



The
Bulmershe
School
INSPIRING POTENTIAL,
ACHIEVING TOGETHER

Bull's Eye

The Bulmershe School Newsletter

February 2018

HEADTEACHER'S AWARDS CELEBRATE SUCCESS



Current year 12 and last year's Year 13 students gathered at school just before Christmas for the annual Awards Evening.

This event not only gives students the opportunity to collect their exam certificates and catch up with friends whom they may not have seen since the summer, but also to celebrate their magnificent academic achievements in the past year.

Three members of the Senior Bulmershe Ensemble, Jasmine, Jade and Imogen started the evening by performing a song composed by Jade. Then students who had collected their

exam certificates were invited on stage to be congratulated by Mrs Woodfin, Headteacher. Former Headteacher Ms Reynolds, now Principal of Frome College in Somerset, kindly gave her time to attend the evening, delivering a rousing and amusing address.

The 37 very deserving award winners were then invited on stage to accept their awards from Ms Reynolds and listen to citations written by their teachers. Many students had brought members of their family who looked on proudly.

Congratulations to all award winners. A full list of winners can be found on the school website.

Former Headteacher Emma Reynolds is pictured above after presenting the Headteacher's Award to Erin Foster and Daniel Percival.

"This is a great school.." - come and see it for yourself

□ *'The headteacher is passionate about wanting the very best outcomes for all pupils. A welcoming and inclusive culture, with a shared drive for continual improvement, is evident from the top down. Leaders, teachers and pupils are rightly proud of their school.'*

□ *'One parent spoke for many when they commented, "This is a great school where pupils' individuality is acknowledged and respected then nurtured and nourished to give them the opportunity to be the best they can be".'*

From the Ofsted Inspection Report, November 2017.

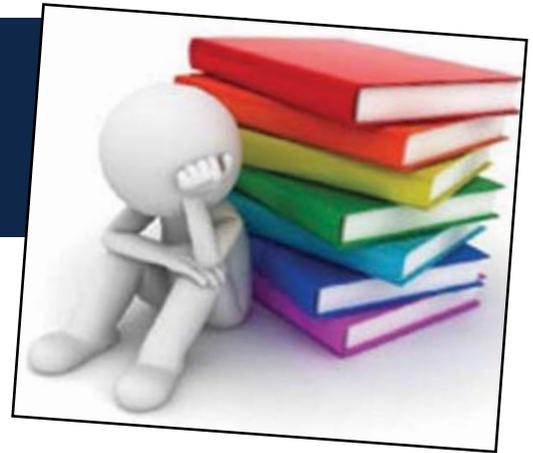
Come and see for yourself: due to popular demand the school is hosting extra open mornings for parents of prospective students.

Please join us on Monday 5 and Wednesday 7 March, 9.00 - 11.00 am, for a tour of the school and a Q&A session with the Headteacher and Leadership Team. Reserve a place by calling the school office: 0118 935 3353.



Stay up-to-date with the school website: www.thebulmersheschool.com

HOW TO HELP WITH REVISION AND EXAM STRESS: *a guide for parents*



Bulmershe students will be taking their mock examinations in the week commencing 5 March and revision should be well underway. The next term is likely to be a stressful time for many of them. Here are some tips for parents to help reduce the stress.

All students sometimes fall behind, feel demotivated or overwhelmed, or struggle with the balance of social, work and school demands. When your child feels like this, berating and threatening them will not help. Talk to them about the issues, acknowledge their feelings and adopt a sensible attitude to finding a solution.

The best thing your child can do is get organised and come up with a plan. Make sure that they know what they are doing and have a quiet space to do it in.

Be flexible – use the 80/20 rule. If your child is sticking to what they are supposed to be doing

80% of the time, they will be doing alright.

Agree with your child a balance between work and social life and stick to the agreement. Again flexibility is key – if a special night comes up, agree that they can make up the work at a specified future time.

Teenagers often take an all or nothing approach to difficulties – ‘I’ve messed up this essay, I might as well give up.’ Encourage them by helping them to see their difficulties in perspective.

On Tuesday 20 February (6:00pm – 7:00pm) there will be an evening in school for parents of Year 11 and Sixth Form students on coping with exam stress and different revision techniques. More information for this will follow shortly.

Do you live with a young person suffering from anxiety, panic and stress?

Anxiety can take its toll, not only on the child’s life but also on yours. There are many pressures that can contribute to your child feeling anxious and their anxiety can be very destructive and leave you both feeling helpless.

The school has organised a workshop to equip parents with the skills to help their children to cope and overcome anxiety and stress.

The workshop will be delivered by ARC Counselling Service, whose professional counsellors will support each step of the training, which will take place on Tuesday 20

March, from 6.30pm to 8:00pm. If you are a parent of a Bulmershe student in Years 10 – 13 then please contact our Reception to book your place, either by email at reception@bulmershe.wokingham.sch.uk, or by phoning the school on 01189 353 353

The closing date for applications is Tuesday 13 March, but hurry as places are limited.

If you have any questions, please contact Miss Roberts at kroberts@bulmershe.wokingham.sch.uk or Miss Bradley at eb Bradley@bulmershe.wokingham.sch.uk (or call the school number).



Maths master classes are popular with primary school students

In the Autumn term the Sixth Form Centre was full of excited Year 5 and 6 students from Willowbank and Redlands Primary Schools and later joined by their parents.

The students completed the highly successful maths master classes at the Bulmershe School with the aid of the inspiring Bulmershe teachers and students.

The activities and puzzles were both a fun and an interesting way of engaging and learning maths, which provided the youngsters with an opportunity to extend their mathematical knowledge and enhance their understanding in a highly stimulating environment. The activities also provided real life experiences of many aspects of mathematics like symmetry, geometry and application of sequences in code breaking.

The students displayed much energy and enthusiasm during and after the activities, which provided the ingredients needed to inspire the next generation of Mathematicians.



Success for Bulmershe teams in Rotary Club Tech Tournament

The Bulmershe School hosted the Rotary Club's Technology Tournament in December. The challenge for the 17 teams from Wokingham schools was to plan, design and make a space capsule launcher, able to launch a golf ball capsule over 3m into the air, pass through a positioned metal loop and land close to the launch pad.

Bulmershe entered four teams into the tournament at different difficulty levels: Team 1 (Foundation challenge); Trinity McFarlane, Eva Cramer (Year 9), Charlotte Ibbotson and Audrey Hucker (Year 8); Team 2 (Foundation challenge); Emilia Clacy, Jenna Conneely, Erin Grace and Hermione Taylor (Year 8); Team 3 (Foundation challenge); Adam Elder, Hannah Manson, Ella Moffatt and Amy Smith (Year 9); Team 4 (Intermediate challenge): Kwadwo Oppong-Mensah, Yogi Paudyal, Finnuala O'Higgins and Biraj Rai.

Teams 1 and Team 4 were awarded first prize in the Foundation challenge and Intermediate challenge.

It was a brilliant day and a lot of talented students took part and showed off their unique ideas to solve a difficult challenge.

Well done to all of the students who participated and congratulations to the winners.



The winning teams: Team 1, left, and the Intermediate Team, below, pictured with Mr Hulley, Head of Careers & Enrichment/SMSC



From the school governors

The Bulmershe School governing body is appreciative of what has been achieved in the school so far this year. I mention a few exciting things: an overwhelmingly positive Ofsted report; a successful and enthusiastic passage of the leadership torch to Amanda Woodfin, her Deputy Heads and other leaders, who are motivated to drive the school even further while maintaining its humanistic and person-centric ethos; an extremely informative and successful new Forum for parents, teachers and our children; new initiatives in almost all aspects of Teaching and Learning and student support across the year groups; and the dreamlike performance of *Les Miserables* which brought tears, pride and joy to many faces!

As a governing body we are starting to see why the school is doing steadily so well. It is a collective and mutually supportive culture, where no one is left behind, while everyone wishes to work together within a genuinely respectful and supportive culture.

The governors spent our last meeting carefully debriefing and making sense of the Ofsted report and developing a shared understanding of our priorities for further growth - I do not write 'improvement' because 'growth' is something larger and more qualitative, including the well-being and personal growth of the whole school community.

The recent Ofsted report contained a gentle

push to further grow how Bulmershe leads and supports high quality teaching, learning and improves the outcomes of its more gifted and talented students. Being the governor with responsibility for the more able students, I would say that our vision agrees with Ofsted's, albeit this will be happening in a manner that serves and supports the whole school.

Within this context there are two exciting new initiatives in Bulmershe for the most able students across the years. These will include 1) more effective curriculum planning and cross-subject sharing of the best teaching and learning techniques across teaching teams and subjects; 2) training middle leaders and teachers how to stretch upper band students - including a novel project called 'Thinking Harder Strategies' and; 3) cross-year-group collaboration among more able students, including mentoring and peer learning and teamwork skills; also the provision of research skills training for students.

Governors are very pleased with these advances as first steps toward improving progress, attainment and excellence of the upper band students and disadvantaged ones in the most able student's group. It is still early to share examples and stories as well as results of these exciting new projects as the mid and end term reports shall be shared with governors in the next months. We therefore commit to share some highlights in a future issue of this bulletin.



This edition's governors' report is by Dr Kleio Akrivou, the governor with responsibility for the overview of the performance of the school's more able students.

From the Headteacher

The new year has got off to a busy start with mock exams for Years 11,12 and 13.

Exam stress and anxiety is something we take very seriously, and in January we hosted colleagues from the Mental Health Champions programme, who held a training session for key staff from Bulmershe and other local schools, demonstrating coping mechanisms and tips to be shared with students suffering from stress, anxiety or low self-esteem. A workshop on anxiety held in November for parents of Years 7 to 9 proved so popular that we are holding another on 20 March for parents of students in Years 11 – 13 (see page 2 for details).

Our Sixth Form open evening on 15 January was attended by over 200 parents and students, keen to learn about the opportunities in our Sixth Form next academic year.

'ParentMail' is an on-line service, which will be available for booking appointments at parents' evenings for all years. These and other dates for

your diary are as follows:

- ☐ Mon 12 to Fri 16 February; half term break. School resumes at 8.25am on Mon 19 February.
- ☐ Mock exams continue with GCSE MFL speaking, week commencing Mon 19 February.
- ☐ Year 8 Parents' evening; Thurs 22 February.
- ☐ Year 8 Options evening; Thurs 8 March, 4.30 – 6pm.
- ☐ Year 8 Options interviews; week commencing Mon 12 March.
- ☐ Year 10 Parents' evening; Thurs 22 March.
- ☐ Parent Forum; Wednesday 28 March - topic to be announced.
- ☐ Thurs 29 March; school finishes for the Easter holiday at 12.20.

Finally, may I please politely remind you that the disabled parking bays in front of the school's visitor reception are specifically for our disabled parents/carers. Please ensure that they are kept clear.

With best wishes for a restful half term break.



Amanda Woodfin
Headteacher

SPORTS NEWS

Seventh place for Renée in cross country competition: congratulations to Year 10 student Renée Whalley (*pictured right*) who came seventh in a large field at the Berkshire Schools cross country competition at Newbury Showground. Renée ran really well in very difficult conditions but typical of a cross country race. Renée will now represent Berkshire in the Inter County Schools Cross Country Competition on Saturday 3 February, again at Newbury Showground. Well done on a great performance.

Year 10 boys football team progress in County Cup: The Year 10 boys football team are successfully through to the next round of the County Cup after beating Slough & Eton 5-1 in the preliminary round. The boys dominated the first half but only led 2-1 at half time thanks to goals from Aaron Whitehead and Kyle Davies. Further goals in the second half from Richmond Rono, Calvin Beresford and a second for Whitehead meant the boys now play away at Theale Green in the first round proper.



Last term we were delighted to welcome 25 Year 5 students from local primary schools. We were highly impressed by their knowledge and enthusiasm and we are sure that we have several new doctors and chemists in the making. The passion and desire to learn was highly

commendable and made the entire experience a joy for all involved.

The Year 5 Science Club in The Bulmershe School continues soon - for details see the panel below. We look forward to seeing your budding scientists!

YEAR 5 SCIENCE CLUB AT THE BULMERSHE SCHOOL
Every Wednesday 3:30pm - 4:30pm for 6 weeks.
Starting 21 February until 28 March. Limited spaces.
Please email to sign up: jgrier@bulmershe.wokingham.sch.uk