

OLCHFA SCHOOL—YSGOL YR OLCHFA

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16TH JULY
2007

SUMMER TERM NEWSLETTER

Dear Parents

As we near the end of another academic year, I'd like to thank you for your continued support and to update you about a few other matters:

Firstly, from September, we are moving form groups from the same year groups into more cohesive geographical 'zones' within the school. This will carry all sorts of benefits, mainly around the issues of communication and the establishment of a stronger group identity. Pupils will keep their current form tutors but will move to different rooms, depending on where in the school their year group is located. A small minority of pupils

will retain both tutors and rooms.

Secondly, also on the matter of form tutors, we are piloting a new Year 7 form tutor arrangement under which all Year 7 forms have two tutors, one of them drawn from the support staff of the school. This will allow for higher levels of individual mentoring and support for pupils. This move towards a different use of form time will also be replicated in other year groups, but not with double staffing at the moment.

Thirdly, another reminder about the change of timing of the school day, which was notified to you earlier in the year. Could I par-

ticularly draw your attention to the fact that the morning session is now longer and there have been some concerns expressed about the need for pupils to access some food at the morning break. Please ensure that your son/daughter is either provided with appropriate food for the breacktime or that he/she takes advantage of the breacktime snack provision we are starting at the school. For £1, pupils will be able to purchase a bacon or sausage bap, a piece of fruit and a drink.

I and the staff wish you a good summer break.

Hugh Davies

Headteacher

IMPORTANT

PLEASE

NOTE

THE SCHOOL

WILL BE

CLOSED

DURING THE

SUMMER

HOLIDAYS

FROM 23rd

JULY TO 3RD

AUGUST TO

ALL PARENTS

AND VISITORS

For Information

All vacancies, teaching and non-teaching, are routinely advertised on

www.eteach.com

SCHOOL DAY FROM SEPT 07

| | |
|----------------|--------------------|
| 8.30—8.45 am | Form/Assembly time |
| 8.45—9.45 am | Lesson 1 |
| 9.45—10.45 am | Lesson 2 |
| 10.45—11.05 am | Break |
| 11.05—12.05 pm | Lesson 3 |
| 12.05—1.05 pm | Lesson 4 |
| 1.05—2.00 pm | Lunch |
| 2.00—3.00 pm | Lesson 5 |

UNIFORM SHOP OPENING TIMES FOR THE SUMMER HOLIDAYS

| | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Monday 20th August | 10 am until 1pm |
| Tuesday 21st August | 2 pm until 5 pm |
| Wednesday 22nd August | 10 am until 1pm |
| Thursday 23rd August | 2 pm until 5pm |
| Friday 24th August | 10 am until 1pm |

EXAMINATION RESULTS 2007 ARRANGEMENTS

Public Examinations have now come to an end. Results will be issued as follows:

16th August - Main Hall

A2 & AS Level - 8.30 am

23rd August - Main Hall

GCSE— 9.00 am

Colleagues will be available to provide guidance and advice during these days.

Whilst we appreciate that students and parents are anxious, we would appreciate it if students did not arrive at school too early prior to the issue times. Staff will be in school to assist and advise students as appropriate after results days.

SCHOOL FUND -AUTUMN TERM

At the start of the Autumn Term, all parents are asked to contribute to the school fund which provides a range of additional resources and facilities for the pupils. This fund supports extra curricular activities, minibus provision and pupil planners, and I would be grateful if this money could be paid as soon as possible in September. The full year cost is £3.00 per pupil, but for each additional child in the family, the cost is £1.00 less e.g. three pupils at Olchfa would mean £3 for one, £2 for the second and £1 for the third child for the year.

END OF TERM / START OF TERM ARRANGEMENTS

LAST DAY OF TERM

FRIDAY 20th JULY

The last day of the summer term will run as follows:

| | |
|---------------|--------------------------|
| Morning | Normal lessons |
| 12.20-1.15 pm | Lunch |
| 1.20 pm | Registration |
| 1.30 pm | Pupils will be dismissed |

START OF TERM ARRANGEMENTS

SEPTEMBER 2007

| | |
|----------------|--|
| 3rd September | Year 12 Enrolment — (Year 11 Olchfa pupils only) |
| 4th & 5th Sept | Staff INSET |
| 6th September | Year 7 and 10 and Year 12 (new to Olchfa) |
| 7th September | Remainder of pupils return (i.e. Years 8,9,11 and 13) |

GOODBYE AND WELCOME TO STAFF

As is the usual practice, it's time to let you know which members of staff will be leaving us this year and which new staff will be joining us in September. We pay tribute to a number of staff who are retiring and thank them for their loyal and devoted service over many years at Olchfa. Presentations will be made to these staff on the last day of term.

We start with Mr Ray Nelson (Biology) and Mr Roger Way (Geography) who have been with us for over 30 years! Mrs Thelma Pike (Business/Economics), Mr John Williams (Maths), Mrs Muriel McClean (Teaching Assistant), Mrs Menai Donovan (Welsh) and Ms Carolyn Rowlands (Welsh) all leave us this year. Moving to pastures new are Miss Liz Dyer (D&T) and Miss Katie Griffiths (Curriculum Resources Assistant). We would also like to thank Miss Sian Jeffreys who has covered maternity leave for the last year, Mrs Pauline Roberts in English and Mr James Cooney (D&T Technician).

It's been a particularly busy recruitment period and to date we have appointed the following: Mr Mike Cavendish and Dr Scott Reasons (Maths), Miss Rebecca Higgins (Biology), Miss Cathryn Wilkes and Mr Gareth Thomas (ICT), Miss Marese Cocoran (Geography), Miss Philippa Rogers (D&T), Mrs Yvonne Evans (Welsh), Mr Simon Dolbear (Business/Economics), Miss Stacey Boyle and Miss Rachel Hughes (Cover Supervisors), Mr Peter Brazel (D&T Workshop Technician) and Ms Sali Billingham as Curriculum Resources Assistant.

SCHOOL RULES

At this time of the year, it is useful to remind you of school rules and expectations. Please refer to Pupil Planners, the Home School Agreement and the Information to Parents booklet for general rules and procedures. These documents will be issued in the first few days of September.

Parents and children are reminded that the school **cannot** take any responsibility for mobile phones. Should any damage or

theft occur to a mobile phone in school, the school is **NOT** insured for such loss or damage. Therefore bringing a mobile phone onto the premises is done at the family's own risk. We would like to highlight that we do not undertake to investigate/search for mobile phones if they are lost. We advise you to check whether the mobile is covered under your insurance. We advise that children do not bring mobile phones to school for this reason.

However we do allow mobiles to be on the premises (providing they remain switched off) if parents deem this necessary for the journey to and from school, but they must be kept out of sight and in a school bag. We do not allow these mobiles to be used in school hours **at all** in **any** circumstances.

Would you like to be more involved with the school?

If so, please contact Mr Wainwright regarding the Accessibility Users' Group as part of the school's Disability/Equality Scheme.

Contact Mrs Baglow regarding the Catering Focus Group.

The PTA are continually looking for new members with fresh ideas and input, so please contact the school.

SMART UPDATE

Year 7 have now completed the new SMART programme and, we're pleased to report that the scheme is a massive success. The programme has equipped our students with the skills, techniques and attitudes to get much more out of their education and feedback from pupils, staff and parents is overwhelmingly positive.

Over the course of the year pupils have been introduced to Multiple

Intelligences and every pupil in year 7 has identified their individual strengths, weaknesses and techniques to improve. They have all been introduced to a range of thinking methods which are not just being used in SMART classes, but across the whole curriculum. Having spent time in Library before Christmas all our year 7 pupils have produced some fantastic projects which they have gone away and researched themselves. In the last term pupils have been building on these skills in a variety of activities including building and racing pirate ships, designing experiments to melt jelly in

the fastest times and building and redesigning island theme parks to be as eco-friendly as possible!

Next year, the pupils who have completed the SMART programme will not have any individual 'SMART' lessons on their timetable, but many of the skills, techniques and vocabulary that they've learned this year will be used in their other subjects, to allow them to continue to build and develop their ability to learn independently.

The SMART website at www.olchfa-smart.org.uk contains links and activities for pupils to access outside the classroom, but that link back to skills and topics studied in class. We're also keen to hear feedback from parents, and there is a page on the same site to take comments, and for you to ask questions. Please do use it, as we'd love to hear your feedback on what you think your children have got out of the SMART programme.

YEAR 11 VALIDATE

Year 11 students will have their ID photographs taken on the 17th September in order that they may have their Validate card. This is for age identification when they reach 16 years.

CHARITY WALK

We were very fortunate with the weather for the charity walk to Mumbles and back this year. To date over £6,000 has been raised for children's charities that the pupils have chosen. Thank you to all who have supported the pupils in their fundraising.

INSET DATES

2007 / 2008

4th and 5th

September

7th January 2008

7th March

27th June

Two further

INSET dates to be confirmed

LOST PROPERTY

Can we remind pupils and parents to make every effort to collect lost property items from the Pupil Welfare Officer. As usual this accumulates to a vast amount of clothing, trainers, shoes and jewellery which has to be disposed of at the end of every term due to lack of storage.

Activities 2007

Once again this year, there is an extensive programme of activities for our pupils (and staff!) to enjoy. These range from trips abroad to EuroDisney, a theatre visit to London, outdoor adventure activities, indoor activities and clubs. For those who do not wish to participate in out of school activities, arrangements have been made for events to take place in school.

Parents ought to be well aware of the options that have been made available to their child (ren) from information sent home. My thanks to Mr Turpin for organising activities and to staff for leading and supporting them.

Routine Vacancies

If you are interested in becoming a Dining Room Assistant, please contact Mrs Baglow on 534304 for further details.

If you are interested in becoming an exam invigilator please contact Mr Helliwell, Exams Officer on 534309. Training will be provided.

The Parental Calendar will be issued to pupils early in September. More information will also be available on our website from September e.g. school holidays / academic calendar / PTA meetings etc.

World Challenge Expedition to Venezuela

Over 20 of our pupils and four of our staff are currently in Venezuela on a World Challenge Expedition. This month-long expedition involves community work and, depending on choice, trekking into the Andes or the jungle! So far, reports have been positive from the team, despite the tropical heat and interesting wildlife!

SCHOOL TERMS AND HOLIDAY DATES 2007—2008

| | | | <i>Mid Term Holidays</i> | | | |
|--------------------|---|------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Term | Term Begins | Term ends | Begins | Ends | Term begins | Term ends |
| Autumn 2007 | Tuesday 4th Sept | Friday 26th October | Monday 29th October | Friday 2nd November | Monday 5th November | Friday 21st December |
| Spring 2008 | Monday 7th January | Friday 8th January | Monday 11th February | Friday 15th February | Monday 18th February | Thursday 20th March |
| Summer 2008 | Monday 7th April | Friday 23rd May | Monday 26th May | Friday 30th May | Monday 2nd June | Wednesday 23rd July |
| BANK | 21st March 2008 — Good Friday / 24th March 2008—Easter Monday / | | | | | |
| HOLIDAYS | 5th May—May Day / 26th May 2008—Spring Bank Holiday | | | | | |
| INSET DAYS | 4th and 5th September / 7th January / 7th March / 27th June | | | | | |
| | Two further INSET dates to be confirmed | | | | | |