



Friday 15th October, 2021

Dear Parents,

It is hard to believe we have come to the end of the first half of term but what an action packed six weeks it has been. We have had to react on an almost daily basis to the changing Covid situation balancing our need for safety with the desire to experience so much of what we had taken for granted. I am incredibly proud of the community once again for our ability to adapt and react and in doing so we have also enjoyed some lovely achievements during the term.

In this newsletter I will share some important notices and give a quick update on some of those exciting events and successes of this half of the term, as well as looking forward to the coming weeks.

COVID-19 update:

You will see from my recent COVID daily update that we currently have three pupils (6W and 4L) at home isolating following a positive PCR test result. We will continue to monitor the situation over half term and will keep you posted. It will be important for you to alert me to any change in your child's Covid circumstances by sending an e-mail to [bursar@richardpate.co.uk](mailto:bursar@richardpate.co.uk) and [rmacdonald@richardpate.co.uk](mailto:rmacdonald@richardpate.co.uk).

Grammar School Results:

Yesterday the first of the grammar school results started arriving in my inbox and it has been a busy 24 hours as parents shared the news. As it currently stands we have 8 children who have qualified for Pate's Grammar School, 8 who have qualified for Sir Thomas Rich, 8 who have qualified for Denmark Road, 3 who have qualified for Stroud High School and 2 who have qualified for Marling. Many of these children have qualified for multiple grammar schools and parents will need to make their choices by the 31<sup>st</sup> October. I have still to hear from some parents but this is an excellent set of results. All of our Year 6 children have worked incredibly hard and I am tremendously proud of each and every one of them. We also have a number of our Year 6s going through the independent entrance and scholarship exams and that process runs for the next three months.

SchoolCloud Parent Meetings: We have now completed another round of SchoolCloud Parent Meetings for Reception to Year 4. In the current climate we felt this was the safest way to operate these important meetings. I am aware of one or two technical hitches but I know the teachers are working with parents to reschedule these meetings. I welcome any feedback and suggestions for improvement moving forward.

Charitable Initiatives: We continue to feel very grateful for the generosity of the Richard Pate family and it was wonderful to see the large amount of dried foods and canned goods that were donated for our Harvest Festival today. The Year 4 Choir sang beautifully and the Year 2 children entertained us all with a poem and we all paused to say thank you for the many blessings we all enjoy. Your generous donations are being despatched to a number of grateful recipients via Cheltenham Community Projects, Cheltenham Open Door and Astell House and are being enhanced by some lovely letters written by our Year 4s.

We are currently in discussion as to what we can focus on for the Christmas season. We will be sharing more details shortly.

Strategic Investment: We have undertaken another round of investment in the School and have completed the project of updating every PC in the building. That includes the computer suite, library and every classroom computer as well. This along with the new WiFi arrangements in School has transformed our IT capabilities. We are also awaiting delivery of a third iPad trolley as the devices are in such constant use throughout the School. Our other big investment will come in the way of new Smart Boards to replace our existing Interactive White Boards. We are trialling a prototype in the first week of November with a view to replacing them in every teaching space in the School. This is part of the next strategic plan which will map out the next phase of the School's development.

Recent Successes: Four of our Year 6 pupils took part in the St Edward's School Year 6 Maths Challenge involving teams from 16 local schools. Congratulations to Hector Schad and Oscar Burley for coming first and to Jasper Michael and Charlie Parsons who also did very well.

We have had great sporting success with our U11 boys coming second in their first ever IAPS Regional Football Championships. As a result, they have qualified for the National Championships in November at Millfield. The U11 girls also did well at the Regional Hockey Championships winning the plate competition losing only one of 6 matches along the way. The Junior Cross Country team continues their strong record with more impressive Top 10 places at this week's competition at St Edward's. As I finish this newsletter I have just been told that the U11 boys' football team have also won the Albert Dix Football Tournament which features a large number of schools from across the area.

Uniform: As we return for the second half of term we will expect to see all the children arriving in winter uniform on their uniform days. They will still be required to come into School in their PE and Games kits on days that have Games and PE or an after school sports club. We also ask for your help in reminding your children to bring their coats home from school and to wear them on these colder mornings. They will also require regulation school hats, scarves and mittens or gloves. On the very coldest of days the children are welcome to wear their track suit bottoms to keep warm. I leave this to your discretion. We would also like to see the children adhere to the wider uniform protocols with those with long hair tying their hair up with uniform hair ties and the boys keeping their hair no longer than collar length.

Personal Hygiene and Handwashing: In addition to the ongoing COVID hygiene guidelines, we are conscious that the winter months can often bring a proliferation of colds, flu and nasty germs. We would be grateful if you could remind your children of the importance of washing their hands after visiting the toilet and before eating or handling any food. Reminding them of this message will help to keep everyone safe as we move into winter. On 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> November we have the flu immunisation team on hand to immunise those children who have signed up.

PTA News: Our fabulous PTA have been poised in the background waiting to bring a host of events and activities to your children and the Chair, Lisa Hall and I are looking at a variety of possibilities for the second half of term. We will send you an overview of these when we return in November so keep your eyes peeled. We are hoping to hold the first PTA Meeting of the year on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> November at 8.00pm in the Hall. We will confirm this when we return but do keep it free in your calendars.

Diary Dates: Please see the calendar attached to this week's Link for information on the second half of term. We continue to update events on the website so it is worth checking there for the most up to date information.

As always, it has been a great pleasure to watch your children enjoying activities both in and out of the classroom during this first half of term. Despite the ongoing challenges, the School continues to come alive with their wonderful work, sporting and music activities and the many displays throughout the corridors show how proud they are of their efforts. I hope you all enjoy your children's company over the next two weeks as much as we have over the first half of term. Please make sure you all stay safe and we look forward to welcoming you all back in a fortnight.

Yours sincerely,



**Robert MacDonald**  
**Headmaster**