

OLCHFA SCHOOL—YSGOL YR OLCHFA

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FEBRUARY
2008

SPRING TERM NEWSLETTER

PARENTS/TEACHERS

ASSOCIATION

It is with sadness and disappointment that we inform parents that the Parents/Teachers Association is being wound-up. Over the last few years, membership of the Parents/ Teachers Association (previously Home School Association) has dwindled considerably, and despite frequent requests, new members have not been forthcoming. The current membership of the PTA is 3 parents and it is not feasible for them to keep the Association going and raise funds for such a large school.

Over the years, the PTA has been very successful in organising fundraising events for the benefit of the pupils. The PTA has, for example, financed the purchase of 3 minibuses, bought various IT equipment, and supported the IT

Lease for a number of years.

We therefore give official notice that unless a number of committed parents come forward to re-launch the PTA by **20th March 2008** the current PTA will be wound up.

The PTA has also for many years successfully run the school shop. We appreciate that the school shop is a valued service to the pupils and we are therefore making every effort to retain this service. It is hoped that the Charity Committee or the Young Enterprise Committee will be able to organise and run the school shop.

However, through our School Improvement Plan, and in particular the area of parental engagement, the school is keen to promote and encourage parents to be involved. Mr Gardner, Deputy Headteacher will be setting up various Parent Forums in

due course and further details will be published and issued. Should you wish to express an interest in these Parent Forums, please contact the school by letter or email.

We would like to put on record our sincere thanks to parents and staff who have been involved with the HSA / PTA over the years, for their hard work and commitment in raising funds. We hope that in future years, it may be possible to resurrect the PTA, but this of course is depends entirely on you as parents.

For Information

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

www.eteach.com

Eisteddfod —2008

The Eisteddfod will be held in two sessions this year, not to disrupt the GCSE moderation and Drama practical lessons. Year 8 Eisteddfod will take place on the morning of 29th February and Year 7 on the morning of the 3rd March. A variety of competitions have been organised and pupils are working hard to practice for these. Pupils in the Llewellyn House will be allowed to wear green jumpers and a daffodil as their emblem and pupils in Owain House will wear red jumpers and a leek being their emblem.

GCSE Drama Rehearsals

A warm invitation is extended to parents to the GCSE Drama dress rehearsal which will be held on 10th and 11th March commencing at 6.30pm until approximately 9 pm. This is an excellent opportunity to see the quality of the students' practical drama examinations. We hope to see you there!

Kevin Head, Head of Drama

Annual Presentation Evening

This will be held on the 18th March at 7pm in the Brangwyn Hall. Our guest speaker this year is Stuart Williams, former Head Boy of Olchfa in 1990/91. Stuart is currently the Managing Director of Emap Metro and is responsible for the film and music division of Emap plc.

KS3 Revision Guides – Year 9

The Science Department is able to obtain study guides specifically for the KS3 Syllabus at a discounted price of £3.00 (RRP £5.99). Whilst it is not essential that these are purchased, previous students have found them very useful when revising for end of KS3 exams.

If you would like to purchase this guide, please forward a cheque made payable to "Olchfa School" to Mrs M Daniel who is available at breaktimes in Room 14 (Monday and Thursday Week A / Tuesday and Friday Week B).

Please put your child's name, form and Science Group on the back of the cheque.

This is the only opportunity you will have to purchase this book through the school and the deadline for requests has been extended to 7th March 2008.

Dr F M Paton, KS3 Science Co-ordinator

Olchfa's Annual Excursion to Alton Towers

Our annual trip to Alton Towers is scheduled for the 15th of March, details of which have been issued to pupils via Form Tutors.

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.

CATERING AND CLEANING AT OLCHFA

During the past year, the school has been working with Panache Consultancy to steer us through the tendering process for the catering and cleaning services, previously provided by the LEA. The process is now complete which has enabled us to successfully appoint Midshires Catering Services Limited and Park Cleaning Services Limited as our preferred contractors.

Both contractors commenced on the 18th of February and I'm sure your child will report on the improvement of provision/services in due course. We are excited about these new arrangements and look forward to working with Midshires and Park Cleaning Services.

Healthy Schools Scheme

Olchfa has already achieved an award for Phase I of the Swansea Healthy Schools Scheme. The school will be broadening this initiative of leading a healthy lifestyle throughout the school in various ways through the curriculum. Midshires Catering have also given an undertaking that all food served in the school will be freshly prepared, using local produce when available. They will embrace the National Nutritional Standards for School Lunches to ensure that meals are prepared with healthy eating in mind. Midshires have stated that they will aim to provide a menu that gives maximum choice for all including vegetarians, dietary needs of both religious and ethnic groups.

Health and Safety – Hygiene

In an effort to make our school a healthier environment, Antibacterial Foam Hand Dispensers will be installed during half term in the Main Hall, Drama Hall and Medical room. We are trialing these areas in the first instance as the area where food is served. Pupils and staff will be asked to clean their hands prior to going to the food counter. The Cutan foam kills 99.9% of many common germs. It has been dermatologically tested, hypoallergenic, non-tainting and

non-toxic.

As parents will appreciate infection control is difficult in such a large organisation, and we hope that parents will appreciate the school's efforts in this aspect. We also hope that pupils will appreciate and respect our efforts and use the dispensers appropriately.

INSET FOR 2008

7th March

27th June

Correction to the Governors

Annual Report to Parents

The Maths GCSE entry printed in the Report does not include those Year 11 pupils who sat their GCSE a year early. Thus the figures should read:

Entries	295	(not 265)
A*	43	(not 17)
A	46	(not 42)
A*-C	223	(not 192)
%A*-C	75.6%	(not 72.8%)
A*-G	294	(not 263)
%A*-G	99.7%	

Uniform

A reminder to parents and pupils that polo shirts may be worn after the Easter holidays. Polo shirts can be purchased from **the school shop which will be open during the Easter holidays on the 4th April between 10am and 1pm.**

Litter

The school has a recurring problem with litter. Despite having numerous bins, our caretakers spend many hours litter picking during the week, which is not a good use of their time. The school also receives complaints from members of the community who state that they witness pupils dropping litter on their way home from school.

By the end of February all year groups will have received a presentation during Assemblies from an Enforcement Officer from the "Streetforce Campaign". These presentations are to inform pupils that the City and County of Swansea will be issuing spot fines to anyone, including minors, seen dropping litter. The school will also be issuing sanctions to pupils who are seen dropping litter on school grounds. Whilst we try to tackle this matter in school, could we also encourage parents to talk to their child(ren) about disposing litter appropriately.

Plea to Parents/Guardians

Once again we ask that parents/guardians complete the data information sheets that are issued at the beginning of the year and return to the school. These sheets are extremely important as it is vital that we have up to date contact details for pupils with regards to correct parent/guardian names, addresses and contact numbers. In the event of an emergency, or your child is unwell it is vital that the school is able to contact a parent immediately. We have had several incidences recently where we have been unable to contact parents, sometimes for a number of hours, which is stressful for your child and staff. Should family circumstances/contacts change during the year, please send a note or email the details to the school.

Pupil Welfare Officer

We say goodbye to Mrs Julie Jenkins, our Pupil Welfare Officer at the end of February. Mrs Jenkins has been with us for three years and we thank her for her services during this time. We wish Mrs Jenkins well in her new venture. We extend a warm welcome to Ms Rebecca Williams who has been appointed as our new Pupil Welfare Officer and wish her every success in her

CALLING HOME

We would remind parents and pupils that the use of mobile phones to call or text home during the school day is not permitted. Pupils who are unwell should report to the Pupil Welfare Officer who will then call home if necessary. For any other messages pupil can use a phone in Room 42.

AWARDS FOR OLCHFA SCHOOL

We are delighted to report that Olchfa has won a Welsh Secondary Schools Association (WSSA) Award for its work with “Transition KS2—KS3: A Case Study of Collaboration Between Schools in the Olchfa Cluster” submitted by Mrs Johne Cowley, Assistant Headteacher. Congratulations to all Olchfa staff involved in the Transition work, and also to staff in our feeder Primary Schools. This is a prestigious award which we are extremely proud of.

Olchfa also received a Certificate of Special Commendation from the WSSA for the entry entitled “A Case Study of the Exciting and Innovating SMART Skills Based Curriculum Introduced in Olchfa in 2007.” Parents of pupils in Years 7 and 8 will be aware of our SMART skills based curriculum which is extremely popular with our pupils. Plans are in hand for the SMART programme to be rolled out to further year groups in due course. Olchfa staff and pupils have undertaken many presentations to various Swansea and Welsh schools who are interested in the programme, and attendees at those presentations have been extremely impressed at our pupils articulate presentations and discussions regarding SMART lessons.

MANY CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL

Olchfa – Herzongenried Exchange

Olchfa is extremely proud of its exchange with the Intergrierte Gesamtschule Mannheim Herzogenried since 1983. 25 years is a long time and we are grateful to the staff that have been involved in organising and participating in the exchange during this time.

The exchange developed out of a football competition. In 1983 a very young Herr Rainer Bade brought a football team from Herzogenried to play against an Olchfa football team.

Herr Bade has remained the chief organiser since 1983. His colleagues, Herr Hans Autz and Frau Christine Jonietz-Ubl have assisted with the exchange for many years.

Frau Margot Baumann also spent many years accompanying the German pupils to Swansea and was responsible with Mrs Anne Wookey for the institution of the very successful work experience programme for the sixth form students of both schools.

Students have the linguistic skills necessary to benefit from the work experience which takes place simultaneously with the normal school exchange. We would like to put on record our thanks to the companies who host the work experience students.

Since the establishment of the exchange, hundreds of Olchfa students have benefited from participating in terms of linguistic and personal development.

I would also wish to thank the host parents in Swansea and Mannheim for their commitment in hosting students during the exchange, which would not be able to take place without the support of families on both sides.

Congratulations to you all.

Hugh Davies

Headteacher

Pupil Achievements

It is not our intention to select certain pupils in this article, merely to highlight some of the activities our pupils are involved in. If you have any information of this nature, please e-mail to Olchfa.School@swansea-edunet.gov.uk

We like to report on some pupil achievements outside school, and these are some examples. Heather McClean has been selected to represent Girl Guiding Cymru at an International Event in San Francisco in July of this year.

Kristian Jones (Year 12) has been selected for the England Schools team to compete in the World Schools Orienteering Championships in Scotland in April. Congratulations Kristian and good luck.

Congratulations are extended to our Urdd Swimmers. The team competed in the National Urdd Swimming Finals in January and did extremely well, winning the Freestyle Relay Girls Year 9 and 10, and the Medley Relay Girls Year 9 and 10. Individual competitors did well in their individual races – well done to Sarah Falconer, Joe Tucker, Rachel Hatcher, Bronwen Harry, Laura Hatcher, Sian Davies, Chloe Preece, Iona Evans and Megan Wyatt.

EVENING CLASSES AT OLCHFA. Courses are for 10 weeks and start week commencing 7th April. Enrolment will take place on the first evening of each class. Please contact Mrs Jones on 534317 for more details

Monday and Tuesday	Art	To be confirmed	
Wednesday	Yoga	7 pm - 9 pm	Main Hall
Thursday	Line Dancing Beginners	7 pm - 8 pm	Main Hall
	Line Dancing Intermediates	8 pm—9.30 pm	Main Hall

SCHOOL TERMS AND HOLIDAYS					2007—2008	
Term	Term Begins	Term ends	<i>Mid Term Holidays</i>		Term begins	Term ends
			Begins	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 February	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 HOLIDAYS	21st March 2008 — Good Friday / 24th March 2008—Easter Monday / 5th May—May Day / 26th May 2008—Spring Bank Holiday					
INSET DAYS	7th March / 27th June					