

12<sup>th</sup> December 2019

Dear Parent/Carer

We are fast approaching the countdown to the last few days of what has been a very long fifteen week term. I think we have reached the point where everyone is in need of a holiday. I hope your preparations for the holiday season are going well.

### **Christmas Celebration Evening**

I would like to thank everyone who came along to support this evening and especially the staff and students who put in so much hard work to make it happen. It was terrific to see so much talent and enthusiasm on show. There was a really lovely atmosphere that for me marked the start of Christmas! The event also raised nearly £500 that will help support our Performing Arts Department.

### **Budmouth Life and Times**

The final touches are being made to the new end of term digital magazine. Once it has been released online we will send an 'InTouch' message and link it to our social media accounts. Some of the events taking place right at the end of the Autumn term will be held over to the Spring term edition eg Senior Prize Giving. Thank you very much to our student team who have worked on this, under the guidance of Mr Ciantar and Mr Hill. I enjoyed being interviewed by two prospective journalism students (Year 13 at Budmouth now) about what achievement means!

### **Senior Prize Giving**

This new Prize Giving event in our calendar takes place on **Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> December at 7pm**. This year's winners from current Years 11, 12, 13 and the outgoing Year 13 from July 2019 will be welcomed with a speech from a member of our most recent alumni, Josh Frampton, before receiving their awards. The reply slips confirming attendance and how many seats are required are being returned to organiser, Mr Henman, and it promises to be an enjoyable end to the term. We hope to see many of our students who have gone onto universities and employment and it will be nice to hear how they are getting on in the next part of their journeys. A full list of prize winners will be published on the website after the event, so there's no spoilers!

### **Hamper Appeal**

After our appeal for donations to the Christmas Hamper Appeal, I am delighted that we are able to supply hampers to be donated locally. Many nominations were made suggesting suitable recipients and I am sure that these will be well received. Thank you!

### **New IT Systems**

This has been a very busy term on the IT front. In January 2020 Windows 7 becomes obsolete and, in recent months, our team has been upgrading over 500 machines to Windows 10. On top of significant upgrades to our 'Wi-fi' and overseeing the migration to new email accounts (students and staff have all now moved to Gmail) this has meant they have had a very busy workload. I would like to acknowledge the hard work of our IT support team and hope that 2020 brings a calmer time for them.

### **FAB!**

The second meeting of our new 'Friends and Associates of Budmouth' group was held last night. Thank you to everyone who attended and to the staff who took part in discussion groups on topics including SEND, School Culture and Curriculum. Once the summary notes have been completed, they will be available to view on the website under the Parents' Information section.

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## Parents' Evenings

The dates for these are available on the school calendar and are also listed under the Parents' Information tab on our website. We have purchased a new online booking system which we hope will make things easier for you to book appointments and will not have to rely on your children seeing their teachers with a booking sheet. Unfortunately, this was not set up in time for us to use for the recent Year 9 evening and I must apologise that the communication about this event came out to parents much later than we would have liked.

Please note that following consultation with staff, we have changed the timing of Parents' Evenings and brought them forward by one hour so they are now from 4pm to 7pm. This brings us in line with all of the other West Dorset secondary schools. The reason for this is primarily due to staff wellbeing and we are mindful that some staff have up to an hours drive home after these events and have to be back in and ready to go the next day. It is impossible to meet the needs of everyone around the timings of these events and we are mindful that some parents have jobs that are afternoon/evening based and, therefore, are not able to make it at all. Please remember though that you do not need to wait until Parents' Evenings to ask for feedback or information that you would find helpful. Whilst email is increasingly being used in the modern age, you are more than welcome to make contact with your child's teachers at other points in the year and, where helpful, to arrange a telephone or face-to-face conversation at a mutually convenient time.

## RAG Week

In the last week of term our 6<sup>th</sup> Form students will be having their first go at organising a RAG Week (raising and giving). Such events are commonplace at university and are a great way to have fun and raise money for a good cause. The 6<sup>th</sup> Form are supporting the established links we have with projects in Kenya. They would, therefore, be very grateful if the students could bring any 'change' that they might be able to spare in support of this. There will be opportunities to take part in activities at break and lunch and watch some staff volunteers doing likewise. I am sure you will hear all about it!

## Ski Trip

Next week, 43 of our students will be learning new skills on the slopes of Les Deux Alpes. I hope that everyone has a great experience under the guidance of our trip leader, Mr Hudson, and they come back for Christmas with no broken bones! Keep an eye on social media for some action from the slopes.

## Finally...

Thank you all for your support during this first term of 2019/20 and our first as part of a new Multi Academy Trust. There has been much in the way of new systems and structures for all of our staff to learn and I know how much they have earned their rest. We continue to receive lots of monitoring of our progress from different senior leaders within the Trust and we remain committed to make ongoing improvements at Budmouth.

On Friday 20<sup>th</sup> December students will be dismissed at 1.30pm.

May I take this opportunity to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year when you get there. Please send your children back to the Academy on **Monday 6<sup>th</sup> January**.

Kind regards.

Yours sincerely



David Herbert