

jep/dck

10 December 2010

To all Senior School parents

Dear Parents

And so we come to the end of another quite extraordinary autumn term, in which the pupils' achievements continue to delight and surprise.

Portsmouth Point, enclosed in the end of term mailing, showcases work by pupils and staff, including a splendid sequence of wildlife photographs by Matthew Allen (Year 12).

You will also find a bumper edition of *Horizons*, our termly round-up of news from across the Junior and Senior School. I hope you will find time in the holiday to enjoy savouring the many highlights of an excellent term, amongst which was our production of the musical *Sweet Charity* at the Kings Theatre involving nearly 100 pupils in cast and crew.

Another memorable event was the formal opening of the Bristow-Clavell Science Centre in November by Mrs Heather Bristow, wife of Alan (OP). As guests and visitors arrived, they expressed their amazement at the creativity of the space we now enjoy for science. As they departed, however, all they could talk about was the intellectual buzz generated by the pupils demonstrating experiments on the three floors of the new building. As ever, our pupils are our finest ambassadors, and fast becoming our finest scientists too, it seems.

It has been good to enjoy a full and productive week, uninterrupted by snow, in the run-up to the end of term. May I thank parents again for their forbearance and support during the closure of the school last week.

We bid farewell to a number of individuals this term. Mr Terry Stevens has provided excellent teaching in the Chemistry Department, as has Ms Ute Colbey in Modern Languages.

Special tribute must be paid, however, to Mrs Philippa Foster, who has led the Junior School from its inception as a newly-combined school and nursery in September 2000, and been inspirational in her 23 years here to so many PGS pupils, providing the very best of starts to their educational journeys and future lives. There have been some lovely surprise celebrations for Mrs Foster and her husband Robert (OP), including a splendid Junior School Winter Ball on board HMS Warrior 1860. We thank them both for all that they have done to make this such a vibrant family school and look forward to keeping closely in touch in the years to come.

We also say farewell this term to two long-serving governors, Mr Ian Carruthers and Air Chief Marshal Sir Richard Johns (OP) who have both played a significant part in shaping the school's development and sustaining its ethos as a happy and successful school. I am delighted that they have accepted the role of Governor Emeritus in recognition of their service and support.

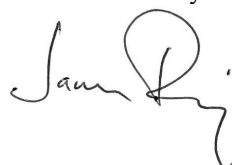
In the New Year we will therefore be welcoming a number of new faces to the Governing Body and staff. Mr Phil Parkinson, a former parent and leading city architect, joins the Governing Body, as does Mrs Fiona Boulton, Headmistress of Guildford High School. Mr Peter Hopkinson, currently Head of Arnold Junior School, becomes the new Head of the Junior School, joining his wife Michaela and their two children who have been at PGS since September. Mr Nicholas Gallop becomes Assistant Head (Head of Sixth Form) and Mr Steve Harris (OP) returns to his *alma mater* as Surmaster. We also welcome Mrs Nadine Alexander-Digby to teach French and Spanish. Term resumes on Wednesday 5 January 2011.

We look forward to a cracking weekend of Old Portmuthian sport on Saturday 11 December at Hilsea Playing Fields, where the extension to the pavilion is nearing completion and to which all are warmly welcome; and to the Old Portmuthian Club dinner that evening when we will be formally opening the new Roger Harris (OP) climbing wall, a facility which has attracted enormous interest from pupils this term.

We say *bon voyage* to all those taking part in the Ski Trip to Killington and the combined Junior and Senior school Family History Trip to Ypres and Bruges, and wish Jessica Lavery (Year 12) the best of luck as she travels to Argentina in the 420 National Youth Sailing Squad to represent Great Britain.

On behalf of the Governors and Staff, may I wish you and your families a peaceful Christmas and a very happy New Year.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian Carruthers', with a stylized flourish at the end.