



## **WHOLE SCHOOL NOTICES**

### ***The Headmaster writes...***

Last Tuesday I was not in school, not because I thought it was going to snow but because I was invited to the International Boys' Schools Coalition. The day was held at the Guildhall in London and attended by Heads of boys' schools from all over the world, including Eton, Harrow, the Royal Grammar School and John Hampden. It was an extremely stimulating day which was opened by Tony Little, Head of Eton, who touched upon the emotional development of teenage boys, their reliance on habits and routines, as well as boys' proclivity to be single task orientated creatures. Abigail Norfleet, an American academic, was particularly interesting. She discussed the boys' tendency to be visual learners, how they have to have movement, how their performance responds to competition and how they work well in groups. Most illuminating was her theory that boys thrive in boys' schools because they discover different routes to being a man, whereas in a co-educational setting their learning can be less impressive, their need to show off more obvious and where "maleness" is more narrowly defined. In essence, boys' schools can develop reading cultures, a lack of awkwardness for drama and music when they have a community of non judgemental men and strong role models. Boys' schools work because there are distinct neurocognitive differences between boys and girls, a sensitivity towards specific boy problems, not such dependence on verbal learning and a learning environment specifically tailored for boys' skills. The afternoon's speaker was Michael Thompson who was catapulted into the media spotlight when the work he co-authored "*Raising Cain*" was published shortly before the Columbine massacre. His latest book "*It's a Boy!*" has, I believe, just been finished. As a consultant and psychologist (who has worked in five hundred schools!) he talked about male violence, the academic gap between boys and girls, the need for male role models, boys' reading, so-called "violent play", disorganisation and adolescence. He also gave advice on how parents can overcome their doubts and enjoy raising boys. How mothers must hold onto the image of a man they have loved or admired rather than negative images of men, how fathers must remember that no one "made them" into a man, there are meaningful rituals they can enjoy with their sons and that they, too, were vulnerable at some stage.

It was encouraging to know that at Davenies we do approach teaching boys in many of the ways recommended throughout the day. We don't just happen to be a boys' school but are consciously so. Having been educated in boys' schools and a teacher in boys' schools I bring to the debate my own bias, but any of you who have had four year old boys around to play, having only had girls or who have an older daughter, or are astonished that their husband cannot find his keys yet again, will know that there are some fundamental differences in educating the two sexes.

### **Visitors**

I would like to remind all parents to sign in at the office when visiting the school and indeed to sign out when leaving. We have had a number of instances of parents buzzing in at the front door and then walking to their destination without coming to sign in and collect a visitors' badge. We have to try to create a

culture where all adults are 'badged' or are the teachers. Stories abound of unwanted adults gaining access to schools and going unchallenged and I believe this was the case recently in the locality. We welcome visitors, are grateful for parental help, but are mindful of unwanted intruders.

*Mr Scriven writes...*

#### **Haiti Disaster: Charity Clothing and Mobile Phone Recycling**

Well done to those boys who managed to collect a sack or two full of clothing last weekend – the staff changing room in the cricket pavilion is starting to fill up!

Year 7 boys will be willing and ready to take any more bags again on **Monday 1<sup>st</sup> February**, both before and after school. Please have a rummage around and send in your black sacks (clothes) or carrier bags (mobiles). Proceeds will be split between the Haiti Disaster Fund and the Geography Department's partner school in South Africa.

*Mr Affleck writes...*

#### **Murder Mystery Evening**

This ever popular evening takes place on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February. Tickets are selling fast at £10 a head; book quickly to avoid disappointment. All proceeds go to Friends of Davenies.

## **PRE-PREP NOTICES**

*Mrs Rush writes...*

#### **Haiti Day**

After meeting with the form reps on Friday morning, we have agreed a programme for Haiti Day on **Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> February** to coincide with our mini open afternoon. The boys will be sending you an invitation, and a Parentmail has been sent out giving all the details.

#### **Morning school**

I am sorry if there was confusion after last week's newsletter concerning the start of the school day. The doors are open from 8:20 am in Year 2 and 8:25 am in Reception and Year 1. The boys are expected to be in their classroom by **8:40 am at the latest** for registration. It states in the school calendar that school begins at 8:30 am, but for the Pre-Prep boys we give the extra ten minutes as you need to walk the boys into school yourselves.

Please may I remind Year 2 parents that the boys must have named ankle socks with their named white shorts in a bag in school ready for their PE lessons (Monday 2MR and Friday 2S).

## PREP SCHOOL NOTICES

### *Mr Gibson writes...*

At the end of Week 4, the House competition is as follows:

Cook	39.31
Scott	41.39
Drake	43.56
Shackleton	47.65

### *Matron writes...*

#### **Off-Games Procedure**

If your son is not to participate in Games for any reason, please confirm this in writing to both his Form Teacher and the School Office. This ensures that he will be added to the 'Off-Games' List.

### *Miss Young writes...*

#### **We'll Meet Again – Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February**

Could all boys appearing in "We'll Meet Again" please be returned to school at **6:00 pm** on Wednesday evening, wearing full costume and make up, if needed, and sent straight to 4R. Please do not arrive before 6:00 pm as there will be no one to supervise the boys.

### *Mr Scriven writes...*

#### **National Geographic Kids Magazine**

Apologies for any confusion, but subscriptions to this new magazine will now run from February 2010 – January 2011. Boys have been given their first copy of the magazine which they may take home or keep at school for use during lunchtime reading periods. Future copies will be distributed on the last Friday of the month, unless they arrive during the school holidays when they will be issued on the first Friday of the new term.

#### **Year 6 – Caving and Potholing Trip to Cheddar, Somerset**

A small number of places are available for boys in **Year 6**. The trip takes place on the weekend of 12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> March. A flyer, with consent form, has been sent home separately.

#### **Year 7S – SAP Personal Survival and Lifesaving Course**

Week two begins **for boys in 7S** on Monday 1st February at 4:10. This week will see boys taking the Level 2 Personal Survival test. Boys will need to bring to school the full clothing list of 'wet kit' this week: **swimming costume, towel, long trousers** (tracksuit bottoms with a drawstring are ideal, or light fabric trousers with a belt – no jeans!), **long sleeved shirt, jumper** and **trainers**. Those who pass will be available for collection at 5:15.

## Mr Thomas writes...

### Match Teas

We think that match teas are an important part of our match day experience. Pick-up times are always published to allow for the time it takes to get through match tea. Home games in the winter terms will usually mean a 4:15 – 4:30pm pick-up, unless otherwise stated. Cooked teas at Davenies, and at the schools we visit, are planned well in advance of each match afternoon and, with this in mind, team managers are always wary when agreeing to your son's request to leave early. Please would parents refrain from asking to take their children home before match tea, unless there is an important reason for you to do so.

### Swimming at Crosfields

Eight swimmers from each of Years 5, 6 and 7/8 combined, swam in a friendly head-to-head gala at Crosfields School on Tuesday evening. Although Davenies were narrowly defeated overall (160 points to 140), it was an excellent contest. Particular congratulations to the Year 7/8 team who competed strongly to draw their age group with 50 points; the result resting on the final freestyle relay. There were some very good individual swims resulting in a number of wins; William Rose (U'10 backstroke), Ben Hillier and Andrew McDonald (U'10 breaststroke), Stanley Walsh (U'11 breaststroke), Daniel Deakin (U'13 breaststroke), Jonathan Davies (U'10 front crawl and U'10 butterfly), Frederick Williams and Harry Berkley (U'13 freestyle), and George Simmons (U'11 butterfly). The U'10s scored 48 points to Crosfields 52, while the U'11s scored 42 to Crosfields 58.

A valiant effort all round – well done. In a very busy week after half term we host the 3<sup>rd</sup> of our Panagraphic Galas on the 25<sup>th</sup> February, followed by the regional qualifying round at The Dragon on 26<sup>th</sup> February. Between now and then, swimmers need to 'get in the zone' and get in the pool!

### Sports Results

Team	Score	Result	Scorers
1 <sup>st</sup> XI v Oratory	3 – 2	W	L. McGuire × 2, A.J. Woodland
2 <sup>nd</sup> XI v Oratory	2 – 3	L	J. Baker, M. Rushton
3 <sup>rd</sup> XI v Oratory	0 – 9	L	-
4 <sup>th</sup> XI v Oratory	0 – 5	L	-
Colts A XI v OPS	1 – 3	L	J. McGurk
Colts B XI v OPS	2 – 3	L	K. Nemoto, C. Murray
Colts C XI v OPS	3 – 3	D	U. Adalsteins × 2, N. Wright
U'10 A VII v The Beacon	0 – 1	L	-
U'10 B VII v The Beacon	2 – 3	L	M. Roberts × 2
U'10 C VII v The Beacon	0 – 0	D	-
U'10 D VII v The Beacon	1 – 1	D	C. Woolf
U'10 E VII v The Beacon	0 – 1	L	-