



Newsletter

January 2010

From the Headteacher

Dear Parents

I am delighted to have been appointed to the Royal Latin School. It is, of course, a great honour to follow such an impressively long line of Headteachers and I should like to pay tribute to my predecessor, Mr. Robert Cooper, who has laid outstanding foundations for the future development of the school. He has also been generous in spending time with me to ensure that I am aware of some of the major issues facing the school.



I am sure that many of you will be keen to know a little more about me! I grew up in Birmingham, attending Handsworth Grammar School, and then moved on to read history at Trinity Hall, Cambridge. On completion of my PGCE at Oxford I started my early teaching career in Australia, Bristol and Paris, before settling with my family in Oxfordshire. I have been Head of History in Thame, Head of the joint Sixth Form in Didcot and, most recently, have been Deputy Head with responsibility for the curriculum at Bicester Community College. I am married with three children, all of whom attend state schools in Oxford, and are a constant reminder of what life is really all about!

Starting in January gives me an excellent opportunity to get to know the school as we begin to plan ahead. It will be important for me to listen and observe before attempting to introduce any significant changes. My initial priority will be to visit as many lessons as possible and to see at first hand the quality of learning that is taking place. I am also looking forward to meeting and getting to know all members of the community – students, staff, governors, parents, as well as local educational and business partners – all of whom will help to inform the school's new development plan for 2010-2013. Whatever the detail, I believe that the principle lying behind an outstanding education always remains the same – that every child should be nurtured and their potential recognised and fulfilled. 'High expectations for all' is a motto to which I fully subscribe and I will ensure that this lies at the heart of the school's future.

At 6'4" I am a fairly visible presence, so please feel free to introduce yourself at Parents Evenings and other school events. In the meantime, I would like to send you all my very best wishes for a happy and successful new year.

David Hudson

Snow News!

May I thank all parents for their patience and understanding over the closure of the school last week. It wasn't quite what I had imagined having to do in my first week! It has been good to open again this week and I have been very impressed with the responsible way in which students have coped with the conditions. I am also very grateful to staff, many of whom managed to struggle into school in difficult conditions. We are all looking forward to normal service being resumed!

Carol Concert-15th December 2009

In the presence of pupils, parents, staff and governors we hosted our annual carol concert at Buckingham Parish Church. The evening commenced with 'Once in Royal David's City', setting the scene for other traditional carols to follow, interspersed with both secular and sacred congregational carols led by the orchestra and choir of over 70 students. A separate massed choir of year 7 pupils sang a carol in German. In addition the GCSE & A-Level Musicians, gave three stirring and up-beat musical interludes, including music by John Joubert and John Rutter. The readings were led by Katie Haigh, Bethany Bloomer, Charlie Calver and the Headteacher. Prayers were led by Revd Philip Derbyshire. Perhaps the highlight of the evening was Bob Chilcott's setting of Christina Rossetti's poem In the bleak mid-winter, sung by Anna Czornyj, Eleanor Gough, Lucy Calver & Amy Brown, accompanied beautifully by Tom Sparrow. These carol concerts have become a popular and traditional prelude to Christmas at The Royal Latin and this occasion presented a fitting opportunity to say goodbye to outgoing Headteacher, Robert Cooper. Special thanks to Mr Tucker and Miss Truslove for preparing the choirs and orchestra so effectively and to Andy Cooper and the Friends' Association for coffee, mulled wine and mince pies.

School Travel Plan

A School Travel Plan (STP) is a process whereby a school works out how it intends to make travel to and from the school by pupils, parents and teachers more sustainable and safe. We are in the process of producing our Travel Plan and hope to receive funding in September 2010. Thank you to all parents who completed the on-line questionnaire and who raised some very interesting points. We shall discuss the responses at our next Working Committee Meeting. If anyone has any further comments on how we can encourage more sustainable travel please do not hesitate to contact me on:-

ddonoghue@royallatin.bucks.sch.uk

As part of achieving the Healthy School Award we are encouraging walking and cycling to school as this is an excellent way of improving fitness. This term as part of the School Travel



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



Science



Plan we would like to ask if Parents who drop off their children by car, to drop their children off a short, safe distance away from the school and encourage their children to walk some of the way. Parents should not be dropping off or picking up their children from the school site unless they have permission. The site can become very congested and during peak times it is difficult to enter and leave the site. Many thanks for your cooperation.

Junior Ski Trip to Port Aine

The deadline for all payments and forms is Thursday 14 January. Please ensure these are marked for the attention of Emma Dunn in the Student Office.

Buckingham School Sports Partnership

The Royal Latin School is part of The Buckingham School Sports Partnership and last term 40 CSLA leaders led 2 successful festivals. As a school, we are responsible for 7 primary schools in the local area and all of these schools are invited to attend various festivals throughout the year. During the Autumn term we entertained 85 pupils and many parents who came to support.

Due to the Latin leaders enthusiasm and help in delivering these festivals the younger pupils have had a first class experience at our school. The leaders were outstanding and became true role models for the students. The festivals offer the opportunity to learn new skills and more importantly work as a team to achieve success. Throughout the year, 700 pupils will attend festivals, making their learning enjoyable and most of all, enthusing all the pupils into leading healthy lifestyles.

Miss Felton (School Sports Coordinator)

Anti-Bullying Awareness Week

Anti-bullying awareness week was successfully led by 8N last term under the guidance of Miss Nicholls and Mrs Vinall. They held a variety of events during the week and sold anti-bullying wristbands. Any profit was donated to Children in Need. Members of 8N even "bullied" staff into wearing school uniform on the Children in Need charity day! During the week, an anti-bullying charter was signed by the Headteacher, Chair of Governors and the Senior Prefect who Chairs the School Council. 8N led assemblies, where the key theme, cyber-bullying was addressed.

Their key message was "How can we stop cyber-bullies?"

Keep personal information private

Stop! Block! Tell!

Take 5

Report any cyber-bullying to www.wiredsafety.org

Each form was asked to write an anti cyber-bullying pledge which will be put on the school website. Last year, students contributed to an anti-bullying "wall" in

the main school which contains pledges and statements explaining students views on bullying and bullies and re-wrote the school Anti-Bullying Policy.

This term we will be inviting pupils to take part in the Buckinghamshire County Council Secondary School Anti-Bullying online pupil survey "Safe from Bullying".

Last year, we sent home to each family, a CD-Rom produced by Childnet International entitled "Know IT for all parents". It is a guide to getting the most out of the internet and keeping children safe online. If any parent did not receive a copy and would like one, please contact your child's Head of Year and we will send one home.

Buckinghamshire County Council are conducting a Secondary School Anti-Bullying Online Pupil Survey called 'Safe from Bullying'. The aim is to gather data to provide a clearer picture about bullying concerns and anti-bullying effectiveness across Buckinghamshire. Please refer to the website for more information.

Healthy Schools Award

We were delighted to hear, at the very end of last term, that we have been successful in our application for the Healthy Schools Award. This recognises the focus we have on promoting healthy lifestyles in all aspects of school life.

Animal Farm

During the week beginning 30 November, Animal Farm was performed four times to members of the public. This included an open dress rehearsal to students from Northampton College in the school Hall. For many of these students, English is their second language, and as they are studying the novel, we were able to help them with our performance. They also gave us many useful suggestions. A great day was had by all.

The three evening performances were well received by sell out audiences. We would like to thank everyone involved in the production: students, staff, parents, caretakers and first aiders. We all helped to create a memorable event.

Martin Boileau

Head of Drama

Forthcoming Events

Thursday 14th January-Year 11 Parents Evening 4pm-7.30pm

Wednesday 20th January-Year 13 Exams Begin

Friday 22nd January-Year 10 Enterprise Day

Monday 25th January-Year 10 Work Experience Week