



2 July 2010

Dear Parent,

Time this term has again evaporated far too quickly, and we are already on the eve of the summer holiday! Whilst many pupils have been focussing on public examinations, others have occupied themselves in all manner of ways, and I hope that you have read about some of these in *The Lion* newsletter. We have been blessed with very fine weather, and we have therefore benefited from a full programme of outdoor activities. Many pupils and staff will also be involved in activities or expeditions during the holiday.

Staff

We bid a fond farewell to several colleagues, who have enriched the lives of pupils at Bablake in diverse ways, over varying lengths of time:

Mrs Brenda Wood joined the school in 2005, having already been Head of Art at Lyng Hall. She has taught on a part-time basis, but has given freely of her time and talents outside lessons. She has specialised in drawing, 3D sculpture and printing, and is a talented sculptor in her own right. We wish her a happy and undoubtedly creative retirement.

Mrs Patricia Tatum was a professional singer before becoming a teacher. She had led Music Departments in both London and Coventry prior to taking up a part-time post at King Henry VIII School in 1990. She combined this with a position at Bablake a year later, and soon committed herself entirely to our school. She has been a source of great inspiration through her Music teaching and her direction of the school's choirs, and it was only two weeks ago that the Chorale won their class at the Leamington Festival. She has been Head of Middle School since 1999, and her pastoral encouragement, guidance and professionalism have been hugely valued. May she too enjoy a well earned retirement.

Mr Rob Dougall was a pupil at Bablake between 1962 and 1969. He was made 2nd in English at his previous school after four terms' teaching, and his Head of English said that he was without a doubt the best appointment he had made in twenty years of teaching. He returned to Bablake in 1989, and besides being a truly inspirational English teacher, he has been in charge of swimming and life-guard training, as well being Assistant Head of Sixth Form since 1995. He is a lover of literature and fine art, has run marathons for charity and is a highly accomplished photographer, who has passed on his skills to Sixth Formers, and whose pictures have greatly enhanced our prospectus and website. He will be retiring to Devon, and we wish him every happiness as he continues to travel well beyond these shores.

Mrs Mandy Reed joined Bablake part-time in 1986, having previously been 2nd i/c Girls' P.E. at Barr's Hill School. Her specialisms have been netball, badminton and tennis, but she has contributed well beyond her hours to the success and enjoyment of girls' sport. We shall fortunately see her regularly in the future, as she continues to lead Girls' P.E. at the Junior School.

Mr Andrew McConaghy came to Bablake directly from teacher-training in 1973. His outstanding History teaching and organisational skills soon earned him promotion, and, after a spell as Head of General Studies, he became Assistant Head of Sixth Form, and then Head of Sixth Form. He supported water polo, rugby and bridge club, and taught musical appreciation. It came as no surprise when he was made Director of Studies in 1992. In this role and as a member of the Senior Management Team, he has shown exceptional judgement and ability, and has played a major part in both academic and curricular development at Bablake. He has carefully crafted the timetable, and has almost invariably ensured that pupils can study their desired options. We wish him a healthy and happy retirement.

Mrs Patricia Thomas came to Bablake in 1990, and originally worked in the Reprographics Department. As Librarian, she sympathetically and ably supported pupils and helped to maintain and enhance the quality of reading and research in the school.

Mr Stuart Slater worked as a member of the Maintenance Team for fourteen years, and, as a meticulous professional painter, ensured the good condition and attractiveness of our buildings. Both Mrs Thomas and Mr Slater have suffered from illness, and we hope very much that they will soon experience better health.

Mr Jonty Boddington has been supporting pupils and staff as Design and Technology Technician since 2001. As with our other support staff, he has taken great pride in his work, and we have benefited greatly from his care and expertise.

Mrs Chrissie Waddington will leave in the middle of September to pursue an MSc at the University of Warwick. She has been Physics Technician since 2005, and, always keen to further her education, has successfully completed a part-time Open University degree.

I am sure that you would want to join with me in thanking all these valued colleagues for their service to the Bablake community, and in wishing them happiness for the future.

Diary dates

The **Autumn Term Calendar** will be published on the website by the end of next week, and pupils will receive hard copies at the beginning of next term.

In the meantime, please note the following **Parents' Evenings**, which will occur in the first fortnight:

U6 Parents/ Form Tutors Consultation Evening – 9 September – 5-8pm
5th Year Parents/ Form Tutors Consultations – 13–15 September – 5-8pm
Introduction to Sixth Form Evening for L6 parents – 14 September – 7pm

The **U6 Mock Interview Morning** will take place on Saturday 25 September, and all Upper Sixth Formers are expected to avail themselves of this very valuable opportunity to be interviewed (panel and individual) by professionals, and to receive feedback.

A **School Visits Advance Planner** will appear in the Calendar section of the school website during the holiday, so as to aid parents with forward planning of holidays and expeditions.

Term dates for 2011-12 will now be published at the beginning of next term. Because Coventry and Warwickshire have not yet confirmed their schedule, it has not been possible for us to fix our dates definitively. However, the Autumn Term will begin either on Monday 5 or Wednesday 7 September 2011.

Malaysia Senior Girls' and Boys' Hockey Tour: The school will host a Per Una fashion show to help with fund-raising on Friday 8 October. Models will be chosen from amongst the 'tourists', and many items will be available at half-price or less. Details will be circulated at the start of term.

New Sports Kit

Parents should have received information about the website, sizing, ordering and arrangements for September (should there be the need to exchange garments ordered in an incorrect size). This was sent on Thursday via e-mail, or will accompany this letter for parents who receive hard copies. All the information is also in the School Shop. Should there be any queries, please phone Orion (01670 736666). Mark Whiteley from Orion will also be available on 07917 712886 on Friday and Saturday 1 and 2 July, from 10am until 5pm.

Peer Support

A Peer Support scheme will be introduced during the next academic year, and training for those involved will take place prior to half-term. The training will be given by CHIPS (Child Line and the NSPCC). Approximately 25 pupils will be trained initially, including some of the Lower Sixth Form Prefects who are assigned to the new Shell Forms, as well a number of 4th Years. Current Third and Fifth Year pupils have received an introduction to the scheme and those interested will be invited to apply at the beginning

of next term. We hope this will then be extended in-house to involve more in those year groups if appropriate. The aim will be to give support and reassurance, not only to those who may need a listening ear, but to those who may need help with settling into the work aspect of a new school. The scheme will complement the Form Prefecting system already in place, and, we hope, further enhance our pastoral care of pupils.

Wheatleyan

Owing to illness and bereavement within the Editor's family, it has unfortunately proved impossible to produce the Wheatleyan annual record within this academic year. It is almost complete, and will be distributed to parents at the beginning of term. The next edition (covering 2009-10) should be completed to its normal schedule in December/ January. I apologise for this unavoidable delay.

Summer works

Significant amounts of maintenance, upgrading and refurbishment will, as ever, occur during the summer holiday. The changing rooms will be refurbished and extended, and we shall be providing temporary facilities until completion of this project late next term.

School computer network

The school computer network will undergo a major upgrade during the holiday, and e-mail will therefore be unavailable between 26 and 30 August, over the bank holiday weekend. The school will, however, be open on 26 and 27 August if parents wish to contact us.

I wish you and your families a very happy, sunny and restful summer, and thank you for your support this year.

Yours sincerely,



J W Watson
Headmaster