



Oakhyrst Grange School

PREPARATORY SCHOOL FOR BOYS & GIRLS

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HEADMASTER: MR. ALEX GEAR B.Ed

26th March 2010

Dear Parents

The Spring Term has simply raced by. In this letter I will mention a few of the major events of the term and begin with the Peripatetic Spring Music Concert, which was held on Tuesday 23rd March. This was a landmark occasion for me personally in that the Oakhyrst Grange Orchestra performed its first piece in front of a packed audience. My sincere thanks to Mr Dominic Carter and to all of the peripatetic instrumental teachers for their hard work in preparing the pupils. The sheer number of pupils involved, the range of instruments being played and the ever rising standard of performance are clear indicators of the excellent progress being made in music.

It has been a busy term for trips and outings and here is a taste of what children have been up to. Mrs Munnery took Kindergarten to Waitrose and to Pizza Express. Years 3 and 4 have visited the Tower of London, Year 5 visited Caterham Library and Year 6 went to the Imperial War Museum. I would like to extend a personal thanks to my staff for their hard work and professionalism in arranging these trips. While many schools shy away from the stress and strain brought about by arranging trips and visits, the team at Oakhyrst Grange is very keen to provide as varied a diet of educational experiences as possible. The risk assessments, planning and general administration make for huge amounts of work. The safety of your children is paramount. I would ask that parents of a sensitive disposition allow for the fact that every reasonable precaution is always taken to ensure the safe and smooth running of every trip. I would also remind you that it is your absolute right to refuse permission for your child to participate in a particular trip. Alternative and appropriate work will be provided at school.

To more mundane matters, a few words about parking. Our swimming pool is in constant use and the ever-growing school population make for much busier traffic conditions throughout working school days. While I am always seeking ways to alleviate the congestion and am working alongside the Board of Governors to come up with strategies and solutions, I would ask for your cooperation and common sense with regard to parking. Do please try and leave occasional gaps as pull in points to enable a free flow of traffic. Try not to park on the blind bends toward the Harrow. Please do not park on the yellow zigzags at the entrance and exit points of the school. I will continue to speak to Swimming Pool Users about not parking on our premises. During the holiday, Mr Buchala will install speed bumps at the entrance and exit points of the drive. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

There have been one or two situations more recently where the role of the Form Mum has been somewhat confused. I would like to thank the Form Mums' team for the splendid work that they do in passing information from the school to their respective forms. It is not appropriate to use Form Mums to lobby for particular initiatives or indeed to act as a source for expressing collective concerns. The simple truth is, that if any parent wants to talk about their child and considerations that affect their child, they should speak to the School Office, the appropriate member of staff or indeed, myself.

The World Book Day fancy dress celebration on Tuesday 9th March was perhaps bigger and better than ever. All of the children in all of their costumes could claim to be winners. During the evening of Tuesday 9th March, my staff held a curriculum evening on the themes of Handwriting and Reading. The event was moderately well attended, but of significant benefit to those who were able to make it. My thanks to Mrs Kemp for arranging the events. My thanks also to Mrs Dawson and the PFOG team who arranged the book sale with Scholastic, which enabled us to spend a magnificent total of £500 plus on books for the school. On Thursday 25th March, we were visited by Eamonn Reilly, the world famous children's author who addressed the whole school assembly and left signed books for sale. Once again thanks to Mrs Kemp for the

Mighty oaks from little acorns grow

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arrangements. Mrs Kemp has asked me to thank you for your generous World Book Day donations, which totalled £230. The proceeds from this collection will be spent on School Library improvements. For information, the library is now connected to the Internet by a brand new computer. From September, we will have installed software from Micro Librarian system.

There has been the usual flurry of activity on the sports front and teams have represented the school in all of the senior ages at netball, football, tag rugby and cross-country. From the beginning of next term, Mrs Michelle Evans, will assume the acting role of Head Swimming Coach. Mrs Evans has just completed a Level 2 Swimming Qualification. Mr Jo Clark will continue to act as Mrs Evans's assistant as we go into next term. My sincere thanks to Mrs Michelle Evans for filling in during Mrs Clark's sustained absence period so very well. Toward the end of the Summer Term I will make permanent Swimming Coaching appointments for the following year. My congratulations to Benedict Ruiz who represented the ISA London South East division Cross Country team in the Nationals at Rugby. Benedict also learned this week that he has been selected to play for ISA London South East division Soccer team at U11. My congratulations to him and all of the pupils who have represented the school this term.

A message from Mrs Sibley to request that all games kit and school uniform is properly labelled. Where nearly new uniform has been purchased, would parents please make sure that the old labels have been removed as this can lead to an awful lot of confusion when trying to find lost property. **Girls are reminded that Summer Uniform is to be worn from the start of next term.** The term begins on Wednesday 21st April 2010.

The term was rounded off with the usual grand Easter Egg Hunt organised by PFOG. Mrs Munnery and Mrs Powell had to be held back in order to let the children have a fair chance to find as many eggs as possible. My thanks to Mrs Dawson and her team for running such a splendid event. Mrs Dawson arranged a very successful PFOG Race Night, which raised over £800. The proceeds from the Race Night are being put toward a Science Day in the Autumn Term. We were joined by Mr Jon Mountain, of the Caterham Round Table at our final assembly of the term in order to present him with a cheque toward the End Polio Now campaign. Next term we will be organising a Mile of Pennies event toward the same charity, so please start collecting your coppers now.

As you now know, Mrs Lesley Clark, our Swimming Instructor is leaving us at the end of term. We said an official farewell on the last day of term during the school assembly, where the staff, parents and pupils were given an opportunity to express their gratitude to her for her many years of dedicated service to the school. Mrs Clark is remaining in close touch with the school through her L & M Swimming Club. I end this term's report by wishing Mrs Lesley Clark all the very best as we move into next term.

I hope that you all have a safe, restful and happy Easter holiday.

With all best wishes

Mr Alex Gear
Headmaster