



# BRENTFORD BULLETIN

KEEPING YOU IN THE LOOP

## HEAD TEACHER'S WELCOME

Dear Parents/Carers

Happy New Year! I do hope you had a lovely Christmas break. 2015 promises to be another successful year for the school. We were delighted to receive the school's Raise Online report in December, provided by the Department for Education. The report compares our school with others across the country. This year, we are in the top 9% of schools nationally for progress, a big step up from last year when we were in the top 11%. These results are fantastic and are testament to the hard work of teachers, students and the endless support and commitment which you have demonstrated as parents and friends of our school community. Huge gratitude to everyone who has contributed over the last year, to ensuring that our examination results make us one of the best schools in the whole country; we should all be proud of the exceptional hard work that the girls put into their work on a daily basis.

Leaving school with an excellent set of examination results will never be enough to ensure future success for our girls in such a competitive and tough world. The development of key skills and attitudes is equally as important. We want our girls to develop the values within our vision; 'Confident', 'Ambitious', 'Courageous', 'Flexible', 'Inquisitive', 'Creative' and 'Reflective', are all qualities which we are trying to develop in our girls. I hope that you had a chance to look through our termly Highlights magazine, sent home at the end of last term. I am sure that you will have seen the huge variety of opportunities that are available to the girls, all aimed at developing the Brentford Girl of our vision. It is our mission to ensure that your daughter becomes the successful, ambitious and 'fully rounded' girl of our vision. Year in and year out this is what we commit to doing.

Thank you for sending your daughter back to school well prepared for her learning. I would like to remind you to check through her journal, if you are unsure about our expectations regarding uniform, make-up and jewellery. We are, again, focusing on improving the girls' punctuality to school. Most are on time every day, but there is a small number of students who are regularly late. This is unacceptable. Building attitudes for life and future employment begins in school. Please ensure that, if your daughter is regularly late, you work with her to get her into school on time this term.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support.

Best regards

Marais Leenders

## OUR VISION

Imagine the future Brentford girl. She thrives on challenge and a desire to fulfill her learning potential; She has high self-esteem; is able to think independently and is confident in her social and academic capability; She is emotionally aware and emotionally intelligent; She is capable and dependable; She is resourceful and inquisitive; She embraces the technological world; She sees the world as a global village and is ready to interact with others in the local and worldwide community; She accepts the welfare of others as her responsibility; She understands the need for sustainable living both locally

and globally; She is ready for life in the future - whatever that may be.

She is the centre of our vision and will remain the very core of our being and our purpose.

## OUTSTANDING GCSE ACHIEVEMENT IN 2014

The school recently received a glowing report from the Department of Education, which confirmed the outstanding achievement made by our Year 11 students across a wide range of attainment and progress indicators in 2014. On the key attainment measure of the percentage of students who achieved 5A\*-C including English and Mathematics, Brentford girls achieved 69%, which was significantly higher than the national average of 55%. The academic improvement our students made since Year 6 was simply amazing and put us in the top 9% of schools nationally for progress (we were in top 11% in 2013). The progress made by our girls within the individual departments that make up the English Baccalaureate was fantastic: English (top 36% nationally); Mathematics (top 12% nationally); Science (top 19% nationally); Modern Foreign Languages (top 2% nationally) and Humanities (top 18% nationally). The teaching staff clearly played a key role in expertly preparing and supporting our students, however, their phenomenal success is primarily thanks to their own hard work and dedication and to the wonderful support they received from you at home!

Our warmest congratulations to everyone involved in helping contribute towards this outstanding success. We are very confident that this year's Year 11, with the same amount of support, will be able to build further upon these successes and, in so doing, make themselves, their families and their teachers very proud indeed! We encourage them to use every opportunity afforded them to achieve their very, very best!

## CHALLENGE THE GAP - YEAR 8

The 12 girls from Year 8 on the Challenge the Gap project have recently completed their study of the Roald Dahl classic 'Matilda', which they had started last term. The girls met weekly with a member of staff during their Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) lesson to discuss chapters of the book that they had been directed to read. The aim of the project was to encourage girls to read regularly and to help develop their written and oracy skills through the book club discussions and activities. To celebrate the girls' hard work, we will be taking them to the theatre this term to watch another Roald Dahl classic 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'.

## THE BRILLIANT CLUB - GRADUATION OF FIRST COHORT

The 15 students from Year 8, who formed our very first cohort to take part in the Brilliant Club last term, had to each submit essays of 1500 words as part of their final assessment. The girls received fantastic feedback on their work from their PhD tutor from King's College and to mark their success, the girls will be graduating at a ceremony at King's College on the 24th January 2015. The aim of the project is to encourage and enable students from a variety of backgrounds to secure places at highly prestigious universities. The school will be running the project again this term with a second cohort of students

and I am confident that they will be as successful as our first cohort.

## UPDATE ON PARENT CONTACT DETAILS

The school has invested in a fantastic new software package that tracks students' attendance at after-school intervention sessions, as well as any other extra curricular clubs the school may offer. Parents have the option to log in to the system to view their child's participation in these additional sessions. To access this facility, it is essential that the school has your most up to date email address and mobile phone number. Please submit these to the school if you have changed your details recently.

## COMMUNITY NEWS - CYCLE TO INDIA FUNDRAISING INITIATIVE

I am sure that you remember reading about October's 6th Form visit to India in last term's Highlights magazine. Following on from this, and as part of our commitment to the region, a sponsored virtual 'Cycle to India' will take place later on this month. Students are being encouraged to raise sponsorship money and get on an exercise bike in school, cycling a mile or more towards the 4000-mile total, which represents the number of miles between Brentford and Amritsar. Please look out for the letter and sponsorship form that your daughter will be bringing home. I do hope that you are able to support this worthy cause - every contribution, however small, will go towards supporting charitable ventures in the Amritsar region of India.

## YOU SAID... WE DID-PARENTS

As part of our on-going commitment to home-school communication, a number of opportunities were created last term for parents to provide us with feedback about how we are doing, so that we may improve still further our provision to your daughters. I am pleased to say that most of the feedback we received was overwhelmingly positive, but some things were highlighted that we are going to pick up on this term.

Many of you have commented on homework, requesting more homework for your daughters and further guidance on how best it can be completed. This term, a major review of homework is taking place with a view to addressing these and other questions, to ensure that all homework set fully supports your daughter's wider learning objectives.

Now that the afternoons are getting lighter, many of you have asked for more after-school activities. Lots of these already take place - including intervention classes for exam students - and we are reviewing other provision to make sure that a range of activities is on offer for students of all ages.

Several Year 8 parents would like to see more Art lessons on the curriculum and the curriculum offer is presently being examined by a group of staff. This feedback will be incorporated into their report.

Thank you very much to those parents who contributed feedback in the autumn and do take the opportunity to do so this term as well.

## YOU SAID... WE DID-STUDENTS

Student Voice is very important to us at Brentford and the Year and School Councils were very busy last term, meeting on a number of occasions to discuss school with the Head Teacher and other staff, from a student perspective. Following on from December's meetings, a number of issues raised by students will be addressed. Many students commented on homework and student viewpoints will be sought for the review taking place this term.

Rewards for students doing well was another matter raised and the school shop - where students can cash in their House Points - will, this term, be restocked with a wider range of products to appeal to all students. Several year groups commented on the school toilets and a number of these were

refurbished over the Christmas holiday.

Students have also asked for more notification about when activities are taking place and new software, being introduced this term, will allow teachers who run clubs to email notification to students to make these processes more efficient.

## 6TH FORM MUSIC QUIZ

We are looking forward to our annual 6th Form music quiz, which takes place on Thursday 5th February from 6-8pm in the school hall. This is a fantastic opportunity for all 6th Form students to meet other students. Please encourage your son or daughter to attend this event. We will also be welcoming Year 11 to this event. Please ensure that all permission slips are returned to the 6th Form admin office.

## 6TH FORMER FOR A DAY

Our Year 11 students will have the opportunity to become a 6th Former for the day. This will take place during the two weeks commencing on the 26th January and the 2nd February 2015. Approximately 10-14 students per day will become a 6th Former for the day. Students will follow the business dress code and will be allowed to go outside at break and lunchtime. The students will experience a double A Level lesson in the morning, a double study session during lessons 3 & 4 and a double A Level lesson in the afternoon, along with tutor time. Students will be expected to sign in with Mrs Novak at 8:30am and out with Miss Hayles at 3:20pm. This is a fantastic opportunity for all of our Year 11 students to find out what it is really like to be a Brentford 6th Former. Further information will be sent out to students in tutor time this week.

## YEAR 11 INTO 6TH FORM INTERVIEWS

We will shortly be sending out information regarding the Year 11 into 6th Form interviews taking place on Thursday 26th February. This is an opportunity for your daughter to discuss her subject choices at A Level, in order check that she is making the right choices for her future. We will be inviting parents and carers to join this meeting. We look forward to meeting with your daughter.

## 6TH FORM MOCK EXAMS

On return from the February half term, the 6th Form will be involved in their last set of mock exams, before their real exams in May. We, therefore, ask all parents/carers to support their son/daughter to ensure that they are prepared for their exams, by revising regularly and following a revision timetable.

## TERM DATES

### SPRING TERM: BEGINS MONDAY 5TH JANUARY - FRIDAY 27TH MARCH

- HALF TERM: MONDAY 16TH FEBRUARY - FRIDAY 20TH FEBRUARY 2015
- SPRING HOLIDAY BREAK: MONDAY 30TH MARCH - FRIDAY 10TH APRIL
- GOOD FRIDAY: FRIDAY 3RD APRIL
- EASTER MONDAY: MONDAY 6TH APRIL

### SUMMER TERM 2015: MONDAY 13TH APRIL - MONDAY 20TH JULY

- MAY DAY: MONDAY 4TH MAY
- HALF TERM: MONDAY 25TH MAY - FRIDAY 29TH MAY
- END OF TERM: FRIDAY 17TH JULY

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