



The Gosford Times

The Weekly Newsletter of Gosford Hill School

Issue 27 – April 2016

New Headteacher Introduction

It's a pleasure to introduce myself as the new Headteacher of Gosford Hill School. I hope that you and your family had a restful Easter holiday and that your child has returned to school feeling refreshed and reinvigorated for the busy summer term ahead. I'm grateful to Stephen Bizley for the work that he did in handing over to me, which has made the start of term a smooth transition for me.

I'd like to start by saying what a tremendous first few days I've had in school. I have been struck by the warmth, caring and welcoming attitude of students who are clearly proud of our school. Staff have also gone above and beyond by working together to support me. I've managed to spend a great deal of time already around school going into lessons, talking to students and celebrating the work that they're doing, which is one part of the role of Headteacher that gives me the greatest pleasure. There is a real buzz in school and that positivity is something that I look forward to building on.



I'm joining Gosford Hill School having worked in three schools previously, so bring a broad wealth of experience to the school. As a music graduate, I left Durham University to become Head of Music at a school in South Oxfordshire, before taking up a post as Assistant Headteacher, leading the Performing Arts at a school in Aylesbury. More recently I worked as Deputy Headteacher at Chipping Norton School. As Headteacher I will still teach Music as it's important to be able to empathise with what it's like for my colleagues and to work with students, which is the reason that I came into teaching in the first place.

Expectations of Students

On Monday I spoke to students about my expectations of them in school. I compared their education journey through school to that of Team GB preparing for the Olympic Games in Rio this coming summer. As students, they spend years learning in order to prepare them for the one chance that they get to take their GCSE examinations. The examinations are over in a very short period of time, as are the events which athletes compete in. In addition, I talked to students about examinations providing stepping stones to the next phase in their life and that by doing their absolute best, they keep more doors open to options in the future. I want our students to be autonomous and resilient learners, where in addition to subject knowledge, they develop the transferable skills to set them apart in the competitive world of work where jobs are evolving all the time with the rapid development of technology.

Behind every successful athlete there is a team of people supporting them ranging from psychologists, nutritionists, coaches and physiotherapists. I compared that to the support network that students have available to them in school and at home. I know from working with young people in a number of schools that where there is a strong relationship between an individual student, home and school, students have the best chance of success.

Learn * Lead * Inspire

I want students to have a positive growth mindset where they seek to overcome barriers for themselves through guidance from staff rather than defaulting to giving up if they think that they can't do something. I told students that their work isn't finished unless it is their best work. Finally it's important for students to act upon feedback given by staff so that they understand how to make the next steps to develop their learning.

Over the Easter holiday it was great to see so many Year 11 students in school taking advantage of the Easter Revision Sessions that a wide range of staff led over their holiday period. We now look forward to the final push as our Year 11, 12 and 13 students prepare to sit their examinations in a few weeks time.

Uniform

Now that we are in the summer term, I'd just like to clarify my expectations of uniform. Students look incredibly smart, and on the whole they wear their uniform with pride. In the warmer weather, students are still expected to wear their full school uniform, but with staff permission they may remove their blazer in lessons. It should be worn when moving around the school however. I would appreciate it if you could please reinforce with your child that their shirt is to be worn tucked in, and I've asked staff to insist upon that.

Mobile Phones

I appreciate that from a safety perspective it's useful for students to have a mobile phone on them, particularly if they need to contact you on their way home. During the school day, mobile phones should be switched off and kept out of sight. If students are seen using their mobile around the school, I have asked staff to confiscate it and hand it to reception, where you as a responsible adult are welcome to collect it. To avoid inconveniencing you, it would support us if you could ensure that your child understands this. I appreciate that mobile phones can be valuable in supporting learning, so there may be occasions where staff give permission for students to use their phone in a lesson related to learning. The Sixth Form, who have private study time, are permitted to use their mobile devices within the Sixth Form Centre, but should not be using them when around the school.

Parent Meetings

Finally I'd like to invite you to meet me at one of the Parent Evenings that I am holding on Tuesday 19th April (Years 7-9) or Thursday 21st April (Years 10-13) at 6pm where there will be an opportunity to hear my vision for the school, and where I will outline what we are doing to move the school forward following the recent Ofsted inspection. I look forward to meeting you in the coming months, and working in partnership with you to ensure that **our** school serves **our** young people in **our** community to ensure the best possible outcomes for every student. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any concerns or better still any ideas for how Gosford Hill School can continue to improve.

Nigel J. Sellars
Headteacher



Human Library

In the week before Easter the Learning Centre was once again buzzing with conversations.

A group of Year 8 students were participating in a 'Human Library' event. In small groups they 'borrowed' a human from the 'library shelf'. Each group was able to quiz their human about their working lives for a few minutes before borrowing another human. The students asked an amazing array of questions. They all asked for more time and the opportunity to speak with more humans.

Student comments:

'they all had such different jobs and they all love what they do',

'you may have to travel with your job, so languages are useful',

'it made me think more about university and further education'.

Our 'humans' are drawn from local business organisations, parents and governors. If you are willing to share your experiences in the future with our students please contact me.

Our final Year 8 Human Library event will be on Thursday 21st April when all Year 8 students who have not yet taken part will have the opportunity to do so.



Ms E Hounsell, 14-19 Pathway Manager

Year 12 UCAS Conference

On Wednesday 23rd of March, Year 12 students attended the UCAS Fair at Bournemouth University. The University offered a wide range of opportunities and experiences for all students to look at; we were given many prospectuses to allow us to explore multiple different universities that we were interested in. Overall the student body found it an exciting and useful experience, enabling them to develop further ideas about what they would like to achieve in the future.

Many students shared their thoughts about the day with me:

"It was a very informative experience and it helped me to decide which universities to consider."

"It opened my mind to the world of universities."

"It made me realise the amount of work I need to put in to enter my ideal university, but it'll be worth it!"

Francesca Ferguson - Year 12

This conference forms part of the School's programme for Post 18 options preparation. The next event is the Higher Education Information Evening on Wednesday 20th April 6-7pm in the Main School Hall. This is open to Year 12 students & parents.

Year 10 Work Experience 18th - 25th April 2016

Our Year 10 students will be taking part in the school's work experience programme next week. We consider that work experience is an important activity for all our students, assisting them in developing skills for successful progression.

For the first time this year we have issued all students with log-on details for an electronic diary. As a parent/carer you can support your son or daughter with work experience by encouraging them to complete their diary each day. It is an exciting, challenging and tiring week from which all students will learn a great deal about themselves and the demands of the world of work. Please encourage them to stick at the placement for the week and embrace all the opportunities offered.

The electronic diary can be found at <https://login.navigate.uk.com> The handbook is available on the school website in Curriculum - careers

Ms E Hounsell, 14-19 Pathway Manager
ehou2868@gosford-hill.oxon.sch.uk 01865 374971 X 702

Year 12 Parents and Students Higher Education Information Evening

This event will held on

Wednesday 20th April 2016

at

6.00pm – 7.00pm

European Teachers Visit to Gosford Hill School

On Wednesday 13th April, we welcomed teachers from Italy, Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Hungary, Turkey and Latvia. The teachers are attending the Lake School of English in Oxford on a professional development course and their tour of our school is part of their course.

After the tour they enjoyed tea and cake in the Learning Centre

**Mrs J Humphreys
and Ms S Thacker – Intervention Faculty**



Year 7 and 8 Hockey Teams Oxfordshire Games Finals

On Wednesday 23rd March nineteen students from Gosford Hill represented the North Oxfordshire area at the Oxfordshire School Games Finals held at Tilsley Park. All the top teams from the County were present. Gosford Hill worked hard to achieve: Year 7 fourth in the round robin tournament and Year 8 fourth in Pool A. This was a huge step up for the teams seeing many close calls on scoring goals and near misses. The standard of Wallingford School and Gillotts School the eventual winners, has set the bar really high for next year. A fantastic effort on our first time in the finals. Well done to all the players.

Miss D Green and Mr R Goldring



Year 7 Team

Thara Parthipan, Jessica Soares, Jessica Mallaghan, Amber Parker, Amy Neale, Abi Owen, Ruby Devlin, Hannah Mckenzie, Amelie Prior

Year 8 Team

Ella Littlewood, Harriet Symes, Nicole Petrova, Georgia Sanderson, Lexie Horn, Laura Bateman, Claudia Upellini, Amy Lawrence, Susannah Knowles



Annie Photos

Just a reminder that photos from the Annie production can be purchased by using the following link

[http@//bit.ly1U1BWuw](http://bit.ly1U1BWuw)

(the link is case sensitive and the final section includes the number one rather than capital letter I)

Year 8 visit to the First World War Battlefields – 24th March 2016

Fifty Year 8 students left Kidlington bleary-eyed at 3.30 am to visit Ypres in Belgium. We went to the Tyne Cot memorial where there are thousands of graves for UK and Commonwealth soldiers. It helped us to visualise the number of casualties there were in the war. We also went to Langemark and the German cemetery, which looked very different and also had a mass grave for 12,000 remains.

We went to the Flanders Field Museum and the trenches at Sanctuary Wood Hill 62. It was very interesting to learn about the soldiers' living conditions and how the war affected everyone. Our favourite part was the trenches as it was fun to go around them and explore them and go through the tunnels, which were really really dark. It helped to understand what it felt like to be in those trenches.

Victoria Crane and Anna Hopkin Year 8



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 – gabs4889@gosford-hill.oxon.sch.uk

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

TERM DATES – 2016 -2017

2015-2016

Term 5

Monday 11th April – Friday 27th May 2016

Term 6

Monday 6th June – Tuesday 19th July 2016

INSET DAYS: 1st July 2016. 20th July 2016

2016-2017

Autumn Term

Thursday 1st September – Friday 16th December 2016

Half Term Break – Monday 24th October – Friday 28th October 2016

ILP DAY: Monday 5th September 2016

INSET DAYS: Thursday 1st September and Friday 2nd September 2016, 7th October

(2 more INSET days to be decided within the Spring and/or Summer terms 2017)

Spring Term

Tuesday 3rd January – Friday 7th April 2017

Half Term Break – Monday 13th February – Friday 17th February 2017

Summer Term

Monday 24th April – Friday 21st July 2017

Half Term Break – Monday 29th May – Friday 2nd June 2017