

14th December 2015

Dear Parents & Carers,

A very busy last few weeks of term

It has been as busy as ever since my last newsletter. As the term comes towards the end, we have had mock exams, Progress Evenings, sports fixtures, rehearsals for the Winter Showcase and Christmas Assembly, and, of course, the Inter-House Carol Competition.

Picture the scene for the latter: the BFS playground. Five hundred staff & students across twenty forms, and gathered into their four house groups. Five staff judging. One student trumpeter to give everyone the starting note. And then a series of renditions of carols, of, er, varying quality. All very BFS, and a tremendous amount of fun had by all in the end.

However: we're not yet done with the term – please take note of all the things that are happening this week.

This week

Tuesday

- Christmas lunch – as per the letter that went home a few weeks back, deadline for paying for this was last Friday; students not partaking need to bring a packed lunch for this day as the canteen will only be serving Christmas lunches
- Winter Showcase – the 8.00pm performance is now SOLD OUT, but there are tickets left for the 6.30pm show. Tickets are available in the school office & on the door.

Wednesday

- "Christmas tree" themed MUFTI - £2 per student - funds raised will be split between the Forest of Marston Vale & Friends the BFS
- Harry Potter trip to Warner Brothers Studios London

Thursday

- Christmas Assembly – St Paul's Church – from 2pm - all friends, family & ex-students of BFS welcome
- Note – after the assembly ALL students will return to school, and school will end at **3.30pm** on this day

Friday

- Lessons as normal, up-to-and-including period 4
- Lunch will run from 12.50 until 1.40pm
- Students will then return to form groups for registration, and be released from 1.45pm.

Progress Evenings – Year 10

A heads-up to the families of our Year 10s that there will be a Progress Evening on Thursday 14th January. Attendance at this is vital – it will be the first proper opportunity to discuss your child's performance in their GCSE courses. We have timed this to come just after their first grade sheet, to make it particularly useful. **All our families promise to attend Progress Evenings in the Home-School Agreement** – at last week's evening for Year 11s we had almost 100% turnout, and we hope to see the same for our Year 10s.

Our new grade sheets in Years 7, 8 and 9

This coming week will see grade sheets coming home for Years 7, 8, 9 and 10. For all but the Year 10s, **these will be very different to what people will have seen before.**

Alongside every other school in the country we are now reporting on students without the old, somewhat unreliable, "levels" – and as you will have seen in the letter from Mr Donald recently, we have adopted a different approach, tying in with the "knowledge Maps" that are the basis of our Key Stage 3 curriculum.

We have spent a lot of time researching different ways of best presenting information on students' learning, so whilst we are confident that we are approaching things in the right way, we are also certain that there will be lots of room to improve things! I would be grateful if you could take an especially careful look at your child's report this coming week, and let us know what you make of the information we have provided you with. Feedback – positive or negative – is the only way we'll keep improving; Mr Donald and I look forward to hearing from you.

That's all from me for now – I will write again to everyone before the term ends.

All the best,

Mark Lehain.

Key dates

15 th December	Christmas Dinner at school Christmas Showcase – The Place Theatre, 6.30pm & 8.00pm
16 th December	Christmas tree themed MUFTI!; £2 per student (proceeds to charity) Year 7 Harry Potter trip
17 th December	Christmas Assembly - St. Paul's Church, all welcome – 2.00pm – 3.00pm (NOTE – students will return to school afterwards; school ends 3.30pm)
18 th December	End of term – school finishes at 1.45pm
4 th January	Staff training day
5 th January	Start of Spring Term – 8.25am as usual; week ONE on timetable
14 th January	Year 10 Progress Evening – from 5.30pm School finishes at 3.30pm
15 th – 19 th February	Half Term