

March 2010

Dear Parents

School finishes for the Easter holiday **at 3.25 p.m. on Friday 26th March**. I am writing to keep you up to date on a few recent developments and to look ahead to the summer term **which begins on Monday 12th April**.

1. French and Spanish exchanges

This term has been a busy one for the Modern Languages Department who have accompanied our students to Saintes (nr Bordeaux) and to Barcelona and have hosted French and Spanish students at AGSB. Both exchanges proved very successful with some good friendships formed and plenty of opportunities to practise language skills. Thank you to all who hosted a student, I hope it was a rewarding experience for the whole family.

2. Romeo & Juliet

Last week those who saw Romeo & Juliet enjoyed an outstanding production. The maturity of the performances from all the actors was remarkable and the 1960's theme gave a contemporary relevance to the familiar story. There were touching moments, some very funny scenes and outbursts of alarming violence. The production marks yet another high point in School drama. Thank you to everyone who was part of the big team needed to realise the three nights of performance and thanks to everyone who supported it ensuring a sell out on each night.

3. Attendance issues

We are fortunate that attendance of boys at school is excellent. However, I remind you of two points of procedure which do need to be followed if we are to keep as accurate a picture as possible of pupil absences:

- Illness – a telephone call should be made to school before 10.00 a.m. on the first day of a pupil's absence. This should be followed up on his return to school by a letter to the form tutor or completion of the relevant page of the student planner.

- Holidays taken during term time – a request should be made in writing to me giving as much notice as possible and explaining the reasons for the absence.
- In addition, this year a number of Year 10 parents have requested holiday leave this week. Year 9 parents please note not to book holidays for week beginning **4th April 2011**

4. Study leave for public examinations

Study leave for Year 11 and Year 12 students begins on **Friday 14th May**. Examinations for pupils in these year groups begin the week after. Study leave for Year 13 students begins on **Friday 21st May**. GCSE language orals begin on **Monday 26th April** and A level orals on **Monday May 10th**. These are important dates because they mean that the time between returning to school in April and the beginning of the examination season is quite short. For many GCSE and AS students a significant number of exams take place before May half term. Therefore, all senior students need to begin a planned revision programme (particularly of weaker subjects) over the Easter holiday. Revision must not be postponed until May.

Year 12 students return to school to begin their A2 courses on Wednesday 16th June.

Parents of boys in Year 10 need to be aware that GCSE modules in Science, Mathematics, Technology and Humanities subjects are scheduled for May and June (mainly) during weeks beginning 24th May and 7th June. We have looked carefully at when the different examinations fall and decided that study leave will be kept to a minimum. The dates will be as follows:

Students taking full Spanish GCSE (fast track) – Study leave **morning of 24th May**
 Students taking full German GCSE (fast track) – Study leave **morning of 16th June**
 All students in Year 10 – study leave **on Tuesday 8th June** to prepare for History & Biology modules and French Full GCSE (fast track)

5. Robert Anderson day

You will all remember the tragic death of Robert in August 2009. In his memory a group of his friends in Year 11 formed a committee chaired by Mr. Birtwell. They wanted to understand the reasons for his death and to plan a major school event. Assemblies were led by them earlier this term which focused upon the dangers of Asthma and allergies. Now, they are planning the major event which will be held on the afternoon of 7th May to raise funds for Asthma Awareness. There will be a ‘fun sports’ theme to the afternoon and this half day will replace Founders Day on the school calendar for 2010.

Year 12 & 13 students will finish school on that day at 12.25 p.m. Further details will be sent by the committee to all boys nearer the time

6. Food Technology and Art development

Our next building project begins on Monday 24th May with a completed planned for early January 2011. Mrs. Hochland’s Art room at the north end of the building will

be demolished during May half term to be replaced by a Food Technology room on the ground floor and a light and spacious Art room for Mrs. Hochland on the upper floor. Tenders for the project will be opened early next term.

7. **Some important dates for early next term**

A full list of dates for the summer term will be published on the first day in the summer edition of our 'Bulletin newsletter'. They will also be available on the website very soon. In advance here are some early dates for your diaries:

Year 7 Parents Evening for forms 7JE, 7HA, 7SQ – 15th April

Spring Music Concerts - Tuesday 20th & 21st April

Oxbridge Evening - 21st April: Every year a large number of our Year 12 students aspire to apply to Oxford & Cambridge. This is a very useful briefing meeting for boys and parents led by two experienced Admissions Officers.

PFA Swing Band Night – 24th April: Tickets for this event are available now and it is always very popular. This year we feature for the first time Swing Band 2 alongside the AGSB Senior Swing Band.

8. **Internal exams**

School exams for lower school pupils take place on the following dates:

Year 7 & 8 Wednesday 19th to Friday 21st May

Year 9 Wednesday 16th – Friday 18th June

A reminder to those of you with boys in Year 9 that Key Stage 3 Maths and English tests will take place as part of the internal exams. Congratulations to Year 9 boys on superb Science SATS results – 89% achieved level 7 which is our best ever!

9. **Reports**

Year 12 reports are issued at the end of this term – **Friday 26th March**

Year 10 reports will be issued on **Friday 28th May** but due to Year 10 modules, if Mr. Wales or Mr. Lowe have any concerns about the progress of your son you will be contacted much earlier in the term so that corrections can be made.

Year 8 reports will be issued on **Friday 9th July**

Year 7 reports **at the end of the summer term.**

I wish you all a very happy and peaceful holiday

Yours sincerely

T. J. Gartside
Head Master