

Junior News

THE PORTSMOUTH
GRAMMAR SCHOOL



Dear Parents,

I am very pleased to report that we experienced an excellent start to the new school year. Pupils and staff all appear very happy; well refreshed and full of enthusiasm for the many different challenges and experiences of the year ahead. Everyone seems to have settled into the new

routines quickly and I have been delighted to be surrounded by so many happy faces. The new year groups are impressing us all with the way they are adapting to the fresh challenges that are presented to them by being promoted up a year. We hope very much that you too are experiencing happy children, however, if this is not the case please do not hesitate in informing us of the situation so that we can help in any way needed. So many of our new pupils settle in well because of the wonderful welcome they are given by their buddies and the families of the buddies. I am extremely grateful in particular to those families who have taken the trouble to meet with the new children and their parents over the holidays, welcoming them so warmly into the PGJS family. It was noticeable on the first day when the new children arrived that as soon as they spotted their buddies their faces changed from a look of slight anxiety to one of relief and happiness!

Although term for the children began last Monday, it began for the staff the previous week when they attended two days of In-service Educational Training (INSET) designed to further teachers' understanding of 'well being' and the 'Six Thinking Hats' strategy. The Six Thinking Hats is a strategy designed to teach children how to reflect on their thinking and to recognise that different thinking is required in different learning situations. Although the phrase, 'put your thinking hat on' is metaphorical, the children do love wearing the different hats when invited to solve problems. When you visit the school you will no doubt see the six coloured hats prominently displayed in the classrooms. Each hat represents a different way of thinking: white hat thinking focuses on the information available and needed; black hat thinking examines the difficulties and problems associated with a topic; yellow hat thinking focuses on benefits and values; red hat thinking looks at a topic from the point of view of emotions, feelings and hunches; green hat thinking requires imaginative, creative and lateral thinking about a topic and blue hat thinking focuses on reflection, metacognition (thinking about the thinking that is required), and the need to manage the thinking process. The staff found the two INSET days most worthwhile and look forward, over the year, to putting into practice much of what they learnt.

At the commencement of the two INSET days all the staff, academic, support and admin from across the whole school gathered together to be updated on key information. We were delighted to learn that the new science block had been successfully completed; this new facility will undoubtedly provide a first class educational facility for our

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aspiring scientists. We also learnt of the refurbishment that has taken place within the Junior School that has further enhanced our facilities. We were pleased to be informed as to how our GCSE and 'A' level pupils had performed. I was delighted to learn of the excellent performance of our former Junior School pupils. Twenty two of those pupils achieving 3 or more A grades at 'A' level had attended the Junior School as indeed had thirty three of the pupils who gained all A grades or A*'s at GCSE. I was particularly thrilled to hear of Oscar Cunningham's 5 A* grades at 'A' level (I so clearly remember teaching him maths when he was in Year Three and thinking that he had quite exceptional ability) and of Matthew Gray and James Scott-Brown's 4 A* grades at 'A' level who were also quite exceptional students. We were especially pleased to hear that former pupils, Anna Bazely and Kieran Keel achieved a clean sweep of A* grades at GCSE (nine for Anna and ten for Kieran), a tremendous achievement. Equally pleasing were the results of those pupils who did not always find learning a natural and easy process when they were in the Junior School but have gone on to achieve excellent results at 'A' level or GCSE.

We aim for all learning in the Junior School to be a truly enjoyable experience and you will notice as the year progresses that the learning experiences often involve special events such as going on educational visits or having expert visitors running workshops in the school. Year Five have already been on a visit when on Tuesday they were launched straight into the new term with a walk to the dockyard and an hour's workshop based within the fantastic education facilities available to us there. Each class, ably assisted by volunteer parents, braved the rather inclement weather to find globes, navigational equipment, spices, jewels, flags, photos, maps and a never-ending supply of fascinating objects to ignite their curiosity for all things explorer-themed. Claire, our guide through this workshop, gave some background on the whys and wherefores behind sixteenth century exploration, explaining rudimentary navigation techniques and demonstrating methods using original instruments. These included a rather magical-looking Chinese early compass, a cross-staff and the slightly later invention of the sextant. After revising how to find latitude and longitude, each of the five groups was given a box of goodies and a position to find on the globe. This was where their brave band of intrepid explorers had been washed up. Where were they? What had they found? What was the climate? Which new animals and plants did they see? This cross-curricular approach with real hands-on, practical activities led to much discussion, analysis and deduction. Reporting back, the children were given information from all parts of the world, from Africa to the Caribbean and Australia. The final task was to choose three gifts for Queen Elizabeth (aka Mrs Giles, Townsend, Minall, Jennings and Webber(?)) from the array of artifacts, with the hope that they would suitably impress

Ctd...

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their monarch and lead to a reward of land and titles. Much fun was had at these presentations, with pearls, vanilla and silk proving particularly popular with Queen Giles. I wonder what the other teachers/monarchs favoured and rewarded?

We have enjoyed those events that have taken place this week involving contact with parents; the 'Welcome' coffee mornings for new parents, the two curriculum information evenings and the two Cathedral services. Both Cathedral services had the theme of new beginnings; a highlight of the whole school service was the Year Five performance of the song 'High Hopes'. The service for the Reception pupils was a welcome service; welcoming them to the school and wishing them a happy and successful journey as they progress through the school. I have no doubt that in twelve and fourteen years time we will be celebrating their successes at GCSE, 'A' level and in the IB, (a recent innovation which no doubt will be well established by then).

I would like to conclude my letter, firstly, by thanking parents for sending their children back to school looking so smart in their school uniforms with appropriate hair styles and adornments and, secondly, by encouraging as many families as possible to come along to the Barn Dance that is taking place in the small quad on Sunday September 19th: do come along it is a truly fun and enjoyable occasion for the whole family when mums and dads can dance with their children. I still have a very fond memory of dancing with my son when he was in Key Stage One!

I wish you all a very happy weekend, please note that the Saturday morning sports programme for pupils in KS2 does not commence until next Saturday—this Saturday is a football and netball INSET morning when all the staff will be put through their paces—if I am limping on Monday, you will know why!

Philippa Foster

INFORMATION AND DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

PUPIL PHOTOGRAPHS - IMPORTANT REMINDER FOR ALL PARENTS

On Wednesday 15th and Thursday 16th Sept all pupils in JS will have a special individual portrait photograph taken by a professional photographer. Parents will then be sent a letter with image thumbnails and instructions on how to order copies if required. Please note that Year 3&4 pupils will have their photographs taken on Wednesday so they will be in school uniform and not games kit, whilst Year 5&6 will have their photographs taken on Thursday for the same reason. Reception, Year 1 and 2 will have their photographs taken on Thursday. For these photographs please ensure all pupils have their full school uniform with them on that day and in particular, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils must have their red jumper with them for their photograph.

AUTUMN CO-CURRICULAR PROGRAMME

Please note that the following activities will commence the week beginning 13th September:

All strings and brass groups; Vivaldi and Corelli;
The Brass Band; Ballroom and Latin Dancing (Years 5/6 - spaces available); Speech and Drama with Mrs Hague.
Ballet with Leanne Ramsey has already begun and will continue on Mondays for all year groups with some spaces available.

ALL OTHER CLUBS

A letter detailing the clubs for this term will be coming home with your child on the afternoon of Monday 13th September. Please complete and return the slip the next day, but, at the latest, by the **morning** of Thursday 16th September. If you are applying for tennis lessons this slip should also be returned and tennis must be included as one of your child's choices on the overall club form. These clubs will begin from Monday 27th September and run for 8 weeks in total (3 weeks, half term and then 5 weeks, leaving the last week free).

CHOIR CLUB

Years 3/4 and 5/6 choir clubs will begin on Monday 20th September.

CONTACT

If you have any queries or would like your child to have information on Ballet classes or Ballroom and Latin lessons, please do not hesitate to email Mrs Pippa Giles on p.giles@pgs.org.uk.

POLITE REMINDERS TO ALL PARENTS - Safety around the school

Museum Road gate

Please note that there is strictly no pedestrian access via Museum Road gates at any time. The access from Museum Road is for vehicles only and parents and for the safety and security of all, this gate must not be used as a pedestrian entry or exit point at any time. All pupils, parents and visitors to the school must use the Main Arch pedestrian access on the High Street.

Drop-off and collection outside the Main Arch

Please note that the lay-by outside the Main arch on the High Street is for coaches and delivery only. For the safety of all and the smooth flow of traffic in this very busy area, there should be no cars pulling in to drop off or collect pupils from this point. We would ask that all parents who wish to drop off or collect children without parking and leaving their car, find a safe place to pull in either on Museum Road or further down the High Street, thereby allowing pupils to still walk from car to school without needing to cross a road.

End of school collection and supervision of pupils

We are delighted to welcome so many parents onto the main site at the end of school to collect children but please could I remind all parents that the Senior School timetabled day does not end until 1550 and therefore it is essential that there is no unnecessary noise or disturbances to the lessons taking place in these areas. Children who have been collected from the Junior School must be supervised and we would ask that any parents or children who are waiting for the Senior School end of day at 1550, wait in the area adjacent to the Junior School Quad or sit quietly on the benches around the quad. No pupils should be wandering freely, playing on the Senior School Quad or making unnecessary noise at this time.

Thank you for your support and understanding with the key aspects of school life and please contact me should you require clarification or further information.

INFORMATION AND DATES FOR YOUR DIARY Ctd...

HOUSE PICNICS—FRI 17TH SEPTEMBER

All KS2 pupils will need packed lunches for the House picnics on Fri 17th September.

JSA BARN DANCE - Sunday 19th September

Tickets are now on sale for the annual JSA Barn Dance. Bring the whole family along for a fun afternoon. There will be a great band, Squinty McGinty and an excellent caller guaranteed to get everyone up dancing. A bar will be available for anyone in need of refreshment! Snacks will also be available. Cost of tickets is £6.00, (this includes a complimentary drink, dancing and snacks) under 5s go free. Let's see if we can make this year even better than last year. Hopefully it will be in the Junior school quad but don't worry about the weather as we have use of the DRT is its wet. Hope to see you there.

OPEN MORNING

Saturday 25th September 0930-1230

Each year our school Open Morning is a special opportunity for current and prospective new parents to visit the school and as part of the very busy and exciting morning, all pupils from Years Two, Three, Four, Five and Six will be performing or participating in one or more of our programmed events. A more detailed letter will be sent home nearer the date, but at this stage we would ask that you place the date in your diary that if your child is in Year 2-6 inclusive they will be involved in an activity or demonstration at some point during the morning. As a current parent, you are all most warmly invited to enjoy looking round both the Junior and Senior Schools on this day and we look forward to seeing you then. Please note that on Friday 24th September as part of our Open Morning preparations within the school, the Junior School day ends at 12 noon for all our pupils and that there are no school lunches on this day

PHOTOGRAPHS

Photographs from a number of Junior School events including class and sports teams can be found at <http://rossyoung.co.uk/pgs2010/>.

MENU WEEK 2

PARENT HELPERS: All parent helpers need to have current CRB clearance through the School.

Name: (please print)

Child's name(s)

I can help regularly* Occasionally* Telephone number*

* please delete as applicable.

All forms to be returned to Mrs E. Day via the Junior School Office or to Mrs. Kent on the Upper Junior School site. Please use the black post boxes outside the Junior School Office.

PUPILS' ACHIEVEMENTS

Congratulations to **Mia Glover** (4G) for gaining her RYA Stage 1 award.

Congratulations to **Caroline Clayton** (6J) for achieving her Grade 1 Piano.

BADGES

RED BADGE

Congratulations to **Florence Bishop** for gaining her Red Badge.

BLUE BADGE

Congratulations to **Philip Macanovic** for gaining his Blue Badge.

HEADTEACHER'S AWARDS

The following Head Teacher's Awards were awarded: **Philip Macanovic** for excellent progress in English last year, **Clemmie Gumm** for super effort and progress last year across the curriculum, **Emma Priory** for excellent effort in mathematics and English last year, **Oli-ver McTear** for good mathematical thinking, **Raunak Mukherjee** for a superb homework using algebra

BEACH CLEANING - Sunday 19th September

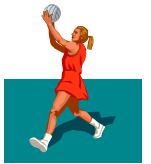
Hayling Island, 9.45am start.

Calling all members of our school community. Grab your coat, gloves and wellies and join our gang. Would love to see any beach cleaning novices. Join the team, do your bit for our environment, have a chat and enjoy the fresh air!



SPORT

SATURDAY SPORT



NO HILSEA GAMES THIS SATURDAY AS THERE IS A STAFF INSET SESSION

NO FIXTURES

WEEKDAY SPORT

POLITE NOTICE

There are occasions when weekday games sessions have to be cancelled even when the weather would appear to be fine. We strongly recommend that you make it a weekly habit to telephone the games line number on Wednesdays and Thursdays. The date is always stated on these occasions to ensure that there can be no misunderstanding. It would be appreciated if you could avoid ringing the Junior School Office for this information to leave the office free to deal with other communications.

NO FIXTURES

ANSWERPHONE SYSTEM

In the event of uncertainty due to inclement weather please check above sports arrangements using the answerphone system. Please phone the School on Saturday morning from 8.00 a.m. On weekday games days please phone from 1.30 p.m. **The number to ring is 02392 364266.** In **EMERGENCIES ONLY** please ring the following number: **07738 958314**

BRASS BAND TRIP TO DISNEYLAND PARIS

It was a real pleasure to see children from Year Three to Year Six mixing well and encouraging each other. They were all supportive of each other and helped other members of their group conquer their fears of rides or heights.

Dr. Saunders

The children were so well behaved - much better than my school!

Teacher from Wolverhampton

An American Director of Studies commented on how well the children sat for the parade. He thought it was amazing that we captured the children's interest in brass so young and how well they played.

'Don't touch my equipment Mr Brown' when Mr Brown tried to move a music stand for Harry Tyacke!

Antonio Lopez, stage manager

The Pirates of the Caribbean was the best ride, because it had water, characters, skeletons and chains - cool!

Finley Howe-Walsh

Space Mountain was awesome! I've never been on a rollercoaster before and had no idea what to expect! It was really dark, jolting all over the place through the asteroids, super nova and strobe lights.

Ben Priory

After the ride, Ben declared he would never do that again, but by the end of the day wanted to go back!

Mr Holloway's highlight was watching the band play. He felt we were so privileged to play on the Disney stage and it would be something we would remember for the rest of our lives.

Mr Brown's best part was seeing everyone enjoying themselves and all the children and adults together as one big happy family.

Stewart Jack's favourite part was buying a teddy, a gun and two key rings. He also loved the Pirates of the Caribbean ride. He thought he would never go on such a scary ride.

Naeve Molho thought the Eiffel Tower was the best part as the view was amazing from so high in the sky.



SABBATICAL TO UGANDA

After a year of fund-raising for Musequality that included concerts, a sponsored Practice-a-thon and a 500 mile bike ride to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the String Scheme, Head of Strings Mrs Jane Ingamells went on sabbatical leave in the Summer Term, travelling to Uganda to set up a String Scheme at the Tender Talents Secondary School in Kasangati, 10km north of Kampala.



The first things that struck me when I arrived at Entebbe Airport were the heat and the glorious colour! Being on the Equator, the landscape is very tropical, with dusty red earth and green banana trees. The roads are lined with brightly painted shops and small mud-brick houses, some with goats or cows tethered outside, and people are everywhere - sitting by the side of the road, cooking, walking, riding on bicycles and mopeds (*boda-bodas*), in minibus-taxis (*matatus*) or cars. Kampala, the capital city, is built across several steep hills and the traffic is simply chaotic - anything goes and accidents are a daily occurrence. Main roads are surfaced (with many deep potholes) but side roads and roads outside Kampala are simply dusty tracks. With the main road to

Kasangati still under construction I travelled to school by minicab ('*special hire*') but for shorter trips I took a *matatu* or rode pillion on a *boda* - an exciting, if rather dangerous way to get around. Nobody wore a crash helmet even though, as in the UK, it's illegal to ride without one!

Stentor had donated fifteen violins for the project, which was sponsored by Musequality, and the first task was to get them released from Customs where they had been impounded. This cost a lot of money - luckily I didn't have to pay - and took several days of negotiation by the Director of the Kampala Music School, Simon Yiga. Eventually we were able to take the violins to Tender Talents, a mixed day/boarding school with an emphasis on the Performing Arts, where many of the boarders are Aids orphans or victims of the ongoing conflict in the north of the country. In Uganda only primary education is free, and many secondary pupils have to take years off due to lack of school fees - plus if they don't pass the end of year exams they must repeat the whole year. This meant that although I was teaching the equivalent of Years 7 and 8, the ages ranged from 12 to 17! However, the enthusiasm of the pupils more than made up for their late start and several of them made amazing progress in a short space of time. The boarders organised a practice club (despite having a day that began at 5.00am and finished at 10.45pm!) and on my last day the violinists, choir and dancers performed to an audience of parents, friends and members of the local Rotary Club. I presented the Director of the school, Frank Katoola, with a Portsmouth F.C shirt and cap, which he promised to wear at all subsequent violin concerts, and he presented me in turn with a traditional Ugandan drum.

During my stay I also helped Frances Attwood, the Head of Strings at Kampala Music School, with her violin teaching at the Jenny & Jessie Primary School in Zzana, to the south of the city, and I visited Kikaaya College (the partner school of PGS), to give a presentation about the violin. On days off I visited Entebbe with its tropical Botanical Gardens, and Jinja, the location of the source of the River Nile, as well as spending time in the various craft markets and shops of Kampala. I enjoyed eating the local food - *matoke* (cooked green bananas), *ugali* (stiff maize porridge), cassava, yam, pumpkin, beans and groundnut sauce - as well as fresh pineapple, mango and paw-paw.

I learned a great deal during my stay - although it's impossible to overlook the poverty and hardship suffered by so many people, there is no sense of self-pity, only a desire to improve the situation, and Ugandans are passionate about the value of education. I had a great experience in a beautiful country, and I really hope that one day it will be possible to return.



Mrs Jane Ingamells