



THE PORTSMOUTH GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Headmaster: James Priory MA

jep/dck

12 July 2011

To all parents of Senior and Junior Schools

Dear Parents

IB News

We are very proud of our first International Baccalaureate cohort whose results, published last week, are excellent. Thirty one pupils sat the IB diploma as an alternative to A Level this year, choosing a broader, more international programme of Sixth Form study.

The average score achieved by pupils was 35 points, compared to a world average of 28, and puts our pupils' performance firmly on a par with that achieved by other similarly academic schools in the UK, many of whom have been offering the IB diploma for up to 10 years or more.

A fifth of pupils achieved more than 40 points out of a possible maximum of 45, including Isabel Wilkinson (44), Jasper Bone (43), Daniel Frampton (42), Ellen Davis, Madeline Farnworth and Daisy Price (41).

Daniel, who was Senior Prefect this year and whom parents will recall speaking powerfully at the Year 13 Leavers' Service, is just one of those celebrating having secured his place at university, to read History at University College, Oxford. Incidentally, it was great to have Daniel back in school this week to direct one of the tutor groups in the Year 9 Play in a Day project.

Twenty seven academic subjects at Standard and Higher level are celebrating having achieved average scores significantly higher or above the average score awarded worldwide this year. More impressively still, 13 subjects have scored an average of at least 6 points, equivalent to at least a grade A at AS or A Level.

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

Email headmaster@pgs.org.uk Website www.pgs.org.uk

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I will be able to report more fully to parents on the results and university destinations of our IB cohort later in the summer as the complete picture becomes available with the publication of A Level results on 18 August.

In the meantime, I congratulate pupils and staff on the tremendous hard work and dedication which have gone into making such an excellent start to the International Baccalaureate at PGS this year.

Year of Science, 2010-11

The Year of Science culminated this summer in a splendid series of talks, concerts and a carnival procession and Twilight Fire Spectacle to mark Portsmouth Festivities: Space City 2011, during which the Bristow-Clavell Science Centre has been a much-visited venue.

Parents will be interested to know that we are currently developing ideas with Imperial College, London to launch a collaborative science project with local secondary schools, having been approached by Professor Lord Winston to establish a hub for science and engineering in the city.

Lord Mayor's Passport for Success

We are also playing a leading role in the Lord Mayor's Passport for Success programme launched this year across all the city's schools, which is supporting hundreds of Year 8 pupils to become more confident and rounded individuals. Over 40 Sixth Form pupils from PGS have volunteered to train to become mentors for younger pupils in local schools in what promises to be an exciting venture.

Sixth Form Social Apprentice

Year 12 pupils had their own experience of being mentored for future leadership roles when they attended a day styled 'The Social Apprentice' here at PGS.

Members of the school's Development Board and a number of OPs and parents generously gave a day to support and coach small groups of Sixth Form pupils in a series of challenges, led by expert trainer Rosemary Ryan.

With the Year 12 practice career interviews and the dedicated UCAS day also taking place in recent weeks, pupils will be in a strong position as we approach the summer, to be considering carefully their university applications and future aspirations.

International GCSE

There has been much discussion in the press recently concerning competing qualifications at GCSE level and the Government's proposed reforms.

At PGS, each academic department is encouraged to follow its own preferred course in Years 10 and 11. Most subjects offer the GCSE, but an increasing number of departments are now introducing the International GCSE which, in some cases we feel, offers a more fulfilling course and a better preparation for study post-16.

All pupils at PGS study IGCSE Mathematics and from this year in Year 10 pupils have also been studying IGCSE English and English Literature. Higher sets in Physics follow the IGCSE route, and from September the Year 10 higher sets in Spanish and French will also study the International GCSE.

A Level and GCSE Results Days

As mentioned earlier, A Level results will be published on 18 August and available from school from 0800 to give pupils the opportunity to contact their universities as early as possible in light of the increased competition we expect to see in this year's clearing system. GCSE results will be published on 25 August and available from school between 1010 and 1130.

National Consumer of the Year

Congratulations to Chris Hall, Jack Fynamore, Max Jewell and Will Morgan who won the national final in a University Challenge style competition testing their knowledge of consumers' rights and trading standards. It says a lot for a school when the Young Consumers of the Year have chosen it as a place in which to be educated!

The Business Studies and Economics department is also celebrating excellent results in Year 9's entry for the Institute of Financial Studies award, equivalent to a GCSE, taken by all those pupils studying Enterprise. The overall performance was our strongest so far, with the number of A* awards doubled. Well done to all involved.

Sport

It has been an unprecedented year for sport at PGS and particularly so this season. The U17 XI reached the national semi finals of the forty over competition, narrowly losing to Filton College this week, whilst the U15 XI, captained by Jack Marston, triumphed at the Lord's Taverners' Final at Oakham School, becoming national champions in a highly entertaining match against Denstone College. The 1st XI's national final experience at Lord's was unfortunately cut short due to rain, but is being rescheduled for the autumn.

Meanwhile, the Junior Girls Athletics team performed brilliantly in the National Track and Field finals at Abingdon to post the second highest team score in the competition's history. Any other year this would have been enough to win, but the girls were pipped to the post by Southend High who scored just three more points on the day. It was another tremendous performance by our young athletes.

There have also been some individual successes of note, including Joseph Brown becoming the first PGS pupil to win an individual English Schools' athletics title in the javelin. Jessica Lavery is currently competing for GB in the World Youth Sailing Championships in Croatia, where she won the first race of the series. And cricketing duo Robert Gibson and Jacob George enjoyed an extraordinary 285-run opening partnership in the Hampshire Academy's latest victory in the ECB Southern Electric Premier League.

The Senior School Sports Day was again great fun and an opportunity for everyone to get involved, with House spirit palpable throughout. I cannot wait until 2012!

Arts

The Summer Art Show this year was staged in the Square Tower and attracted hundreds of visitors, eager to see some of the best work produced by pupils transported from the art studio to the historic setting of the Tower. There is a lovely brochure of the work available from the Art Department if you missed seeing this exhibition.

In the same week as the Art Show, having enjoyed the experience of Year 6's musical interpretation of *The Tempest* at the New Theatre Royal, I hot-footed it back to school to see the Sixth Form production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in the David Russell Theatre. I am glad I did – the sizzling energy and humour of their performance was brilliant to behold and all the more impressive that the production had been rehearsed and directed by the students themselves in the few weeks available after their Year 12 examinations. Whilst Prospero may have thought the revels now had ended in the New Theatre Royal that night, they had only just begun in the DRT!

Year 9 were not to be outdone, however, and this week produced a wildly ambitious and entertaining evening inspired by *1001 Arabian Nights*, devised and produced within a single school day. Every member of the year group was involved and clearly enjoyed being part of such a colourful and distinctive event.

Senior Prefects

It gives me great pleasure to announce that Anne Cole has been appointed Senior Prefect for 2011-12 and that she will be supported by the following members of next year's Year 13 as Deputy Senior Prefects: Jake Grimwood, Jessica Lavery, Samuel Morris, Esme O'Hagen and Michael Roderick. I wish them all the best in their new roles.

Staff News

As the school year ends, we bid bon voyage to Dr Stagno, Miss Bree, Miss Brunner, Mrs Burkinshaw, Miss Dunne (to study for a Masters in Science Communication at Imperial College, London), Miss Howarth, Miss Deeks (to become Head of Classics at Surbiton High School), Mrs Wickson and Mrs Quinn, thanking them for all that they have done in their time to enrich the life and learning of our pupils. We wish Miss Bree, Miss Dunne and Miss Howarth, in particular, all the best for their weddings this summer.

Mrs Williams, Admissions Secretary, leaves us in September having played an outstanding role in guiding and supporting so many new families and pupils in her, appropriately enough, 11 plus years at PGS. Retirement will give her the opportunity to travel and to spend time with her grandchildren. Mrs Williams' successor will be Mrs McManus, currently Head of Communications and Marketing at the Student Union at Southampton University.

We also say a special farewell to Mr Cleary, who leaves us after six very happy years as Director of Music to join Christ's Hospital School. Mrs Cleary also leaves us, having been General Manager of the city-wide Portsmouth Festivities which has expanded its audience size from around 7,000 in 2006 to over 25,000 in 2011 thanks to support from The Arts Council and many local sponsors. We wish them and their children, Tom and Becky, all the best in their family move.

Mr Gladstone joins us in January 2012 as the new Director of Music. He has first class honours from Jesus College, Cambridge, and is currently Assistant Director of Music at Sevenoaks School. Next term, Mrs Hall will be Acting Director of Music; we also welcome Mrs Landon as Teacher of Music between September and Christmas.

Also joining us in the New Year will be the new Head of Spanish Mr Stone, who has a BA in Spanish and Latin American Studies from the University of Bristol and is currently Head of Modern Languages at D'Overbroeck's College, Oxford. We welcome back Mrs Pounds, who returns part-time from maternity leave, and are delighted that Mrs Langtry remains with us to teach Spanish until Christmas; Miss Coward will continue in her role as Acting Head of Spanish until then.

Other new staff joining in September include: Mr Jordan, previously Head of Proposition Marketing at Skandia with a BA in Industrial Economics from the University of Nottingham, and a BSc in Sport and Exercise Science from the University of Chichester, as Teacher of Economics and Business Studies. He will be joined in the department part-time by Mr Brown, a well-known face.

In Games we look forward to welcoming Miss Cox, who has a BSc in Sport and Exercise Science with Physical Education from the University of Brighton, and is currently at Testwood Sports College, as Teacher of Physical Education and Games; and Miss Farmer, who has a BA in Physical Education from University College Chichester, and is currently at Bay House School, as Teacher of Physical Education and Games. Miss Farmer has 11 caps for the England women's hockey senior team.

Other new colleagues in September include Miss Crockford, who has a BA in Illustration from the University of Portsmouth, as Teacher of Art; Mr Gray, who has a BSc in Zoology from the University of Southampton, as Teacher of Biology; and Miss Alexandra Murray-Bruce, who has an MA in Classics from the University of Durham and is currently Head of Classics at Camden School for Girls, as Teacher of Classics. Mr Reed joins us as Photographer-in-Residence.

May I also take this opportunity to congratulate the following colleagues who take on additional responsibilities in September: Mr Rutherford as Head of Hockey; Ms Cross as Deputy Head of Smith House; Miss Kirby, Deputy Head of Grant House; Mr Leach as House Sports Co-ordinator; and Ms Kirby as Head of Pastoral Curriculum.

Middle Leadership

Earlier this term we welcomed Professor Sir John Rowling to talk to colleagues with academic and pastoral responsibilities on the theme of leadership in education. To develop our understanding and practice in this field, we have collaborated with the School of Continuing Education at Portsmouth University to create a course in Educational Leadership and Management, carefully tailored to PGS, which we hope will strengthen still further the quality of middle leadership within the school.

In relation to this theme, I am delighted that Miss Bush, Mr Lemieux and Miss Linnett have accepted my invitation to become Senior Teachers from next year.

Looking Forward

During the coming summer holiday, we have pupils travelling to South Africa on the combined senior girls and boys' sports tour, a Classics trip to Greece, another premiere production at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, and the PGS Brass Band Tour to Austria. I shall be accompanying members of the brass band ensembles to Salzburg and look forward to a medley of themes from that classic film, *The Sound of Music!*


Looking ahead to the autumn term, we look forward to the Open Morning on 24 September when I hope as many of you as possible will take the opportunity to visit the school. We have the Remembrance Concert in St John's, Smith Square on the poignant occasion of 11/11/11, and there will be a Bonfire Night and Fireworks at Hulsea Playing Fields on Sunday 6 November as part of the PGS Association's new programme of events and family activities. Families will also

be excited to hear that the annual Kings Theatre musical production, which for 2011 will be *Wizard of Oz*, has been fully cast and begins rehearsals in earnest next term. Join us on the Yellow Brick Road from 24-26 November.

Also exciting will be preparations for Portsmouth's celebration of the Olympic year 2012 and the bicentenary of social reformer and author Charles Dickens, born here in Portsmouth in 1812.

It has been another tremendous year in the life of the school. Thank you for all your support over the last 12 months. I wish pupils and parents a peaceful and relaxing summer holiday.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James King'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent loop for the letter 'K'.