



Friday, 21st April 2017

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Trinity Term Welcome Back

I do hope that the start of the Trinity Term finds you and your children well-rested after a most pleasant holiday. I am sure that our pupils are eager to get back down to their studies. I do also expect, however, that they are keen to enjoy the extra-curricular activities on offer during this term, when the days are longer and warmer. I am aware that our Year 6 pupils will have spent some of their free time preparing for the forthcoming examinations. It is particularly important at this time that they strike a sensible balance between work and play; in addition to this, it is paramount that they go to bed at a sensible time, free from the distractions of television and computer games.

Upon review of the Lent Term, the word that came to mind was action-packed! Pupils enjoyed trips to Smithills Hall, Blackpool Zoo and the Museum of Science and Industry. Year 6 enjoyed a thrilling visit from the author Joe Standerline; the impact of his visit was particularly evident in the pieces of creative writing that each pupil subsequently produced. In addition to these outings, there were many whole school events that took place in school: World Book Day 2017, the Year 5 & 6 Swimming Gala, our Verse Speaking Competition and Easter Events to name but a few. The pupils showcased the range of talent in the Junior School at the King George's Hall Dance Festival, various football, chess and netball matches and, in the last week of term, QEGS Has Got Talent. Many thanks must go to our Junior School teachers who tirelessly coordinate such events for our pupils' benefit and enjoyment. I would also like to thank all of you, our dedicated parents and guardians, for your ongoing support of the broad and balanced education we provide for your children at QEGS. Many of you offer the free time that you have to engage in events at school and support our outings – your commitment to us is recognised and we are most grateful.

A highlight for me last term was the recent Junior School Parents' Evening. The new format in the Main Hall was well-received by all and we thought that the timings worked well for both parties. It was lovely to receive such positive and constructive feedback from the parents and guardians that I managed to speak with. We encourage you to speak with us, at these events in particular, about any issues that you may have, but equally we are available throughout the term should you have any pressing concerns or queries. I spoke with many of you about the necessary amendments to our school lunches; the variety of foods on offer have not changed and we continue to offer a range of food for your children to select from. I do, however, hope that we now have the portion sizes just right!

Our Junior and Infant School Governor, Mr Clark, visited us again last term. On his most recent visit, we focussed on the high expectations in the department. Mr Clark noted how keenly the pupils responded academically and socially, in their movements around school, to the high expectations that all of our staff set. Reviewing the pupils in the Junior School again last term highlighted the impact that our teaching methods, interventions and dedication has on ensuring that each pupil fulfils their potential. It is apparent that the pupils have taken on board that they too have a responsibility to work hard if they are to be the best that they can be: many are taking real ownership of their learning.

I was particularly proud of the pupils that entered the Junior School's QEGS Has Got Talent event, many of whom successfully made it through to the final. It is always a remarkable sight to see our pupils perform so effortlessly in front of their peers and teachers. Such events remind us all about the variety of talents we have in the Junior School: comedians, singers, dancers and even budding magicians! Thinking about Our Values, I was pleased with how well the pupils 'stood together' by supporting each individual with gusto as they entered and exited the stage. It was apparent how many pupils – even in Year 3 – had grown in confidence since September; they undoubtedly 'believed in themselves' and were proud of their own and others' achievements. This was a wonderful way to end such a busy term.

Trinity Term Dates

Looking forward to the term ahead, you will find attached a copy of the dates for the Trinity Term. Please do take the time to record these in your diary. Where necessary, further details for each event will follow in the form of a letter.

Staff Changes

As many of you will be aware, Miss Trafford left us at the end of the Lent Term. I wrote to all the Year 5 parents and guardians separately last term, but I would like to reiterate that we wish Miss Trafford all the very best in her new ventures. We welcome Miss Pearson in her place. Miss Pearson will take over Miss Trafford's teaching responsibilities for the remainder of this academic year and will be the Form Teacher for 5T. Miss Pearson has already been in to school for a number of working days and also attended the recent Parents' Evening. Her attendance will certainly enable the pupils to feel safe and supported during this period of transition. All the staff in the Junior School will keep a watchful eye over the pupils in 5T, particularly during the first few weeks of this new arrangement.

Summer Clothing

Although daily temperatures appear to have increased, please do ensure that your child brings a coat to school. The pupils may now, however, choose to wear summer clothing. Girls may choose to wear the regulation summer dress with white knee-high socks or white tights. Boys may choose to wear a white short-sleeved shirt with their grey trousers or grey shorts. Further details can be found on page 3 of the Junior School Pupil Planner. Should the weather be warm and bright, pupils may wear a regulation school sun hat only, available from Grays. Such reminders are important in order to maintain the high standards of our school in relation to uniform. In addition to this, I would like to politely remind you that school trousers, socks and tights, with the winter uniform, should be plain grey.

Pupil Attendance

There were many pupils congratulated at the end of term for attendance of 99% and above. This is a fantastic achievement; such high attendance undoubtedly enables these pupils to achieve to the very best of their ability. To ensure the smooth running of the Junior School and the safety of all children, parents are asked to inform school before 10:00 if their child is to be absent. Please telephone Infant and Junior Reception on 01254 686311 each day your child is absent. On return to school, the child should bring a signed note from their parent or guardian explaining the cause of absence. For the welfare of all children, parents should notify school immediately if their child is suffering from an infectious illness, or has been in contact with a serious infection. Absence from school for any reason other than illness is not allowed without obtaining prior written permission from the Head, Mrs Gammon. Failure to report a child's absence, or failing to seek permission for an absence, will result in an unauthorised absence being recorded and forwarded to the local authority.

Personal Equipment

I know that Miss Singleton sent out a reminder about this last term, but it is important that your child has a small pencil case containing the following equipment: 2 x HB pencils, a ruler, a rubber, scissors, a glue stick, a blue highlighter, a small whiteboard pen and a sharpener (preferably with a compartment for shavings). Children in Year 5 and 6 also require 2 x blue handwriting pens. We advise that all stationery items are named. Many children will be awarded their Pen Licence in Year 4 this week, I would strongly advise that their name/ initials are placed on the pen that they receive.

I look forward to seeing you at the many events arranged for this term, in particular the Junior School Prize Giving on Thursday, 29th June. I am confident that your children are making good progress in our Junior School and that they continue to thrive and succeed in the many opportunities available to them. As always, if you do have queries or concerns about any aspect of your child's education, please don't hesitate to get in touch with us, usually via the Form Teacher in the first instance.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs K O'Donoghue
Acting Head of Junior School