



Your Child, Your School, Your Voice

Heads Up!

Dear Parents and Carers,

This week's Heads' Up is recycled, but I was reminded of it this week when one of our new Year 7 students explained to me that they were 'no good' at sport and always came last. Enjoy.

Are you a 'Mood Hoover'?

I went to a large rural comprehensive school in West Sussex called Steyning Grammar School with a traditional curriculum with a traditional Headmaster. I loved school, particularly English and PE. My English teacher was an extraordinary character, who wore a floor length overcoat and smoked Camel cigarettes, whilst regaling us with tales of authors he had met. He took us to what was probably an inappropriate theatre above a pub opposite Brighton Station where we saw swears, beery productions of rather grown up plays. He was an inspiring teacher because he encouraged us to have an opinion about literature, to not be afraid of words; to be passionate in our convictions and to love learning. 'Thank you Sir', wherever you are.

By contrast my maths teacher informed me very early on that I was simply 'not very good' at maths. That was it. My relationship with maths was then a broken thing, an embarrassing confession to hide behind, 'I'm terribly sorry, I just can't do it.' It has stuck with me, an algorithm for my failure – it doesn't make sense therefore I am stupid.

How sad that an adult can shape a child's view of themselves in this way. To put a cap on a child's potential is to seal their fate, take away opportunity and future and dreams.

There is a Youtube clip of a flea experiment carried out many years ago, where a scientist bred fleas in a jar with a lid on. When the lid was removed, the fleas jumped no higher than where the lid had been previously; they were set, fixed, truncated in their growth and potential.

This is something I talk a lot about to our students at John Mason. Our teachers must be aspirational in their conversations, with students, colleagues and parents. All too often I will hear a child say, 'I'm no good at...' – what a great sadness to feel this at such a young age. But these ideas are all too easily formed by the loose comment of an adult who has forgotten that feeling themselves. I believe we have a responsibility to ensure all our interactions with young people are positive, nurturing and encouraging.

I recently read a book by Andy Cope called 'The Art of Being Brilliant' which encourages you to build positivity with students by being a '2%er' and not a 'mood hoover' – what a wonderful phrase, someone who sucks the joy out of any situation; you may know one of these? Whilst 2%ers see the positives in every situation, celebrate success and encourage risk taking; they see life's opportunities not life's barriers; what an inspiring way to live.

So in the coming weeks when your child or grandchild, niece or nephew, lets slip a negative about their learning, sport or appearance, be the 2%er; remove the lid, find the solution, encourage them to take a risk and see how high they can leap. These are the future leaders of our communities and they need to know just how proud of them we are.

That's all from me, have a good weekend.

Sarah Brinkley

Follow me on Twitter: @HeadteacherJMS

Teaching & Learning:

Focus on the Maths Faculty

We are almost at the end of the academic year which seems to have flown by. It has been a challenging and enjoyable year for Maths. There have been a number of staffing changes since September but I am pleased to say that as of September we are fully staffed in the Maths faculty with a consistent team.

We said goodbye to Mr Kayyani back in term 2, Mr James left the maths team just after Christmas and has been teaching in the Science faculty, and more recently Mr Ross left the school after his contract expired and has moved onto pastures new.

Mrs Clare replaced Mr Kayyani before Christmas, we welcomed back Mr Leach in the New Year after his 'sabbatical' away, Mrs Rogers returned from maternity leave after Easter and we have appointed a new teacher – Mr Mackenzie – for September.

We are looking forward to September already, after a well-earned rest over the summer of course! We wish all of our students expecting exam results this August the very best of luck and sincerely hope they all get the results they hope for.

September sees the start of our new A Level which is a change in exam board and approach to examination. We are also able to staff a course on further maths which is something we have not been able to do for a number of years.

R Moreton
Director of Mathematics

Calendar Consultation

Last year we found parental feedback on our planned calendar to be invaluable. There were many very helpful suggestions that allowed us to adjust dates or assessment points to create a better flow for the year. This year's calendar is now ready in draft form and you can find it using the usual link www.mintcal.com/calendar or through our website.

We would again appreciate your views on our key dates planned for next year so that we can confirm these and plot other events (trips, visits, etc) around them. Please note that information for 2017-18 on the calendar is provisional and may change in response to parent or staff feedback.

Apologies however due to the changes in the Consortium Sixth Form dates are still not ready, so the following remains pending:

*Confirmation of Sixth Form Dates for Parents' Evenings, exams, meetings

*i-Days remain to be confirmed, but will occur on normal school days with dates to follow.

Many thanks,
Robin Conway

Please send your comments to events@johnmason.oxon.sch.uk

Dates for your Diary:

Wednesday 5th July: Open Morning - 9.00am -12.30pm

Thursday 13th July: Argentan trip leaves;

Friday 14th July: Year 8 Welsh Farm trips end;

Friday 14th July: i-Day;

Sunday 16th July: Koln trip leaves;

Monday 17th July: i-Day;

Tuesday 18th July: i-Day;

Wednesday 19th July: i-Day;

Thursday 20th July: term ends at 1.10pm;

Community News:

Jessie's Art Shed
SUMMER Workshops 2017
 For all children aged 5 - 14

AWESOME INDONESIA
 Wednesday 26th July - 1:15pm - 4:15pm
 Thursday 27th July 9:30am - 12:30pm

DAZZLING DRIP PAINTING
 Thursday 3rd August - 1:15pm - 4:15pm
 Friday 4th August - 9:30am - 12:30pm

BRILLIANT BUTTONS
 Tuesday 8th August - 1:15pm - 4:15pm
 Wednesday 9th August - 9:30am - 12:30pm

FAB FUN FAIR
 Thursday 10th August - 10am - 3pm

For more information or to book a place contact Jessie Whealy on:
 Email - jessiewhealy@gmail.com
 Mobile - 07530 689696

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Dido & Aeneas


An opera by Henry Purcell
 With additional instrumental and vocal performances from students
 A fully staged performance with orchestra

12th & 13th July 2017
 7.30pm

(01235) 524 664
 Tickets available in advance from JMS Student Services

Tickets Adults £4
 Concessions £3

Amey Theatre
 Abingdon School, Park Road,
 Abingdon, OX14 1DE



Stonehill Community Garden


Harvest Meal Fundraising Event
 Wednesday August 2nd 4pm – 8pm

Various stalls & local organisations
 Tasty Garden Produce Meal £ donation
 Raffle & Cake stall
 Herb plants for sale
 Plant swap
 Live Music
 Launch of our Crowd-funder Campaign

Facebook: Stonehill Community Garden

info@stonehillgardens.co.uk
www.stonehillgardens.co.uk


Free Taster Sessions - Summer 2017



oxfordsailingcentre
Official Newsletter

The Scuttiebutt

scuttiebutt: 1. (nautical, countable) A butt with a scuttle, a keg of drinking water with a hoze cut in it on board ship.
2. (informal, uncountable) Gossip, rumour, idle chatter.



Sponsored by the RYA's "Try Sailing" initiative, OSTT is happy to announce a "Try Sailing" partnership. On Saturday 22nd July and Saturday 26th August we will be offering free taster sessions in Dinghy sailing! Each session will be 30 minutes long and will get you out on the water to get a brief taste of what to expect from this relaxing outdoor sport.

Available for both adults and children our professional RYA Instructors will be on hand to take you through the first steps using our beginner dinghy - the Laser Pico.

Bookable through our website now & available at strictly limited numbers, this would be a great option to give your family something different for this summer! Follow the link below for more options.

<https://www.oxfordsailtraining.org.uk/dinghy-taster-sessions/>