



DITCHAM PARK SCHOOL Past Staff Association Newsletter

Email: paststaff@ditchampark.com

May 2019

Dear Friends,

Welcome to our first newsletter of 2019. The year seems to be flashing by at incredible speed and unfortunately, I have been unable to attend any school events during the spring term. However, I hope you have enjoyed reading the Headmaster's weekly newsletters and keeping in touch with what's been going on.

Annual Lunch: On Friday 26th April some 25 of us gathered at The Brookfield Hotel in Emsworth for the Association's Annual Lunch. This was the first time that I had organised it after it had been managed so superbly by Pam Richards in the past, but I needn't have worried; the hotel staff were marvellous and we had a wonderful 3 course lunch. I was delighted that the Headmaster, Graham Spawforth, was able to join us again this year and we enjoyed hearing all about the school's recent successes and developments. I have reproduced his address in this newsletter for the interest of those who were unable to be present. It was lovely to catch up with former colleagues and also to see some new faces, something that Paddy made reference to, saying that it was nice that the spread of colleagues in the Association was now covering the school's 40 year history.





Headmaster's Report:

The School has enjoyed a lot of success and development.

Success

We achieved very good GCSE results last Summer. One boy received the new Grade 9 in every subject and was one of only approximately 200 pupils in the country to achieve this. He was Runner Up in the Independent Schools' Whitbread Memorial Prize for Academic Achievement and Contribution to the life of the School.



Five pieces of pupil artwork won awards in the Independent Schools' Association Regional Art Exhibition and were then entered in the National Art Exhibition where a piece of GCSE ceramic work won 1st Prize.

Last summer one of our Form 5 girls became Hampshire County Champion in the U17 Girls' 800m. She then qualified for the English Schools' National Championships where she came second and was selected to run for England in a home International where she won a Bronze Medal. Another pupil became U18 Junior Sailing Champion for the Laser Class.

A team of Form 3 pupils entered an Engineering Competition. The challenge was to research and decide on the best way to provide power to a remote island community and to feed the inhabitants. The team decided that wind turbines would be best form of power and hydroponics would be best way to feed the community. They built a model of the island and delivered a presentation to panel of Engineers. They won the award for the most innovative and creative solution to the Engineering problem.

Ditcham Park School was also shortlisted for the ISA National STEM Award.

Development

We have developed the front entrance to the school to improve access and to provide a more welcoming experience.

After a prolonged and frustrating building period we have just opened our new Nursery. It is a unique and exciting building - situated at the front of the school in the cottage garden, it is circular in design and provides a wonderful outdoor play area and a lovely indoor play/learning area.

Exciting Curriculum

The School's ethos and mission remains unchanged. We are a school which provides a nurturing and supportive approach to education. We are developing an exciting curriculum with a focus on Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Maths (STEAM) to provide our pupils with the technological and creative skills to equip them to prosper in the 21st century. As already mentioned, our STEM programme has already been recognised by the ISA and we organised a very successful STEM Fair last summer. This year we have focused on creativity and we will be taking all pupils from Uppers to Form 4 off timetable for three days in the last week of term to work on developing creative skills with professional artists. Pupils will perform their creative skills or exhibit their work in an **Arts Festival** which will take place on the evening of **Wednesday 10th July**. Members of the Past Staff Association are very welcome to attend this event. **Graham Spawforth**

Enclosed with this Newsletter is a copy of the Headmaster's Newsletter to parents, for your interest.

Forthcoming Events

Those of you on email will have been aware that the Headmaster and the Head of Juniors extended an invitation to all Past Staff to Open Morning which took place on Saturday 11th May and the Key Stage 1 Country Dancing which took place on Thursday 16th May. I am sorry that I was unable to get a written invitation out in time to those not on email, but hope that others may have made you aware. If any of you were able to attend, I would be grateful to receive some feedback to include in the next newsletter.

The Headmaster has also extended an invitation to us for the following events taking place during the summer term:

Senior Sports Day	Tuesday 25 th June	Playing fields*
Junior Sports Day	Wednesday 26 th June	Playing fields*
Arts Festival	Wednesday 10 th July	6:00-9:00pm Walled Garden & MPB
Founder's Day & Prizegiving**	Friday 12 th July	1:30-3:45pm Martin Pryce Building

* Weather dependent – will take place a week later if cancelled.

** A separate invitation will be issued nearer to the time giving more details.

If you would like to attend any of these events, please email Mrs Lisa Tosdevine who is managing the arrangements. Her email address is: lisa.tosdevine@ditchampark.com. I hope to see some of you there.

Association Events



I am giving thought as to what events members might enjoy for getting together and to this end there will be another coffee morning at Stansted Park Garden Centre in the coming months.

In addition I am looking into a Fish & Chip lunch on the Chichester Canal and a Wine and Cheese Tasting Evening at Vin in Emsworth which I hope may be of interest. Details are given below for your interest and I will provide more information when I have dates etc.

Wine & Cheese Tastings



Wine and Cheese tastings are the perfect entertainment for the start of your evening. A mix of education and fun, you will get to try 6 wines paired with 3 delicious cheeses. We look at how different wines pair with different cheeses and how they both change in style and flavour once tried next to each other. You will try the wines blind which takes away any pre conceived idea you have and its relied purely on the taste buds. Each tasting lasts for about an hour and a half and can be booked on any Mon, Weds or Thurs and Mon to Sat for

groups of 4 or more. Cost is £15pp and subject to availability.



A generous portion of fish and chips from Chichester's own award winning LA Fish, tea or coffee, one glass of wine, real ale or fruit juice are all included on our cruise which takes around 2 hours. Additional wine or beer is available to buy separately should you wish.

The canal is a beautiful retreat close to the city, easily accessible by public transport. Enjoy the reflections on the water and the unique views of the cathedral and South Downs. As you glide past the wild flowers and reed beds, watch out for herons and kingfishers in their natural habitat. The cost is £20/head.



With very best wishes.

Alison Chapman

I thought you might enjoy this picture of a bluebell wood at Stansted Park taken during the glorious Easter weekend. There was actually a herd of deer trotting through but you can't see them in the photo!!

