



## THE PORTSMOUTH GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Headmaster: James Priory MA

*jep/dck*

6 January 2012

To all Senior School parents

Dear Parents

A very Happy New Year to you all.

2012 promises to be an exciting year for us all with the London Olympics on the horizon and the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Year. A special edition of *Portsmouth Point* inspired by the prospect of the Olympic year is currently being written by an editorial team of pupils and should provide us with much food for thought and entertainment when it is published in time for the February half term break.

Here in Portsmouth we shall also, of course, be celebrating the bicentenary of Charles Dickens, born on 7 February 1812. The Dickens birthday lecture, hosted jointly by the school and the Dickens Fellowship, takes place in John Pounds Church on Saturday 4 February, when our guest speaker will be Michael Allen, a leading authority on Dickens' childhood. And later in the year, from 22 June to 1 July, the Portsmouth Festivities will be celebrating Dickens as writer and social reformer in what promises to be a very exciting programme. More details anon!

We are currently gathering news of our pupils' success in achieving places at Oxford and Cambridge. I look forward to sharing this with you as soon as our Sixth Form pupils have received news of the outcome of their pre-Christmas interviews.

In the meantime, I am sure you will wish to join me in congratulating the Chairman of Governors, Brian Larkman (OP), on news of his award of the MBE for services to the Financial Services Industry and the Debt Management Office.

We are also pleased to have received an invitation from the BBC for PGS pupils to participate in *Stargazing Live* at the Spinnaker Tower this month and again to take part in filming for a special edition of *Sky at Night*, when presenters will be visiting the Bristow Clavell Science Centre.

High Street, Portsmouth, Hampshire PO1 2LN Telephone 023 9236 0036 Fax 023 9236 4202

Email [headmaster@pgs.org.uk](mailto:headmaster@pgs.org.uk) Website [www.pgs.org.uk](http://www.pgs.org.uk)

*Founded by William Smith MD, 1732*

Registered with limited liability in England and Wales No. 3401010 Registered as a charity No. 1063732

This term we welcome a number of new faces in the Common Room:

- Mr Samuel Gladstone joins us as Director of Music, having taught previously at Whitgift School and Sevenoaks. He has a First Class in Music from Jesus College, Cambridge and was Organist at HM Chapel Royal of St Peter ad Vincula, Tower of London.
- Mr Oliver Stone becomes Head of Spanish, having studied at the Universities of Bristol and Edinburgh, and previously been Head of Modern Languages at D'Overbroeck's College, Oxford.
- Mr Steven Dymock, who has a BA in Design and Technology from King Alfred's College Winchester, and was previously a Subject Leader at the Wildern School, Southampton, joins us to teach Design and Technology.

We also welcome the following colleagues who will be providing maternity cover across various departments this year:

- Mrs Clare Jones, who studied at the University of Warwick, and has previously taught at Saint Philip Howard Catholic High School, Barnham joins the Biology department, where we also welcome back Miss Gemma Conway, who studied Marine Biology at the Universities of Newcastle and Portsmouth.
- Mrs Sarah Black joins the History Department. She has a First Class in Economic and Social History from the University of Edinburgh and a Masters in Education at Jesus College, Cambridge.
- Mr Ian Hardwick joins Mathematics, having studied at Wadham College, Oxford and formerly been Head of Mathematics at Truro School. He is joined by Dr David Mountford, who will be well known to PGS families as a long-standing former member of staff.
- Mrs Elaine Hooton joins the Geography department. She read Geography at University College, London and was formerly Head of Junior School at Hampshire Collegiate School; she is also experienced as an ISI inspector.
- And finally, our new Director-in-Residence this year will be Miss Sandra Maturana, who has studied in Madrid and London and most recently been working as a director at the Young Vic.

We are, as ever, grateful to parents for support in minimising requests for absence in term time by ensuring that family holidays take place outside of normal school time, including attendance at events such as the Isle of Wight Festival. Our term dates are published well in advance for this reason. Pupils' absence from school can only usually be authorised on compassionate grounds.

On behalf of the staff, I wish all those preparing for A Level modules in Year 13 next week the very best of luck, as well as for those pupils preparing for trial IB and GCSE examinations in the coming weeks.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sam King". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, circular initial "S" and a long, sweeping tail.