day** on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March so we're celebrating in the Study Centre! We will be holding a BOOK FAIR in the Study Centre with a selection of new books available to buy from Weds 24<sup>th</sup> Feb to Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March – all students will be given a £1 book token which can be put towards the books here or in local bookshops. Please encourage your son/daughter to come in and have a look – and maybe to bring some pocket money with them! We will also have a visit to the school from Sam Enthoven, author of "The Black Tattoo", on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March, and a book quiz running all week!

Oakwood School has recently been selected to develop and pilot a series of lessons for Surrey Schools aimed at **Preventing Violent Extremism**. The pilot, funded by Surrey Police, forms part of a national strategy to raise awareness of the dangers posed by extremist groups, particularly to young people. The lessons have been delivered to Year 9 students during Beliefs and Values lessons (part of the Religious Studies Department). Students have been selected from these groups to accompany Mr Shilling (Head of RS) and Mr Easlick (Assistant Headteacher) to feedback their experiences of the course to a conference of senior leaders from Surrey Schools, community leaders and representatives from the Police department.

Important diary dates are:-

Monday	1 <sup>st</sup> March	6.00pm	Parents Forum
Wednesday	10 <sup>th</sup> March		Year 11 Leavers Photograph
Monday 15 <sup>th</sup> – Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> March			Year 10 Swanage Field Trip
Thursday	18 <sup>th</sup> March	6.00-7.00pm	Year 10 Partnership for Revision
Thursday	18 <sup>th</sup> March	7.30-8.30pm	Year 11 Partnership for Revision
Monday 22 <sup>nd</sup> – Friday 26 <sup>th</sup> March			Year 8 French Trip
Tuesday	30 <sup>th</sup> March		Year 7 Chessington Word of Adventure trip
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>30<sup>th</sup> March</b>	<b>12.25pm</b>	<b>END OF TERM</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>31<sup>st</sup> March</b>		<b>INSET DAY</b>
Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> – Saturday 10 <sup>th</sup> April			GCSE Pompeii Trip
<b>Monday</b>	<b>19<sup>th</sup> April</b>		<b>START OF TERM</b>
Thursday	22 <sup>nd</sup> April	4.00-7.00pm	Year 8 Parents Consultation
Monday	26 <sup>th</sup> April	6.00pm	Parents Forum
<b>Monday</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> May</b>		<b>BANK HOLIDAY</b>
Thursday	13 <sup>th</sup> May	4.00-7.00pm	Year 7 Parents Consultation
Wednesday	26 <sup>th</sup> May	7.00pm	GCSE Dance and Gymnastic Show
Thursday	27 <sup>th</sup> May	7.00pm	Oakwood Dance Show - "A Night at the Musicals"
Friday	28 <sup>th</sup> May		Year 10 Geography Trip
<b>Friday</b>	<b>28<sup>th</sup> May</b>		<b>END OF HALF TERM</b>

Thank you as always for your support.

Yours sincerely

S Child

**S CHILD (MRS)**  
Headteacher

