

School House Summer Term 2010

Dear Parents,

It seems only a short time since the early part of the term when the House was, it seemed, gripped by 'Election fever'. I cannot recall ever having a group of youngsters quite as interested in current affairs as our present sixth formers and, in particular, Calum Settington and Josh Benn, both of whom realistically aim for a career in politics. Their enthusiasm fuelled the interest of many others and the Election Night party we hosted in our dining room was well attended not only because of the free food and drink on offer but also because the boys were genuinely interested in the outcome. Indeed Calum's stewardship of the school's Politics Society this year has been outstanding and his chairing of Repton's 'Question Time' in early May (handling a panel which included the local candidates from all the major parties) showed astonishing composure and knowledge in one so young. Josh will next year be his successor at the society's helm and we are rightfully proud of their leadership in this field.



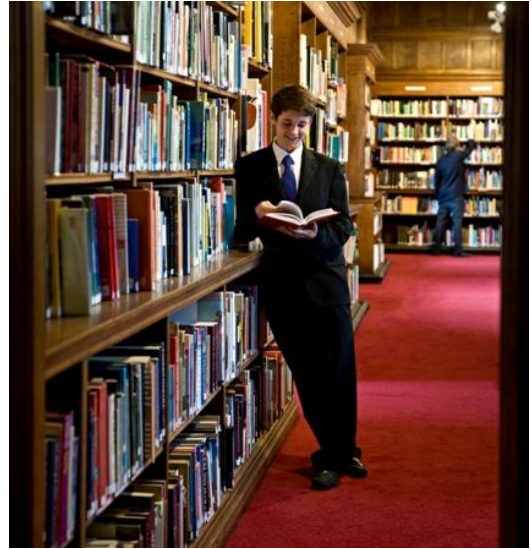
As this demonstrates there are many ways here at Repton for a pupil to make his or her mark and opportunities are not always restricted to the obvious spheres of academia, sport or public performance. That is not to say that the boys of School House do not excel in these areas. Sam Graham, our newly elected Head-Of-House, has been one of four of our boys who has been a regular in the 1st XI this term and he has also been appointed as captain of football for next year. There have been many other school cricket representatives and in our B block it seems almost all the boys have been involved in school teams on a Saturday afternoon! Hayden Ball has been 1st XI scorer and masterminded the technical support for the Junior School Play, several boys featured in the play and too many to mention have pursued their musical interests both publicly and privately



this term, including Blair Dunlop who leaves us after making a huge contribution during his time in the House. The Duke Of Edinburgh Award expeditions have tested the resolve of many, especially amongst the O block in the post examination period. And whilst we have more often been the bridesmaid than the bride in competitions this year – with a string of runners-up placings, the latest being in senior cricket – we did manage to win the junior and overall golf competitions again this term.

However, as I never tire of commenting, a boarding house community is about far more than winning cups. This year's outgoing upper sixth group have set a superb example to the boys below them with their good work ethic, their willingness to represent the House at any opportunity and their kindness and generosity of spirit. They have been most ably led by Sam Kingston-Jones whose own warmth and sensitivity has characterised all that they do. They leave a gap which will be hard to fill and I would like to thank them all for their massive contribution to School House.

I have hinted at the key to making a success of life here by indicating that there are a wealth of activities with which the boys can become involved regardless of their interests and abilities. Perhaps the biggest obstacle to such involvement is, in my opinion, modern technology. I often ask whether or not the boys see their laptops and phones as tools or toys. The ease with which a boy can now watch a video or play a computer game makes it very difficult for some boys to resist the temptation to waste their time and for this reason I would like to reiterate my request that you will not allow your sons to bring Games Consoles (such as Wii, X-box, Playstation) to school. Recent research which you might have seen reported in the national press suggests that modern technology is undermining the fundamentals of education; whilst clearly we need to embrace the many opportunities which technological advancement offers us we also need to guard against its becoming too dominant. There is still a place for reading a book in the range of leisure activities in which our youngsters indulge!



On an associated note might I discourage you from sending the boys to school with very expensive audio items, such as sub-woofers, elaborate speakers etc? Not only are these often far too powerful for the boys' rooms, resulting in 'noise nuisance' to many, but they can be damaged in the hurly-burly of a shared room and thus the cause of upset.

Please forgive me, also, for repeating my call for the boys to be well-groomed and turned out on their return in September. The school rules are clear on the matter of clothing, and hair should be of a reasonable length and appropriate colour.



It has, then, been a splendid year in School House but it ends on a sad note with the retirement, after twenty-eight years' service to the school, of our excellent chef, Mr. Michael Green. I am sure all of you are well aware of the splendid food which Michael has produced on a daily basis. To him the House was more than a place of work and he hugely valued his relationship with the boys, and their appreciation of his efforts. We wish him all the very best for the future.

I have not yet touched upon the subject of examinations. Clearly this term has seen well over half of the boys involved in public examinations which will go some way towards shaping their various futures. I genuinely feel that the vast majority of them applied themselves appropriately to their work and that there was, in the key weeks, a real atmosphere of industry in the place. I wish every one of them success on Results Day.

With many thanks for your continued support and all good wishes for an excellent summer,

Frank and Lyn Watson