

January 2011 / Issue 4

Moving in the right Direction!

Lessons from Geese

Fact 1: As each goose flaps its wings, it creates an up-lift for the birds that follow. By flying in a "V" formation, the whole flock adds 71 percent greater flying range than if each bird flew alone.

Lesson 1: People who share a common direction and sense of community can get where they are going quicker and easier because they are traveling on the thrust of one another.

Fact 2: When a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of flying alone. It quickly moves back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird immediately in front of it.

Lesson 2: If we have as much sense as a goose, we stay in formation with those headed where we want to go. We are willing to accept their help and give our help to others.

Fact 3: When the lead goose tires, it rotates back into the formation and another goose flies to the point position.

Lesson 3: It pays to take turns doing the hard tasks and sharing leadership. As with geese, people are interdependent on each others' skills, capabilities and unique arrangements of gifts, talent or resources.

Fact 4: The geese flying in formation honking encourage those up front to keep up their speed.

Lesson 4: We need to make sure our honking is encouraging. In groups where there is encouragement, the production is much greater. The power of encouragement is the quality of honking we seek.

Fact 5: When a goose gets sick, two geese drop out of formation and follow it down to help and protect it. They stay with it until it dies or is able to fly again. Then they launch out with another formation or catch up with the flock.

Lesson 5: If we have as much sense as geese, we will stand by each other in difficult times as well as when we are strong.

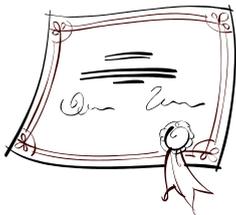
The Gosford Goose: We can certainly learn a lot from our own school badge – the Goose! I mention this after a very positive school review. Local advisers spent two days in our school and in a soon to be published paper have confirmed that we are heading in the right direction. Strengths include the drive for ambition and improvement and the behaviour of the majority of students. We need to ensure that all our work impacts on student outcomes. Further details in the next newsletter.

I would like to thank staff, parents and students for their help in working together to continually improve our school. We must all take responsibility (just like the geese) to ensure that we continue on our journey of being the best we can be.

Stephen Bizley



Congratulations



'On Course' Graduates

Last term Year 9 students Marley Ward and Jordan Huggins successfully completed and graduated from their 'On Course' course. During their time on the course they were involved in a variety of activities and team building events to enable them to participate successfully in school.

Well done Marley and Jordan.

Liz Hounsell - Careers and Work Experience Manager

Robot Club News

"Robot Stormers" at Oxfordshire Tournament



Macauley and Thomas getting prepared to set their robot off for a critical match.

In December, a team of nine students from the **Robotics Club** (the "Gosford Hill Stormers"!) competed in the Oxfordshire First Lego League Tournament. The tournament included programming robots to complete a range of 'biomedical' tasks, as well as a team presentation on their findings from a research project into biomedical engineering solutions to muscle disease. The team performance was excellent, and they came third out of six schools, achieving the highest robot match score of the day. They also won the "Best Robot Design" award and featured briefly on the local BBC Oxford news.

The day was thoroughly enjoyed by all the team with highs and lows as the tournament progressed. Everyone felt that they had learnt something from the robot challenges and their project work. This included the science about muscles, problem solving and working as a team. The dedication and hard work of the team should be highlighted – in addition to the official club sessions held on Thursday afternoons, many of the boys gave up lunchtimes and Saturday mornings to ensure the robot missions would be completed! After the day, they were all keen to enter the competition again next year with lots of ideas of how they could improve.



See link on the school website for more photos from the day.

We would like to thank County Insurance Services, Kidlington for sponsoring the team.

The robotics club will continue on Wednesdays from 3.20-4.20pm in room IT2.

Dr Marian Harrington – Mathematics Faculty

English Faculty News

READ International Book Collection

In the final weeks of the Christmas term, students and staff worked hard to collect and donate books for the Oxford based charity READ International. After listening to presentations in assembly about the charity and their work sending textbooks to partner schools in Tanzania and Uganda, everyone people brought in as many books as possible to donate.

As a school, we managed to collect a fantastic number of books – over 500 in total! Alice Whittaker from the charity was thrilled saying, “Thank you to everyone for their generous efforts, we are so pleased to be able to have such a high number of donated books to send on”.

I am also delighted to announce that Miss Evans’ form have won the prize for collecting the highest number of books. Well done to you all for your hard work and thank you to everyone who contributed!

Helena Koufou – Reading Connects Co-ordinator

Year 7 Reading Club

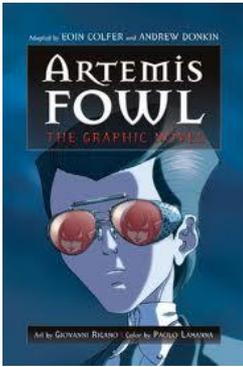
Last term saw the start of a new reading club for Year 7 boys, some of whom have been attending along with their parents. We have been following the exciting story of Torak and his adventures involving a bear which has been possessed by a demon spirit.

The novel is called ‘Wolf Brother’ and is the first novel in the ‘Chronicles of Ancient Darkness’ series. We have had many fun and interesting discussions about the novel and look forward to finding out what happens next to Torak over the course of the next term.

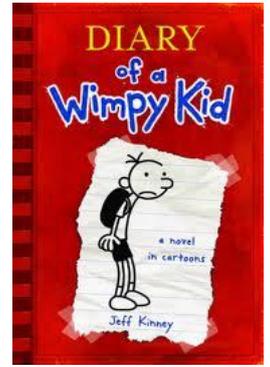
Year 11 ‘Master-Classes’

This term sees the start of a series of ‘master-classes’ for students in Year 11 English. A range of topics will be covered which will focus on the English Language examination. Students will be recommended by their class teachers and invited to the relevant session by letter. Family members are also welcome to attend. Please encourage your child to attend if they are invited as it will make a real difference to their grades.

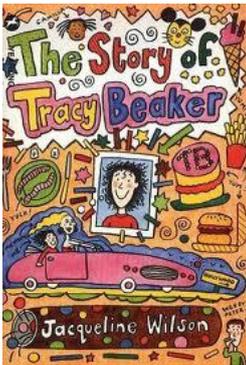
Charlotte Evans – Team Leader, English Faculty



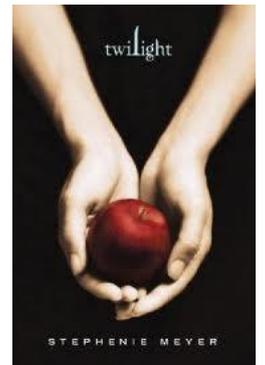
**Are you in Year 7?
Do you enjoy reading?
Do you enjoy sharing your
thoughts on what you
have read?**



**The Year 7 Book Club
may be just the club for
you!**



**Year 7 Book Club
will meet from:**



**Thursday 13th January
1:30 in G1**

Meetings Will Take Place Monthly

Modern Foreign Languages Faculty News

Languages Awareness Week 2010

Sunday 26th September was European Day of Languages, which has been celebrated throughout Europe every year since 2001. To mark this occasion we held our annual Languages Awareness Week between Monday 20th and Friday 25th September. You are therefore likely to have participated in some language-related activities outside of your normal German, French or Spanish lessons at school during this period. The aims of this event were to emphasise the importance of language learning, promote cultural diversity and encourage lifelong language learning.

Each day during tutor time students were tested on their linguistic ability through the MFL inter-tutor challenge. The answer sheets were returned to the languages department and house points were awarded to the winning tutor groups. On the whole the quality of the responses was impressive, which shows that your linguistic skills are well-developed!

During our school open evening on Wednesday 22nd September we held an international food tasting event in the MFL area and invited students who have links with other countries to prepare and bring in international dishes for our visitors to sample. Among the tasty delights on offer were delicacies from a variety of countries including Bulgaria, Spain and Poland. The area was understandably a popular destination for student guides and visitors alike, who flocked over to sample Spanish tortilla, French pastries and German biscuits among the other dishes displayed.

The main event on the Friday was our Speed Languages activity, which was held at lunchtime in the gym. During this event students and teachers who are lucky enough to be able to speak another language were invited to share their knowledge with other students. Students were given slots of several minutes to teach as many phrases as possible to their partners. Participants were asked to choose the languages that they most enjoyed learning at the end of the event. Some of the most popular languages were Welsh, Korean and Brazilian.

Whether you tasted one of the international specialities on display during the open evening or learned some new words during the Speed Language event we hope that you made the most of the opportunity to improve your cultural understanding. One of the most valuable outcomes of the week was undoubtedly that the students were so eager to get involved in raising awareness of the wonderful array of cultures that are present at Gosford Hill school.

Leonie Court – Head of Modern Foreign Languages Faculty

Year 13 Reunion

The annual Year 13 reunion took place on Thursday 6th January in the Common Room where nearly 50 of last year's leavers returned to receive their A2 level certificates and exchange stories about their first term at University or employment over a glass of wine and snacks. It was lovely to see them all again and to hear how well they were doing at their various institutions.

Natalie Fung and Ellis Wiggins also agreed to come into the following Sixth Form assembly to talk briefly about their courses. We wish them every success for the remainder of their courses.

Paul Catling - Head of Sixth Form

Creative Arts Faculty News



Arts Award

In November, the Creative Arts team had their first cohort of Arts award students work moderated.

Over 700 schools and colleges across England are successfully running the Arts Award for ages of 11-25 of all interests and abilities within the arts. It is a recognised qualification and employers see it favourably (similar to a Duke of Edinburgh Award) due to the level of commitment and work needed for this award. The Creative Arts Team are very keen for all students to take up this award, and if any are interested at extending their knowledge and abilities within the Arts they need to discuss this further with any one of the Arts team.

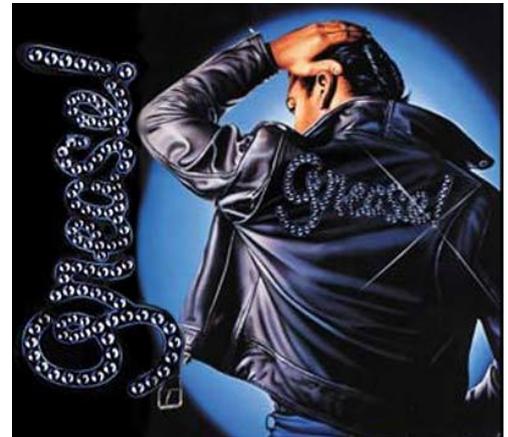
If you have never heard of the Arts Award, and would like to look further into the qualification you can look at the website for more information on www.artsaward.org.uk.

The students who were entered worked in a number of disciplines within the Arts and recorded their responses in a variety of ways. The moderator was very impressed by the standard of work produced and all students entered were successful in achieving the bronze award.

School Production - 'Grease'

The rehearsals for Grease continue, but now is the time for all the other areas of the production to start. At present the scenery is being painted. If anyone has any emulsion paint that they wish to donate to the Art department to help with the painting of the scenery, we would be really appreciative. Back stage are starting to put together a crew, who will be running the lighting, sound, the scene changes, costumes changes, make -up and hair and all the other jobs that happen behind the scenes.

If any students wish to be a part of the team they must see a member of the Creative team to sign up. The performances are showing from Thursday February 10th – Saturday February 12th with also a matinee on the Saturday afternoon. Tickets will be on sale in a few weeks. Ticket prices are £5 and £3 for children under 11. This is a very exciting but busy time and I would like to thank the Arts Team for their hard work so far and to staff who are helping out already and those who have offered their services to support and help out when the performances are on.



Paris Trip

Following the Production a group of students will be off to Paris, the first trip aboard for the Arts team this year with a trip to Italy in June for Year 9 students. Students going on the Paris trip need to ensure that they have paid the full amount and that they have a current passport and a European health Insurance card. Students will be seeing the sights of Paris but also going to the Louvre, Musée D'Orsay, and The Opera House and they will also see a Ballet. The trip is to inspire students' awareness of the work of others across a number of Art disciplines which they can then use in the coursework.

Michele Longmore-Spillett – Faculty Leader, Creative Arts

Uniform Update

Gosford Hill continues to receive very positive comments regarding the new uniform, with many other schools interested in making a similar move - the clip on ties particularly. Thank you very much indeed to the vast majority of parents/carers who have supported the new policy.

Parents and students are invited to contribute to the initial review by writing any thoughts or suggestions and either posting or dropping into reception by the end of term 3 - Friday 18th February, so that any changes can be communicated in plenty of time for September 2011. Please mark the envelope Uniform Review. Alternatively, please use the main school email.

The student leadership team will be gathering views from students, and staff will also be asked to contribute to the review.

Some points to highlight:

- There have been some orders placed with the supplier that have not materialised. These issues have been taken up with Simply Schoolwear and will be resolved. Where parents/carers have had to buy similar items due to orders not arriving (particularly skirts and jumpers), please could a note be written in the student planner. Thank you.
- Issue with the clip on ties, rash appearing.
Response from Simply Schoolwear:
'This is the first time that I have had any reports of a reaction to the clip on ties. As a result I have contacted the supplier to find out a few more details regarding the make up of the product. They have confirmed that the clip itself is made from nickel-free metal, and is also allergen free.'
Simon Grover, School & Customer Service Manager.

The advice given by Simply Schoolwear centres around the actual fitting of both the tie and the shirt/blouse. It is useful to get the clip to slip down between the two pieces of material at the collar/button area, so that the clip itself is backed by one of the pieces of material, thus creating a layer between the clip and the skin. This would also make it more comfortable for the students. If the shirt/blouse is correctly fitted, then by default the tie will be away from the skin. To ensure the shirt/blouse is correctly fitted it is recommended that there are at least two-fingers (adult) of growth around the collar; this means that the shirt is worn in comfort both in terms of the shirt, and the attached tie.

- During the recent extreme weather there has been some relaxing of uniform rules e.g.) boots. Students are reminded that boots and hoodies are not permitted in school in normal weather conditions.
- The winter months also highlight the need for students to wear shoes that are comfortable, supportive and waterproof (to some degree). Girls 'dolly' shoes/ ballet pumps are not suitable for school as clearly stated in the policy.

There are still a number of students who are not complying with the following (both also clearly stated in the school policy):

- Skirts must be supplied from the school supplier, therefore ensuring that they are tailored. They must be knee length.
- Trousers should be formal and tailored. Any form of tight, jean style trousers are not suitable for school - again this is clearly stated in the policy.

Thank you very much for your continued support

Richard Belmont - Assistant Headteacher, Student Support



School Sport Partnership News

Kidlington Tag Rugby Festival

Nineteen teams took part in the Kidlington Partnership Tag Rugby Festival. All five primary schools were represented each school bringing at least two teams. In addition, West Kidlington School brought a group of 13 children who were not ready to take part in a festival but wanted to come to learn more about the game. Hamish Bott and Max Jones led them successfully through a variety of activities throughout the afternoon.

Thirty-two Young Leaders from Gosford Hill School helped to run the afternoon as a team manager, referee, time-keeper or scorer. Mark Gardner, a member of Gosford All Blacks, marked out the pitches, helped throughout the afternoon and presented the trophy and medals at the end of the competition. The final was closely fought between North Kidlington and St Thomas More with North Kidlington School winning by two tries. Both schools will go forward to represent Kidlington in the County Final at Stratfield Brake on 26th November.



The junior section of Gosford All Blacks trains at Stratfield Brake for two hours on Sunday mornings from 10am. All the children were invited to attend this and details were printed on their certificates.

Coaching in Gosford Hill and our Primary Schools



All of our primary schools were offered coaching from Gary Morris this year to prepare them for their festival and Gosford Year 7s were treated to an after school club on Fridays.

Skipping Club at North Kidlington School

Two Year 11 students, Susanna House and Emma Dalton are running a skipping club for North Kidlington children after school on Wednesdays. They plan the sessions themselves and have put together a display for the parents to watch in the last session before Christmas.



Multi Skills

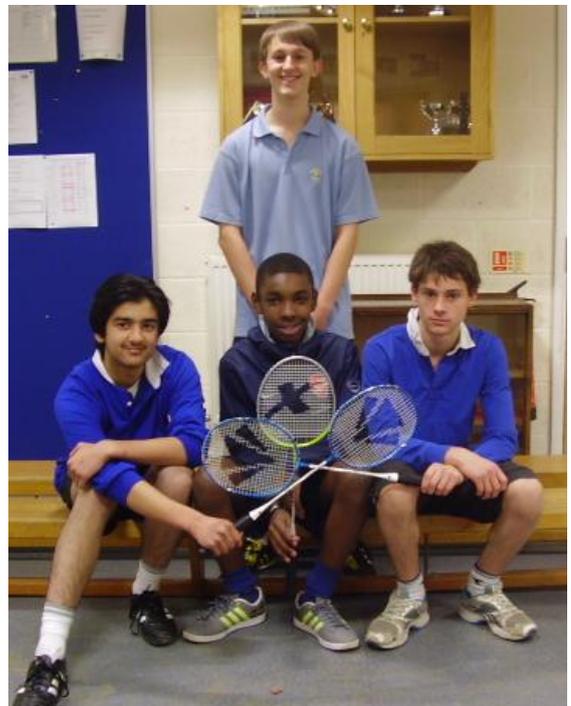
Ros Kelling our Community Coach for athletics and multi skills has been in three Kidlington primary schools this term working with Year 1 and 2 children.



Badminton

Senior Badminton Club runs every Thursday evening from 3pm – 5pm. It is a recreational club but games are played competitively and in good spirit.

This year we entered a KS4 team in the Centerparcs tournament held at BGN School. There were four schools in our section: Banbury, Cooper and Bicester. Ryan Whitehead, Travis Gordon, Harris Iqbal and Kevin Njoroge played very well. They came up against some strong opposition and lost narrowly to Bicester, rather more heavily to Banbury and beat Cooper School. Well done!!



For more information visit the school web site or www.northoxfordshiresp.co.uk

Pam Selby - SSCO for Kidlington

Enrichment News

Woodlands, Glasbury Course 6th - 10th December 2010

Late on Friday 10th December saw the return of 40 weary but very happy Year 7 and 8 students to school following an action packed outdoor pursuits course at the Woodlands centre in Glasbury on Wye. The party, who worked in four groups of ten during the course of the week, tackled many challenges including caving, rock climbing, a high wires course, mountain walking and problem solving course. All groups quickly developed excellent teamwork, communication and listening skills growing in confidence as the course progressed. This was largely due to the outstanding instruction received from Dave, Dylan, Lee and Jules whose expertise and professionalism was unparalleled. The students also quickly got into the routine of jobs and chores around the house to keep it tidy and each group was responsible for serving food one day for both breakfast and dinner. There were also evening activities each night including a hill walk where the group was fortunate to see a shooting star while star gazing.

The behaviour of all the students was exemplary during the week and drew fulsome praise from centre staff and accompanying teachers alike. To sum up - a fantastic experience for everyone involved that will live long in the memory!

Thanks to all the students, Glasbury staff and teachers for making it such a success.

Students:

Year 7: Rory Hoskins, Dan Bedford, Francesca Ferguson, Lisa Groves, Rhiannon Loughborough, Dan Case, James Groves, James Ward.

Year 8: Kyle Kernstein, Ieuen Llewellyn, Connor Hiles, Dean Sherlock, Dexter Corness, Danny Foorde, Alex Hopkin, Ed Vickers, Keeley Barnes, Elissha Chard, Jess Hay, Lauren Jacques, Mia Mosquera, Katie Smith, Aaron Cripps, Sam Hazel, Alice Bickmore, Brendha Cassarotti, Bernat Felip, Toby Griffin-Sparke, Keenan McCloskey, Jack Price, Melissa Fry, Heather Mc Kendrick, Philipa Smith, Emily Wareham, Dan Anderson, Ewan Cameron, Matthew Croker, George Gardner, Ollie Hopes, James Whiting.

Paul Catling - Head of Sixth Form/Year 13 Learning Co-ordinator

Health & Safety News

Coughs, Sneezes & Flu

The season for coughs, sneezes and flu is here, so here is just a reminder that, to stop the viruses spreading we need to have good respiratory and hand hygiene.

This means:

- Sneezing/coughing into a tissue and quickly putting it in a bin.
- Washing your hands and work surfaces regularly and thoroughly to kill the virus.
- Soap is provided in the toilets for students to use.
- Sanitising gel is also available at reception.

Please promote this to your children in the hope that we will have a healthy 2011.

Please DO NOT send students with sickness or flu like symptoms to school. Students should NOT return to school until 48 hours after the last bout of illness. If a student is taken ill during the school day, their parents will be called to collect them. PLEASE ensure the school has up to date contact information, particularly changed mobile numbers.

Rebecca Underwood – Health & Safety Officer



Careers & Work Experience News

During the recent enrichment weeks Year 8 students spent some time researching career options using a new software package, JED. The range of careers they have researched was very broad; some students already have a very definite idea of the type of career they wish to pursue; the majority quite understandably do not. Students can access the software via the internet from home if they wish; in order to do this they will need a registration number from me if they don't already have one.

There is a student and parent Sixth Form Information Evening on Wednesday 9th February. All students in Year 11 who are considering studying in the Sixth Form should attend as well as those students who are undecided about their next steps; it will assist them to make an informed decision about what is the right for them after GCSEs. Other open evenings are shown on the www.oxfordshireprospectus.com as are details of all local post-16 courses.

Many of our Year 13 students have already been successful in their applications to university and have received several offers. Applications can be made for financial support for students starting this autumn through the direct.gov website. <http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/index.htm> from February 14th 2011.

Dates for your diary:

Wednesday 19th January 2011, 5.00pm – 8.00pm, KS4 options choices evening for Year 8 students.

Wednesday 19th January 2011, Careers & Higher Education Conference at Oxford Brookes University for all Year 12 students.

Wednesday 19th January 2011, Abingdon & Witney College 3.00 pm – 7.00 pm, Witney Campus.

Saturday 5th February 2011, 9.00am -12.00 noon, OCVV Oxford and Banbury Campus.

Wednesday 9th February 2011, 6.00pm - 8.30pm, post 16 information evening Gosford Hill School Sixth Form.

Useful websites:

www.spired.com

local information, including Connexions, from Oxfordshire Youth Support Services

www.connexions-direct.com/parentcarer

information for parents about choices for 14-19 yr olds.

www.oxfordshireprospectus.com

Oxfordshire course directory for 14-19 yr olds. Also gives access to same directories for other areas.

www.ucas.ac.uk/parents/

information for parents about university applications

Part Time Work

Any student in compulsory education i.e. up to the end of Year 11, not just up to age 16, carrying out part-time paid work with the exception of babysitting must have a permit to work. To work without one is illegal and more importantly could invalidate any insurance held by the employer. Application forms can be obtained from reception. For further information about the type of work and number of hours that can be worked please look at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk search 'employing children'.

Liz Hounsell - Careers and Work Experience Manager

CALENDAR & OTHER INFORMATION

17-21 January	External Exams	2 February	External Exams Year 11 Parents' Consultation Evening – Main Hall, 4.30pm-7.00pm
19 January	KS4 Information Evening (Year 8 Options), 5.00pm-8.00pm HE & Careers Year 12 Education Conference	9 February	Post 16 Information Evening 6.00pm-8.30pm (Year 11 Options)
21 January	Pre-Ski Lesson (Groups 3 & 4)	10-12 February	'Grease' Production
24-27 January	External Exams (No Exams on 25 Jan)	14-18 February	External Exams
28 January	Pre Ski Lesson Group 5	18 February	Newsletter Issued Year 12 & 13 Paris Trip (18-23 Feb)
1 February	External Exams	19-27 February	Ski Trip – Pila, Italy

TERM DATES 2011
Term 3
Wednesday 5 January – Friday 18 February
Term 4
Monday 28 February – Friday 8 April
Term 5
Tuesday 26 April – Friday 27 May (Monday 2 May – Bank Holiday)
Term 6
Monday 6 June – Thursday 21 July
OTHER DATES 2011
Monday 5 September – INSET Day
Tuesday 6 September – ILP Day
Friday 14 October – INSET Day
Friday 25 November – INSET Day

TERM DATES 2011-2012
Term 1
Wednesday 7 September – Friday 21 October
Term 2
Monday 31 October – Friday 16 December
Term 3
Wednesday 4 January – Friday 10 February
Term 4
Monday 20 February – Friday 30 March
Term 5
Monday 16 April – Friday 1 June (Monday 7 May – Bank Holiday)
Term 6
Monday 11 June – Friday 20 July
OTHER DATES 2012
Tuesday 3 January 2012 – INSET Day

CONTACTING YOUR SCHOOL

Your views are very important to us, whether they're about your child, school activities or wider community issues. For all contact details telephone School Reception.

If you have a concern about your child contact:

- **The subject teacher** - if it concerns learning in a particular subject. Contact Reception to leave a message or alternatively, if you have internet access, you can ask for their email address.
- **The Head of Faculty** - if you wish to discuss any matter in greater detail.
- **Their Form Tutor** - if it is a more general issue about your child's well being.

Staff will endeavour to phone you back as soon as possible. All information is treated in the strictest of confidence. If you want to raise an issue or query about a more general area of school activity or a community matter contact a Parent Governor. (Telephone numbers available from School Reception)

SCHOOL RECEPTION: Telephone: 01865 374971

SCHOOL EMAIL: office.4060@gosford-hill.oxon.sch.uk

SCHOOL WEBSITE: www.gosford-hill.oxon.sch.uk

ABSENCE LINE: Telephone: 01865 855378 (please use this number to report absences)

or

email – absence.4060@gosford-hill.oxon.sch.uk

The Parent Support Site has information on supporting your child(ren) in a number of curriculum areas.