



Bishop Vesey's Grammar School

'Inspiration and Excellence'

Headteacher: Dominic Robson BA (Hons) NPQH

DGR/sw

06 January 2017

Dear Parents/Carers

Happy New Year.

We hope you had a wonderful holiday and are looking forward to a happy 2017. As we start the new term, we welcome **Mrs Sunita Patel** as Teacher of Chemistry, and have two staff in temporary new roles: **Naima Field** as Acting Head of Year 8 (n.field@bishopveseys.bham.sch.uk) and **Ralph Brocklebank** as Acting Head of Chemistry. We also welcome our new Parent Governor elected by the parent body, **Mr Andy O'Brien**. I know that Mr O'Brien will have a lot to offer the school in his new role. Also, starting from next Tuesday 10 January we are employing the services of a Careers Advisor for one day per week, **Pauline Knowles**. I am sure this will be a very good additional support for our senior students in particular.

As we start the new year we note the fact that we have good levels of attendance of 96% Year 7-11 and 95.7% Sixth Form. However, our target is 98% as we believe there is a strong correlation between attendance and academic performance.

This is probably a good time to re-state our policy as a school relating to term time absence and holidays. There are very important reasons why students should not take time away from school:

1. School holidays, but particularly summer holidays, offer ample opportunity to take a family holiday. It is very hard to justify taking additional time away from school in addition to these opportunities to go away as a family.
2. Significant absence from school damages a student's progress. Before applying for lengthy absence, families must ask themselves how they plan to address the difficulties that a student's absence from school will cause.
3. Term time holidays often prove a distraction in the period before and after they are taken. Such absences can have an unsettling effect on students which can further hinder their progress.

There of course can be exceptional circumstances that necessitate holidays during term time. However, they remain exactly that, exceptional and not the norm. I would therefore urge all parents to think very carefully before considering absence during term time.

We have again made it through to the West Midlands Real Business Challenge Regional Final. The team members from Y10 are: **Jaden Lo-Watson, Ibrahim Aliwi, Harvey Quinn, Aidan Towse, Luke O'Brien, Freddie Goodrham** and **Raul Athwall** and they have been working on the Coca-Cola Enterprises Real Business Challenge (RBC). Thanks to Dr Reilly for his support and mentoring expertise with the team.

Have you read the Autumn Term colour newsletter yet? Please find the link [here](#).

This week has seen mock examinations in full flow with Year 13 mocks and Year 11 re-takes. Students have made a very good start to these. Please note that L6 are on study leave next week for their mock examinations.

Many thanks to all parents who are supporting our BVGS Inspiration and Excellence Fund. As I look forward there are big financial challenges ahead for our school, namely central government funding cuts and increased costs. Together these cuts and increased costs pose a very real risk to maintaining the momentum of progress at our School. Every year we invite all parents to make a regular financial contribution to our school Inspiration and Excellence Fund. This year, the money will be used to fund important, basic ICT equipment for our new STEM Block. In line with other grammar schools nationally, we recommend a



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suggested contribution of £360 per year (£30 per month), or £240 per year (£20 per month). If you would like any further clarification on how to donate please visit <http://www.bvgs.co.uk/support-us/why-support-bvgs>.

We look forward tomorrow to our first Rugby fixtures of the new year against Solihull School. For more information about all things BVGS Sport please visit : <http://www.bvgssport.co.uk/>

There are a couple of opportunities to take part in debating competitions coming up this half-term. I would like to enter two intermediate and two senior teams for the Youth Speaks Rotary Competition. That means I need six speakers between ages 11-13 and six speakers between the ages of 14-17 to take part in the competition on 24 January. Furthermore I need two Sixth Form students to take part in the Cambridge Schools Debating Competition on Sunday 29 January. Please let me know of interest levels by email s.weblin@bishopveseys.bham.sch.uk.

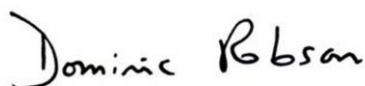
We are legally required to submit information to the Department for Education (DfE) as part of our Termly School Census Return. The DfE have requested the following information for each pupil at the School:

- Country of Birth
- Pupil Nationality

We will be contacting you very soon to request this information and we would ask for your co-operation and support in ensuring our records are compliant with national requirements by the required deadline.

With my very best wishes for a lovely weekend.

Yours sincerely

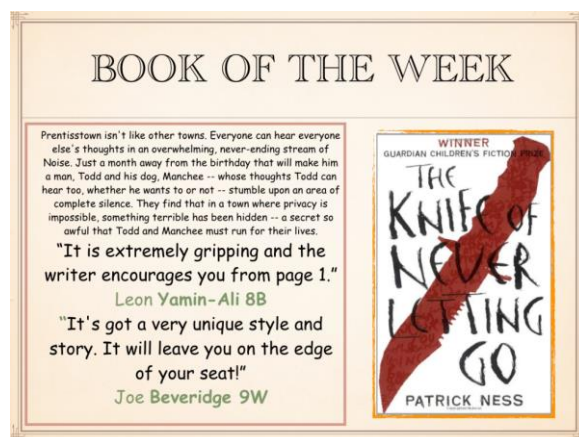


Dominic Robson
Headteacher



John Craggs DL BSc PhD HonDUniv FCMA
Chairman of Governors

Book of the Week



Quote of the Week: Education is not the learning of facts, but the training of the mind to think.
Albert Einstein

Letters issued this week:

[Year 7 Symphony Hall Trip](#)

Forms to request student absence can be found here:

[Request for holiday during term time](#)

[Request for time off for appointments \(not holiday\)](#)

Dates for your Diary

Spring Term 2017

Wed 4 Jan - Tues 10 Jan	Upper Sixth mock examinations
Wed 11 Jan - Mon 16 Jan	Lower Sixth mock examinations
Wednesday 18 January	Y11 Parents' Evening 16:00 - 19:00
Tuesday 24 January	BLH Parents' Forum 19:00 - 20:00
Thursday 2 February	Year 10 Parents' Evening 16:00 - 19:00
Monday 13 February	Review Day
Friday 17 February	Break up for Half Term
Monday 27 February	Spring Term recommences
Tuesday 28 February	Elevate Y10 Parents' Evening 18:00 - 19:15
Thursday 2 March	Y9 Parents' Evening 16:00 - 19:00
Tuesday 7 March	Higher Education Evening 19:00 - 20:00
Wednesday 15 March	Year 8 Parents' Evening 16:00 - 19:00
Thursday 23 March	Spring Concert
Thursday 6 April	Break up for Easter at 15:25

Friday 7 April

Staff Training Day

Summer Term 2017

Monday 24 April	Summer Term commences
Tuesday 25 April	Y7 Parents' Evening 16:00 - 19:00
Thursday 27 April	Senior Soloists' Concert 19:00
Monday 1 May	May Day Holiday
Thursday 18 May	Parents' SDP Forum 19:00
Friday 26 May	Break up for Half Term
Monday 5 June	Summer Term recommences
Tuesday 27 June	Open Evening 16:00 - 19:00
Tuesday 4 July	Performance Evening 19:00 - 20:30
Friday 21 July	Break up for Summer Holidays