

SCHOOL NEWSLETTER FROM THE HEADMISTRESS

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December 2008

Dear Parents,

As the Christmas break approaches I thought I would take the opportunity to update you on some of the events and achievements at Upton which has made for a hectic but rewarding Autumn Term.

Dancing in my Dreams

From 21 – 23 October 2008 our School Production “Dancing in my Dreams” was hugely successful with so many of our Drama and Performing Arts students revealing their accomplishments as actors, musicians and stage crew. Congratulations to all those pupils who performed so well and to the staff for their endless support and dedication.

Annual School Mass

On Saturday 8 November 2008 we celebrated our annual School Mass at the Metropolitan Cathedral in Liverpool. To mark the Capital of Culture year and also to acknowledge our many international links, for which we are enormously grateful, and acknowledge our status as an International School, the mass had an international theme and was celebrated in a number of languages. The total number of people there was around 1600. The Music Department worked very hard, in what has been a busy term, to provide the music for this event. The pupils who took an active role in the Mass acquitted themselves very ably. The Cathedral staff were very gracious in their praise of the girls.

We were delighted to see so many parents and families attending this event. It was particularly delightful to see so many former pupils and staff.

Next year we will celebrate our 160th anniversary and our annual Mass will take place on Saturday 7 November. I hope by then the roadworks will be completed!

Remembrance Day Events

Our cadets turned out on parade for Remembrance Sunday with Birkenhead School and acquitted themselves with great dignity. At their request on Tuesday 11 November at 11 am there was a Remembrance Service followed by a minute’s silence and the laying of poppy wreaths at the Peace Pole in the Peace Garden. The girls who participate in CCF attended in full cadet uniform and paraded in the school grounds and a member of Year 11, Laura Fearnhead sang beautifully the poignant and fitting song “Fields of Gold”. I know the girls would want me to

say a special thank you, on their behalf, to Miss Green who supports the Cadets and helped the girls to put together the service.

International activities

We welcomed Frau Anke Schweer who joined us for three weeks from a Berufsschule in Braunschweig, Germany. Anke was participating in the “Host a Teacher” shadowing programme organised by the German Ministry of Education and the UK-German Connection, London. She was enormously complimentary about Upton and she and Mrs Page are working on a German exchange for next year.

International School Award Redesignation

Good News! The British Council International Schools Award for which we have submitted a renewal application for 2009-2012 have approved our action plan. We now need to submit a portfolio of activities by July in order to have our status renewed. Watch this space!

Pupil Achievements

Diverse City Exhibition is the culmination of a project with the Riverside Housing Association and was officially opened on Tuesday 25 November at the Anglican Cathedral.

Congratulations to the 20 members of our 6th Form who were involved in interviewing the subjects of this photographic exhibition. It is open to the public at the City Exchange, Old Hall Street from 4 December to 18 December 2008.

People of the Pipeline

A group of Year 7 pupils are organising a charity Christmas fundraising event in aid of CAFOD to assist in buying a pipeline for the provision of water to villages in the Third World. This event will be held on Monday 8 December 2008 at 7 pm in the School Hall. Tickets are £2.50 each. This promises to be a magical Christmas evening for the whole family with music, readings and dancing and has the support of Wirral’s Deputy Mayor as well as Radio Merseyside. Everyone is welcome to attend and support the girls in their admirable efforts.

Science Success!

15 Year 9 pupils participated in the “Get Set Science Competition” on Wednesday 19 November with Tasha Godwin in the group that came first.

Interform Debating

The Year 8 Debate winners were 8U Emily Kearney and Gabrielle Shannon. Runners up were Caroline Raraty and Catherine Wastnedge from 8S. Special thanks are due to Sixth Form Debating Prefects and Year 9 Junior Debating Prefects for chairing and helping to judge. It was delightful to see standards rise week on week and the final was truly impressive. Many thanks on behalf of the girls for the support and advice given by Mrs Topping.

Parents & Friends of Upton

Parents & Friends have held a number of successful events this term including the Salsa Evening, Estee Lauder Evening and the Christmas Fair. We thank them for their continued hard work and vital fundraising efforts which go towards providing so many extra facilities and equipment for the girls.

The new School Minibus that we are able to lease thanks to funding provided by the Parents and Friends is proving very useful and has already been used by many pupils. Running two minibuses enables us to keep the cost of trips to a minimum.

Lost Property Day

On Tuesday 16 December from 2pm–4pm lost property will be available from the Reception area. Parents are welcome to pop in to help pupils retrieve their misplaced goods. It is always shocking to see the amount of property, unnamed that goes unclaimed.

Celebrate the 160th Anniversary of Upton Hall School with a souvenir calendar!

The Parents & Friends of Upton have produced a souvenir 2009 calendar which is full of images of the school to celebrate our 160th Anniversary. They cost £4 each. If you would like to buy one, please complete an order form (attached) and return to school with your payment. Calendars are on sale at Reception.

Year 11

Members of Year 11 pupils have had a very busy few weeks. They have coped admirably with the GCSE Mocks and are using the results to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of their knowledge and understanding. Reports will be issued before the end of term and will provide invaluable advice on how the girls can prepare for success in their GCSE examinations.

Reports

Staff have been using web based technology to write reports for Year 11 and all members of the Sixth Form.

This system saves paper and is more economic in terms of the resources we use. Inevitably, as with any new procedure, we expect a few hiccups so please let us know how you find this new format.

Punctuality and Attendance

If girls are to succeed in reaching their potential it is vital that their attendance is excellent and that they arrive in school in good time each day. Nothing is worse than arriving late and unprepared for the day.

If girls are not present for registration, morning and afternoon, they must sign in the Late Book at Reception so we know they have arrived.

If a girl is not marked present and parents have not informed us of an absence our automated system, Truancy Call, will contact you.

Prayers for Return to Health

One of the great benefits of belonging to a community is that people look after each other. There are currently a number of people associated with the School who are unwell or undergoing hospital treatment. A member of Year 9 is about to have surgery. Can I ask you to pray for all those members of our community who are hoping to enjoy a full return to health very soon.

Christmas Carols

On Tuesday 16 and Wednesday 17 December you are invited to join staff and pupils at the Christmas Carols service at 7.00 pm. The venue for this is Sacred Heart, Moreton. The Music Department have been working hard in their preparations for this event so please come along and support our very talented musicians and singers.

Finally, it is Feastday on 8 December and Christmas lunch is being served in the Dining Room for Years 7,8 & 9 and Upper 6 on 9 December followed by Years 10, 11 and Lower 6 on 10 December. Christmas lunch is £2.50 and needs to be ordered. Girls should use the reval machines to make their payment. We break up for Christmas on Friday 19 December at 1pm. Girls may wear non-uniform in return for a donation of £1 which will be divided between Fr Michael Youell's former Parish in Peru and a fund we are setting up to allow the School Council to develop the grounds.

The Christmas Newsletter will be distributed to pupils on Monday 15 December 2008.

Yours sincerely

Patricia Young

