

26th March 2010

Dear Parents

Please find enclosed the latest 'Westbourne World Newsletter' and assessment grades for pupils in Year 5 and Year 6. New pupils who have only recently started in these year groups will receive their first set of assessments at half-term in May.

### **Staff**

New staff who have started since half term are: Mr Jonathan Lawrie [Senior School Geography, Games, Y3]; Mrs Liz Wensley [Senior School/Junior School Art]; Mrs Wendy Hammond [Senior School/Junior School Games], Mrs Danuta Clarkson [GCSE Religious Studies]; Mrs Sheila Moore [GCSE German] .

Mrs Carole Longmire also leaves us at the end of this term to pursue her own business interests in dyslexia teaching. However, the good news is that Westbourne pupils who take advantage of our extra support lessons will not be affected by this because Mrs Longmire will continue to teach their individual lessons.

Miss Caroline Jones takes over as Senior School Teaching Assistant and starts in April.

Mrs Sallianne Foster-Major also joins the team after the Easter break and will primarily be based in Junior School.

All the above staff are fully qualified and experienced teachers and I am sure you will give them a warm Westbourne welcome.

### **New pupils**

All our new pupils have settled extremely well and are contributing much to life at Westbourne. The swell in numbers now means we have a total of 154 pupils in Junior School and 200 in Senior School. Boys account for 55% of the school population and 45% are girls. The average class size remains at less than 15. Many of our larger classes have two teachers, several classes are at times split in half, core subjects are often set with additional staff to make even smaller class sizes, GCSE options subjects are on average eight pupils per class. Our present Year 7s will be restructured after the Easter break so that we have three classes, one of which will be a MAPs (more able pupils) or accelerated group. This is the same structure we already have in place for Years 8 –10.

## **Year 11**

Our present Year 11 are predicted to gain 90% A\* - C pass rates in their GCSEs this summer. We wish them all good luck in their final few weeks' revision. Year 11 have also been given opportunities to show responsibility and develop leadership qualities by having regular prefect duties to perform. Also representatives from the Year 11 Charity Committee attended a Breast Cancer Event to raise awareness of the disease and raised £250 for the charity. Most pupils have responded extremely well to these challenges.

I asked the staff to vote on who might be our first ever Head Boy & Head Girl, using the following criteria for selection: attitude/contribution to school life/respect amongst peers and staff/a good example of a model student/leadership qualities. I was delighted today to be able to announce that Alex Smith and Olivia Pillinger are Westbourne's inaugural Head Boy and Head Girl. This is a major honour for these two students, my sincere congratulations to both.

Next term the Year 10s will take over prefect duties starting in week 5.

## **Question Time Event**

On Friday 19<sup>th</sup> March four Year 10 pupils went to Sheffield University with Mr Lawrie to attend a Question Time style debate. The event was very thought provoking and was a great opportunity to hear the opinion of the panel on a range of issues from global warming to lowering the voting age to 16.

## **Maths**

On Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> March some pupils from Year 6 took part in the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Pop Maths Quiz held at Sheffield Hallam University. Our team finished in the top six and were only three points behind the winners. A total of 76 schools took part and our children said the quiz was challenging and enjoyable!

## **Music**

May I remind all pupils [and parents] that it is vital they attend school events when asked to take part. School Concerts are listed in the calendar well in advance and ensembles/groups of performers cannot function if one or two individuals send regrets at the last minute. Although the recent Junior School concert was a great success I was disappointed to hear that 13 pupils did not attend.

The music trip to London was, to use the phrase of Lizzie Peck (Year 8), "immense". My personal thanks to the staff, and especially the pupils, for making it such a memorable experience.

Pupils who played at the recent Junior School Performing Arts Festival were highly commended and it involved the following pupils: Luke Chakrabati (saxophone); Catherine Miller (piano); Ellie Grant Lewis (flute – 2 pieces) – 2 Merits; Flute Choir (J Richardson, D Ali, R Fowler); Joshua Richardson (flute) – Merit; Arabella Vahey-Crossley (guitar); Arabella Vahey – Crossley (piano) – Merit; Amy Martindale (cornet); Lucy Stern (voice); Singing Group (E Kerry, E Goodfellow, E Stone, L Stern); Tristan Gale (piano); Severin Gale (piano).

On Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> March some of our Year 8 and Year 9s went to the launch of the exhibition at Brodsworth Hall. This will be open to the public this Easter and includes recordings our pupils made and in some cases songs that they wrote.

### **Joseph**

I would like to say a big well done to: Parents for supporting, Mrs Beckett and Mrs Birbeck for making the costumes; Mrs Fardon for the make up; Glyn Dodds for much needed technical support; The banned (sic) for the fabulous music; Mr Bell for his genius in creating both music and scenery; Mrs Briddock for selling the tickets; Mr Hinchliffe for stage managing; Lucy Fardon, Lizzie Housley and Charlotte Northfield for fantastic choreography; Adam Stern for the photographs and programme; the back stage crew for their support and finally Mr Beckett and Mrs Bornand for Direction and Production; AND...THE CHILDREN FOR ...”being the best cast ever!”.

### **Sport**

U13 and U11 6 a-side football teams both came runners up in the Westbourne tournament which involved a total of twelve schools.

U11 hockey team qualified for the north regional round in Leeds on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> March; they missed out on qualifying for the nationals by one goal.

U11 netball team were runners up in the Sheffield High School tournament.

Mothers’ netball match, Friday, 5<sup>th</sup> March. The mothers won overall.

U13 girls’ football team played the staff at Hallam Astro as part of sport aid. The girls won 7 - 5 and the school, at the last count, has raised a total of £515.

Well done to the scuba divers who passed their practical and theory exams.

Golf lessons at Hallamshire GC & Tennis lessons at Fulwood Tennis Club are available next term. Letters are available from the school offices.

### **General**

The ISI report was emailed to you earlier this week along with my accompanying letter. If you did not receive this please contact the school office with your updated email details. Alternatively you can find both documents on our website.

May I thank those who completed the School Travel Plan Survey - it is being submitted to the City Council for formal approval and will be on our website in due course. We aim to reduce the number of staff and pupils travelling to school by car. Please consider walking, cycling, car sharing or using public transport instead of your car. May I also remind all parents NOT to park, or stop on double yellow lines around our school.

### **Future events**

**Summer term – Senior School Prize Giving** will take place on Thursday 15th July from 6 – 7pm, followed by a farewell buffet for Year 11 parents and pupils.

**Junior School Prize Giving** will take place on the Friday 16<sup>th</sup> July from 11.00 - 12 pm, followed by a farewell lunch for Year 6 parents and pupils.

**Junior School Easter Cookery course** (In association with Nonna's restaurant). This will be running from Monday 29<sup>th</sup> to Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> March. We are looking forward to lots of new experiences. We will be making three course meals and having a great time.

**The 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Ball** (featuring the 'Sharp Cuts') organised by **Friends of Westbourne** will be held at **Baldwins Omega on Saturday 22nd May**. Ticket prices are £55 and again we welcome Old Westbournians to join us. You can book tickets by either contacting your class rep or Louise Heath on 0783 7863 676.

We are also organising an Old Westbournians v Headmaster X1 **cricket match at Chatsworth** on the same day. If you are interested in playing please see me asap.

**Headmaster's surgery** is on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> June from 3.30 – 4pm in Ashdell Grove Hall [this is an opportunity for parents to meet informally with me to discuss any concerns or issues].

### **Safeguarding**

I recently attended a safeguarding conference and would like to bring the following to your attention because recently a young girl was raped and murdered due to her activities on Facebook.

I have spoken to all our pupils about the dangers of using Facebook and cyber bullying. I was amazed to see one-third of pupils in our Junior School had a TV or computer in their bedroom and one-third of them are using Facebook or Bebo or You-tube.

Some children as young as those in Year 3 are engaging with it. As parents, did you know that to have a Facebook account, you have to tick a terms and conditions box to say you are at least 13 years old before you can sign up? All children in Year 7 and below should therefore not be allowed on Facebook/Bebo/You-tube.

I have to deal with an ever increasing caseload of complaints from our community about the way pupils engage in these social networks. The problem is young people do not understand that their dialogue is in the public domain, it can be passed around en masse from one person to another and often, because it is a 'faceless' medium, they engage in inappropriate activity and often use offensive language. Cyber bullying affects 10% of all pupils across the UK. This would not be tolerated at school. Whilst I have no intention of trying to police Facebook, the staff at Westbourne, and our Chairman and I believe we need to act on any disrespectful behaviour on or off- line. We have agreed that although we don't want to get involved in these issues, we cannot ignore them once they have been brought to our attention. If pupils decide to ignore this and engage in disrespectful behaviour then they will undoubtedly face consequences at school.

We do need your support in these matters, therefore may I ask you to monitor and supervise your children's use of such networks with great vigilance. Ask your son or daughter to show you their account and check its contents regularly. Tighter control and supervision at home is key to using the network in a responsible manner.

The following rules apply for pupils at Westbourne:

They must never give their true identity, telephone numbers, address or contact details [did you know that just before Christmas Facebook changed all their settings so that all personal details were made public to the entire world. Also 21% of children using Facebook meet someone in the real world that they have only previously met on line]. They must never meet people from the online world that they do not already know. They must not engage in using other people's photographs as this contravenes data protection laws and criminal charges can be pursued. In order to safeguard staff, pupils must not have or invite teachers on their 'friends list' and vice versa (the exception to this is the school account which is run by Mrs Bywater to keep in contact with OWs). Child protection should be everybody's business, on-line or off-line, and we should afford them the same protection as we would do in the playground.

### **Reminders**

Children in Senior School should change their shoes into trainers when they go out to play at break times. Please ensure your son/daughter have the appropriate footwear at school.

### **Finally**

We wish Mr Davey, and all those departing on the school ski trip to France, a safe journey and a great trip.

I look forward to seeing you all again next term (starts Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> April) and wish you all a relaxing Easter holiday.

Yours sincerely