

16th November 2011

Dear Parents

You probably feel as, I do, that we are positively rattling along through the varied colours, hues and moments of the Autumn Term; that the balmiest of mid-Novembers seems to have given way to a marginally chillier snap reminds us that we are edging closer towards Christmas and all the excitements which accompany it. Before then, an assortment of updates for you all, and news of some key dates to come.

Most importantly, the Chair of Governors wrote to you during half-term to announce the appointment of Alastair Morrison as my successor from September 2012. We were delighted that Alastair joined us at the weekend when he met the staff over tea on Friday afternoon, and on Saturday morning he welcomed the parents of the children who we were assessing for places in Year 3 and 4 for entry into the school next September.

I know that you will make the Morrisons' very welcome when they arrive, and that you will support them as warmly as you have Sue and I. To begin this process I have organised a programme of occasions during the Spring and Summer terms when you will have an opportunity to meet Alastair and Lizzie. I do hope you will make every effort to attend one the following drinks parties which Sue and I will be hosting next term;

6th February – 7.00-8.00pm – Drinks with parents of children in Years 5/6/7 (*Sports Hall*)

7th February – 7.00-8.00pm – Drinks with parents of children in Years 3/4 (*Sports Hall*)

You may recall from my letter to you before half-term that Richard Beach (Director of ICT and Head of Middle School) will leave us at the end of this term. I am very pleased that Richard, who will re-join his family in Nottinghamshire, has secured a teaching post at Ratcliffe College, and our congratulations to him. With Richard's departure we have reorganised the staffing structure for ICT across the school with the creation of two posts, both of which we have filled successfully in recent weeks. Paul Sumner will join us as our first dedicated Network Manager at the beginning of December. He is presently the Senior IT Technician at Woolmer Hill School, in Haslemere. To complete the plan, I have invited Graham Starkey to be our first ICT Subject Leader, and take on the role of Head of Middle School. He will assume these roles from September 2012, remaining as our Year 3 Leader and teacher until then. Graham is superbly qualified to lead ICT across the school, to encourage our colleagues to make active and innovative use of ICT in their teaching, and to

develop and support pupils learning in every subject area at all age levels in the school. What is more, he will bring considerable experience of assessment and monitoring to the tracking of pupils in Years 5 and 6.

In order to cover the gap in our ICT teaching which this arrangement creates over the next two terms, I have appointed Michael Spice (a recently qualified teacher) to teach ICT. He will give ICT support in other subjects at all levels of the school, and make a substantial contribution to the games and co-curricular programme. Michael is a national level hockey player, a qualified hockey umpire, a keen rackets player, and a climber and outdoor pursuits' enthusiast. I know he is certain to make a positive mark during his two terms with us.

Kate Morrison (Year 1), who will be on maternity leave from the end of this term, will be replaced temporarily by Miss Georgina Wale. Georgina will complete a maternity placement at Rokeby at the end of this term, and we shall ensure that the handover is effective as possible. Mrs Natalie Herbert will succeed Sarah Barford as our Nursery Practitioner and will join us in January. Natalie is a very experienced professional, and lives with her family in Cobham. Do help me to make our new colleagues very welcome when the time comes.

I have enclosed a copy of the School term dates for 2012-13 and I would ask you to note the amended dates for the Autumn Term half-term in 2012. After some consideration, and in response to feedback which we have received, we have decided to bring our October half-term dates more into line with many other schools. This aligns more elegantly with our later than normal start to the Autumn Term. I hope that this won't inconvenience too many of you, and will enable more of you to enjoy your holidays with all your children, some of whom may be at other schools.

Next term's calendar is already in an advanced draft state, and it won't surprise you to know that it won't be short on content! I know that many of us are so busy these days that advance warning of some key events (in this case some of those which I am hosting) can be helpful. So, in addition to the aforementioned drinks parties here are a few of them;

Tuesday 24th January – 7.00pm – An evening for parents with Martin Collier, the Headmaster of St John's School (Calvi Hall)

Tuesday 21st February – 7.30pm – The Headmaster's Dinner for Year 8 parents (Old Library and the Dining Hall)

Wednesday 7th March – 5.30-8.00pm – Senior Schools Fair (Sports Hall)

The current term has a steady and rewarding feel to it, and hasn't been short on highlights. I am sure many of you and your families were agog at the quality and spectacle of a simply splendid fireworks party, and perhaps I can convey our collective thanks to the organisers for this terrific occasion. Thank you so much. There has been some excellent sport, and the eagle eyed will have noted the clean sweep of rugby wins home and away last Saturday as a particular highlight of many (Tom Blackburn's five tries for the 2nd XV an extraordinary feat),

not to mention an away win in the boys and girls swimming match against Cranleigh this week (a clear measure of the incredible progress which we have made in this sport since the opening of our new swimming pool last year). Our Remembrance Day Service always captures the school in its very best and respectful light, and last week's gathering was no exception. I was very proud, indeed, of your children. Their conduct, bearing and appearance throughout was simply outstanding, as I am sure those of you who were present will testify. And equally impressive are the efforts of four members of the school who between them have raised over £1000 for the Shooting Star Hospice by completing a demanding sponsored cross country course. Well done to Frej and Siri Wrigley, and Connor and Grace Crompton.

We very much hope to welcome lots of Feltonfleet Grandparents to our annual **Christmas coffee morning for Grandparents** on **Friday 2nd December**. Please extend my invitation to your childrens' grandparents where you can. It begins at 9.30am, and it never ceases to be the happiest and most jovial of events - mince pies, mulled wine, carols and lots of friendship ensure that it is! And there is an event for you as well! Sue and I very look forward to joining you for an exciting Christmas evening on Saturday 3rd – the Christmas drinks party. Our thanks, once again, to the Friends of Feltonfleet for going to so much trouble on our behalves and making this such an exciting occasion. We are extremely grateful.

Do, please, get in touch if there is anything at all which I can help you with. In the meantime, thanks as ever for your support.

With best wishes,

Yours,