

SCHOOL HOUSE

LENT TERM 2011



Dear Parents,

It is difficult to cover new ground in a letter of this type as the yearly cycle of school events lends a certain pattern to our activities here. However, whereas last year at this point I was reporting on a year of near-misses this time, as far as House competitions are concerned, I am able to report some outright successes.



In the two big senior events of the year as far as sport is concerned – the steeplechase and the Senior Hockey competition it was the School House boys who brought home the silverware. The steeplechase was a particularly good effort as the House recorded as many as five finishers (Sam Graham, Will Parkinson, Will Reay, Cameron Shaw and Andrew Findlay) in the top ten – an astonishing performance! Our victory on the hockey pitch, though perhaps more expected was nevertheless hard-won with Arjan Drayton-Chana and George Osborne to the fore.

We also carried off the House badminton title, too, with the team superbly marshalled by Jake Tobin and Sam Yung.

As last year though we did not convince the adjudicator in either Unison ('Never Gonna Give You Up' – remember Rick Astley?) or Harmony ('Loch Lomond') both saw excellent performances from the boys and Josh Benn, in particular, is to be congratulated on his efforts.

Many of you will have enjoyed Josh's brilliant performance in this year's Charity Cabaret, again technically 'driven' by School House's Hayden Ball and also featuring a host of other contributions from our boys including, of course, our resident 'comic genius', Sandy Harratt!



As I am always quick to point out, though, our life here is about more than just competitions and as the examination season looms into view I would urge you, as ever, to go through reports carefully with your sons in an attempt to pick out and act upon any specific advice



given by subject teachers. **It is also absolutely vital that those coming back to take examinations follow a regular, structured revision programme over the holiday period.**

If I may I would also like to share with you some thoughts regarding the boys' use of spare time and personal possessions. In this uber-technological age it seems to me that hardly a week passes without a member of the House bringing in a new phone, e-tablet, laptop, desktop or speaker system. We are certainly as a school now encouraging as many pupils as possible to have a networked laptop but other than that I really would urge you to exercise

some caution in the provision of expensive gadgetry. Whatever you may hear most of the time these devices are used for play and not for work.

As an English teacher I am perhaps oversensitive but I really am alarmed at the amount of their spare time the boys spend in front of screens.

Another facet of this culture is the extent to which 'competition' is engendered regarding who has the best phone, i-pod etc. This creates an unhealthy aspect to life in the House, especially amongst younger boys. Please, therefore, think twice before providing your sons with expensive devices. Are they really necessary? If in doubt please feel free to give me a call. Also please do bear in mind my previous request not to allow boys to bring to school unnecessarily powerful speaker systems which simply cause nuisance to others.

Next term begins on Monday 11th April and boarders should return by 8pm on that date with day boys in by 8.30am on Tuesday 12th.



We do hope you have an enjoyable and restful break,

Frank and Lyn Watson