



Bishop Vesey's Grammar School

'Inspiration and Excellence'

Headteacher: Dominic Robson BA (Hons) NPQH

DGR/sw

9 September 2016

Dear Parents/Carers

This is the first of my Friday weekly letters for the academic year. What an exciting year it promises to be. You cannot turn your TV set or mobile device on at the moment without being bombarded with stories about the proposed extension of selective education nationally. We, as a school, are delighted. I am sure you are aware that the issue of grammar schools promoting social mobility is very close to our heart. Those students sitting the entrance test on Saturday are the first Vesey cohort for which a significant proportion of places (20%) are reserved for pupil premium students who meet on a qualifying score. Furthermore we are already engaged in a considerable amount of outreach work designed to promote applications to grammar school from students and families of all backgrounds. Last year, we offered :

1. Biology, DT, Computing and PE Workshops for Year 5
2. Test Familiarisation Workshops led by Year 10 for students and parents
3. Sixth Form assemblies for primary schools promoting aspiration and well-being
4. Sixth Form Language and Sport leadership for local primary school children
5. Joint secondary/primary Drama and Music performances

This week, I have had the pleasure of greeting our new Year 7 and Lower Sixth as they start their Vesey journey. Students have been eager to get stuck into their learning, and have enjoyed their new challenges.

Year 7 began their first day with an assembly focussed on preparing for their 'academic Olympics'. We discussed the importance of the three Cs (courtesy, consideration and co-operation), having ambitious goals and a desire to do your absolute best every time, and the importance of working hard in, and out of, school. Their commitment to these values and behaviours will determine how well they make the most of their 'Vesey Experience'. I have enjoyed meeting the boys in the Dining Hall, in lessons and on the playground. I am pleased with the efforts of the boys. Roll on next Monday!

The Lower Sixth had a useful induction morning supported by the University of Birmingham Outreach Team. It was a pleasure welcome to welcome back Andrew Cotterill (OV) who spoke to the students.

It was also good to welcome back our new Upper Sixth. Though some of the AS qualifications sat this summer are 'revised stand-alone' examinations, not counting to the final exam at A Level, there were still many, very good performances. Forty-nine students achieved three As and 24 students achieved four As. Of that latter group, five students **Georgia Curry, Tom Eglesfield, Sam Smith, Ella Sykes** and **Sophia Thorn** all attained an A* in the Extended Project Qualification. Indeed, the EPQ results were excellent with 68% of all entries scoring an A* or A Grade. No-one is complacent however, and all the Upper Sixth have an awful lot of work to do over the coming year to do themselves justice at A Level.

Looking ahead, on Monday there is a very exciting opportunity for Year 10, 11, 12 and 13. We have employed Centrestage School of Speech and Drama again to produce a senior production. Auditions will be held here, at school, this coming Monday 12 September and Tuesday 13 September from 15:30 - 17:00 in Big School for Years 10-13. Performances are scheduled for Wednesday 7, Thursday 8 and Friday 9 December. Last year's production met with critical acclaim. Indeed, we have been invited to an award ceremony at the Council House in Birmingham on 23 September. We have been told that the cast of 'Two' will be getting some recognition. A letter about this will go to all cast members on Monday. Please note also that invite letters to all Year 7-9 parents and students to be part of Junior Drama went out yesterday. Please get your slips back as soon as possible to guarantee a place. The slips need to be returned to Mrs Sue Foster in the School Club Office, located next to the staff room on the lower Maths corridor.



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It has been a busy summer, with a lot going on in terms of the development of the STEM Block, and school infrastructure generally. We are looking to open our new STEM Block formally in December. Many thanks to **Graham Swindells**, who has masterminded operations over the summer, along with the hard-working site team of **Paul Boyle, Kevin Wamsley and Andy Tomlinson**, as well as the ICT Team of **Dee Baglee and Dean Parsons**.

We would request that parents refrain from parking on the double yellow lines outside the school on Boswell Road when dropping off and picking up students. This has the potential to block the road, and could cause safety concerns for students as they leave the school grounds and cross the road. We would suggest that alternative parking is found away from this point of congestion to alleviate any health and safety issues.

The Library is extending its opening hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays, on a trial basis, until Christmas. These extra sessions will be known as 'Study Club' and are open to all students. The Library will therefore close at 16:45 on Tuesdays and Thursdays and 16:00 on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

Library Opening Hours

Mon	7.30am - 4pm
Tue	7.30am - 4.45pm
Wed	7.30am - 4pm
Thur	8.45am - 4.45pm
Fri	7.30am - 4pm



Year 7 will receive a free book from Bishop Vesey's Grammar School through the Book Buzz Scheme. Miss Brown will be talking to Year 7 boys about this in assembly on Monday 19 September.

A full list of extra-curricular opportunities for students across the school will be emailed to parents next week. I was very pleased to hear that 115 Year 7 students attended starter Hockey last night. Debating starts up next Wednesday in Old Big School at 13:15.

Next week we will be holding our Open Evening on Thursday 15 September 16:00 - 19:00. This is aimed at families who have boys in Years 3-6. If you know a family who you believe would benefit from a grammar school education, please encourage them to attend. It is customary that our Year 8-13 students assist brilliantly on this evening. Therefore, please encourage your sons and daughters to assist us on this evening. In the light of this, and in order to enable proper preparation for our visitors, we will be having a half-day on Thursday with school closing at 12:15. Mr Bowen, Deputy Head has emailed you a letter on this matter. Please can **all** Year 7-11 return reply slips to their Form Tutors regarding this.

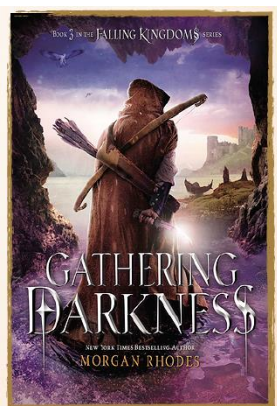
Good luck to all taking the entrance exam tomorrow (and thank you to all helping!). Good luck to all engaged in sports fixtures too. For a full viewing of our sporting calendar this year, please visit <http://www.bvgssport.co.uk/>.

Yours sincerely

Dominic Robson
Headteacher

John Craggs DL BSc PhD HonDUniv FCMA
Chairman of Governors

Book of the Week



Quote for next week

'Perseverance, clear my lord, keeps honour bright'

William Shakespeare

Dates for your Diary

Autumn Term 2016	Wednesday 7 September	Autumn Term commences (Year 7 and Lower 6th only)
	Thursday 8 September	Autumn Term commences (All other years)
	Saturday 10 September	Entrance Test
	Saturday 10 September	Good wishes to all celebrating Eid - Al-Adha today

Thursday 15 September School closes at 12:15 as we have an Open Evening on this day from 16:00 - 19:00

	Tuesday 20 September	Year 8 Welcome Evening
	Thursday 22 September	Year 10 Welcome Evening
	Saturday 24 September	OVA Dinner
	Thursday 29 September	Parent Pastoral Information Evening 19:00 - 20:00
	Tuesday 4 October	U6 Parent's Evening 16:00 - 19:00
	Wednesday 5 October	BLH Parents' Forum 19:00 - 20:00
	Thursday 6 October	Junior Soloists Concert
	Tuesday 11 October	Year 9 Welcome Evening 19:00 - 20:00
	Thursday 13 October	Year 7 Welcome Evening 18:00 - 20:00
	Tuesday 18 October	Open Morning 09:15 - 10:30
	Tuesday 18 October	L6 Welcome Evening 18:00 - 20:00
	Wednesday 19 October	Open Morning 09:15 - 10:30
	Wednesday 19 October	Year 11 Welcome Evening 19:00 - 20:00
	Thursday 20 October	Open Morning 09:15 - 10:30
	Friday 14 October	Staff Training Day
	Friday 21 October	Founder's Day
	Friday 21 October	Break up for Half Term
	Monday 31 October	Staff Training Day
	Tuesday 1 November	Staff Training Day
	Wednesday 2 November	Autumn Term recommences

Thursday 10 November School closes at 12:15 as we have a Sixth Form Open Evening on this day from 16:00 - 19:00

	Friday 25 November	Speech Day - Sutton Coldfield Town Hall 19:00
	Thursday 1 December	Y9 Options Evening 16:30 - 18:30
	7, 8 and 9 December	School Production
	Monday 12 December	L6 Parents' Evening 16:30 - 18:30
	Friday 16 December	Break up for Christmas at 12:15

Spring Term 2017

	Wednesday 4 January	Spring Term commences
	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