



BORDEN GRAMMAR SCHOOL *CHRISTMAS 2018 NEWSLETTER*



Dear all,

As the Christmas holiday season is upon us I'd like to take this opportunity to share some of the news about what has been occurring at Borden over recent weeks and to wish staff, students and parents plenty of well-deserved yuletide cheer!

Borden's Sporting Update:

Borden's boys have had a very successful Autumn Term in extracurricular. Numbers at training and clubs have been particularly good and there is no doubt that this has paid dividends in inter-school competitions.

- At the time of writing both Years 10 & 11 are in the quarter finals of their Kent Cup competition in football. Year 10 put in a 'barnstorming' performance in Round 4 of the cup, beating last year's champions 'The Howard School' to secure their place in the quarter final stages. Femi Kuku's winning goal in the last minute was described as a 'worldly!' by Mr Weller (who is not prone to hyperbole)! Year 11 have a squad bristling with talent and have also advanced to the quarter finals of the Kent Cup having outplayed Dover Grammar School 4-0 this week.
- Within Key Stage 3 both Year 8 & 9 Footballs teams were unlucky to exit the Kent Cup in rounds two and three respectively but both teams put in very strong performances in their district leagues. The Year 7 'A' team are through to the Kent Cup quarter final while the 'B' team were narrowly defeated this week in their quarter final match. The strength of the Year 7 footballers bodes well for their transition to 11-a-side next year.
- Particularly pleasing has been the fortunes of our older years as senior football has been very competitive this year with the 1st XI having the opportunity to finish in the top 3 with their final game last Friday. The 2nd XI won the East Kent League with a dramatic final round of games where any team in the top four could have finished victors. They move forward in the new play-off system in the New Year and were victorious in their third round league cup tie this week.

Overall to have four teams still in the Kent Cup at Christmas is a highly commendable achievement. Thank you to the teaching and support staff for all of their efforts and our parental support.

Term 2 has also seen Borden field a number of handball teams in two separate competitions. Both U13 and U15 teams have played very well against strong opposition. In the most recent tournament the U13's came first with the U15s finishing in 2nd spot. The Year 11 Handball team performed notably well against a talented Fulston side.

Well done to all of the boys that have participated in extracurricular clubs and school teams these two terms. Terms 3 and 4 will see more football fixtures as well as Borden's Hockey and Rugby teams taking the field.

Borden's cultural update:

Music Concerts: This term has lived up to the reputation of being the busy season for the school musicians. The school concert, held on Tuesday 4th December, was a great success and included pieces from the school band, choir, 'Jack's band' and a variety of soloists and duet pieces. The kazoo ensemble was particularly well received.

On the 10th of December, 35 boys from the school band and choir visited Highsted Grammar to perform in the Joint Schools Concert with Highsted and a range of primary schools from the local area. Students performed a variety of Christmas pieces in collaboration with the other schools present and put together an excellent performance for parents and friends. The Carol Service on the 17th December was another opportunity for students from the school choir and band to perform and the traditional carols were interspersed with some lighter entertainment.

In addition to the many festive concerts, clarinet and saxophone students also sat external exams this term. Congratulations to Toby Heather, Toby Clark, Marcus Louch, Harry Brown, Joseph Fowler, Jacob Spann and Luca Ascheri for their participation. We look forward to receiving your results.

This term the school guitar teacher, Laurence Lock, left to pursue a career as a guitar maker and we wish him well in his new venture. We are pleased to welcome a new guitar teacher, Jonathan Reeves in January. Any students who wish to start learning a new instrument should collect an information letter from Miss Phillips or alternatively download a copy from the school website.

Drama: Staff and students had a great time putting together the school pantomime; this year it was their own unique version of 'Snow White'. More than 25 students and 10 members of staff took part and it was very well attended by audiences on both the Thursday and Friday night, creating a wonderful atmosphere that put everyone in the Christmas mood. Mrs Stanley was very impressed with the talent of the students, all of whom took part with great enthusiasm and great humour, helping with all aspects of production. Well done boys!

Modern Foreign Languages: In October A-Level Spanish students experienced cultural and linguistic enrichment during a 5 day stay in Malaga, Andalucía. Pupils spent an afternoon at a language school honing their conversation skills and also took a day trip to Seville with Spanish students from a partner school 'Christine Picasso', making friends and speaking Spanish at every opportunity.





Trip leader Mrs Frost felt it the perfect way to enhance A-Level study and was impressed by the willingness of students to speak the language and sample the local tapas!

The Religious Studies Department was pleased to take Year 8 students to the Shri Swaminarayan Mandir, popularly known as the 'Neasden Temple'. It is the first traditionally built Hindu Temple outside of Europe. It was built in just three years, and the entire building is hand carved. To enhance their understanding of Hinduism, students were invited to participate in the sacred 'Arti Ceremony'. The ceremony involves lighting candles and offering them to the murtis (statues of the Deities) so they can be infused with their power, and then they are shared around the congregation to receive the blessing.

There was also a visit to the 'Understanding Hinduism' Exhibition, which tells the story of Hinduism and its contribution to the world. Students were pleased to learn that if it was not for Hindu mathematicians defining 'Zero' than binary code would not exist and therefore any form of digital entertainment would not exist! As we have come to expect, students were an absolute credit to themselves and the school; they were superb when it came to asking pertinent and thoughtful questions during the question and answer session. Their positive approach has helped to maintain our fruitful relationship with the mandir, and the RS Department would also like to thank parents and carers for their support in the trip.

Aspirational Sixth Formers! A group of Year 12's visited Cambridge University last week to gain an insight into applications to Oxbridge. It was a very successful visit with the students able to reflect on how they can improve their UCAS applications and target gaining entry into some of the top universities in the land.

Charity-minded Sixth Formers: In November an enthusiastic group of Year 12s organised a charity rag week for Abigail's Footsteps, a charity set up to support mothers who have experienced stillbirth. The team of students organised daily fund raising activities and enlisted the help of many members of the year group to assist in putting on a very inclusive fund raising week for the whole school community. Altogether students managed to raise over £1556, a great effort. The recent 'Christmas Jumper Day' was used to fundraise £1000 for the Thomas Cook Intensive Care Unit, King's College Hospital. Thank you to everyone, particularly Sixth Form students for showing student leadership.

Year 7 Christmas Fair: The school gym was given a Christmas makeover this term as the Year 7s launched their festive games and activities at the annual Christmas Fair. Usual gym activities of basketball and gymnastics were put on hold, as Catch the Sprout, Christmas Golf and Snowball Ping Pong became the choice of festive games. There was no lack of enthusiasm from the Year 7 boys running the stalls and activities that they had been busy designing and building since the beginning of the term. Cakes, biscuits and sweets were sold and won, and the PFA provided festive drinks and snacks to raise money for the school. This year the boys chose to raise money for the charity Porchlight in Canterbury. They are looking forward to meeting the Porchlight representative in January when they will hand over a cheque for £300.

Borden's PFA: Our relentless Parents & Friends Association has been fundraising with a great deal of success. As a result of the PFA's efforts £594 was raised via 'The Silent Auction' and £595 through the Christmas Raffle. There are probably pennies still being counted as you read this!

Anti-Bullying Training: The latest group of 20 Year 7 students were trained on 12 November to be Anti-Bullying Ambassadors. Organised by experts from Salus, the students spent a day engaged in discussion and role plays to develop the confidence, skills and knowledge to be able to support their peers and challenge bullying and unkind behaviour inside and outside school.

The afternoon was capped with the presentation of the school's Anti-Bullying award by Sally Williamson, Director of Salus. The Safe at Schools Award is in recognition of Borden's high quality anti-bullying work and demonstrates the school's commitment to creating a safe and inclusive environment.

Assistant Headteacher, Mr Artingstoll, was really impressed by Borden's new ambassadors and their commitment to this anti-bullying initiative. Students have been trained by Salus for a number of years and each form group has a core of students who are skilled in defusing situations and helping their peers. It's just one of the ways we look to create a happy and tolerant community here at Borden.

Personnel matters: Lisa Graham, Catering Assistant is retiring on Wednesday 19 December, she started at Borden in 1995: 23 years. Thank you for serving the students and staff so well. Enjoy retirement.

Bah Humbug - Mock Examinations: Year 11 - 13 mocks occur in Term 3 and, whilst everyone needs a break from work in the holiday, it is vital that all students make the most of this time to start revising for these assessments. The new national experience in 2018 saw tougher marking across exam boards and students cannot view mocks as an experience to 'show them what they don't know.' Rather it is imperative that students set themselves up well for their summer examinations by taking their preparation for January and February assessments seriously. At this stage, the process of revision is as important as the mock results. No Christmas is complete without packs of highlighter pens, flash cards and a revision schedule!

Christmas presents: Parents and pupils are strongly advised that valuable electronic devices, smart phones etc. should not be brought to school. Whilst they are not necessarily banned items, the school cannot take responsibility for their security.

Procedure for exceptionally severe weather conditions: Should there be severe weather in the period between Christmas and Easter the school will remain open unless widespread dangerous travel conditions prevent this from occurring. If this should occur we primarily communicate via **the home page of the school website** (last winter we found that our Facebook and Twitter links proved to be a speedy form of communication). In addition, information of closures and partial closures will also be posted (if still available) on www.kentclosures.co.uk and it is from this source that the radio stations will obtain their information. You should assume that the school is open unless such a message is broadcast.

Uniform: Generally standards of uniform are very good and reflect the pride students have in their school. We are very appreciative of parents' efforts and co-operation in this and many other areas. Whilst the uniform is not used at lunch time this does not mean that boys can wear non uniform items. Items such as jumpers, winter coats and school track suit tops should be worn to keep warm, not non uniform sweatshirts. Jumpers should be grey v-neck rather than any other colour or style. **'Badged' uniform is available at 'Forsters School Uniform Shop' on East Street.**

Start of term: The new term begins on **Thursday 3 January 2019** and will follow **Timetable Week 1**. **Early closure for staff training** on Tuesday 29 January 2019 at 2pm.

Best wishes to you and your family at this time.



Jonathan Hopkins, Headteacher

