



## **The Crypt School Newsletter Term 1 2015**

Dear Parents,

I do hope that the first few weeks of term has been both a rewarding and enjoyable period for your son or daughter. Now almost one month into term, I am sure that our new Year 7 and Year 12, and those others who are new to the School, have settled in and are making good progress with their academic work.

We have the largest ever number of pupils in the main school and students in the sixth form. In Year 7, we now have five forms of entry and our Year 12 is the biggest it has ever been. However, we are still able to offer all pupils and sixth form students that close and personal support that has always been the greatest strength of the School.

I am very pleased indeed to report to you some excellent examination results this summer. Our GCSE students achieved record numbers of A\*-A grades and the overall pass rate was 97.5% achieving 5 or more A\*-C grades, including English and Maths. At AS level, our Year 12 students achieved the best ever AS results in the School's history – 54% of grades were A-B and the overall pass rate was 98% A-E. I was also very pleased with our A Level results and the destinations our Year 13 leaves went onto. 81% of grades were A\*-C and 95% A\*-D. My congratulations to all our students on their own achievements and of course, my thanks must go to both my teachers and to parents for all the hard work and support that was given to the examination students over the course of the last academic year.

As we embark on a new academic year there are some new staffing appointments that parents will want to know about.

Mr Oliver Sandell joins us as Head of English & Drama; Mr Julian Whittaker, Director of Music; Mr Julian Boon, teacher of Physics; Mrs Nicola Bowes, Chemistry teacher; Mr Mike Carolan, DT teacher; Mr Brian Elloway, maternity cover for Mrs Palmer in ICT; Mrs Susan Green, Science and Physics teacher; Mr Martin Mitchell, Music and Music Technology teacher; Mr Patrick Neman, teacher in charge of Psychology; Mrs Amanda Whiles, English teacher; Miss Eleanor Porter, cover supervisor; Mrs Nicola Turner, librarian, and Miss Eloise Fennell and Miss Ellen McGillivray - teaching assistants. All have settled into the school well and already made significant contributions to the life of the school.

There are three other staff announcements:

Mr Andy Hamilton has decided to step aside from his Head of Department position following 5 years of developing the department and leading it through significant change. Mr Hamilton will continue to work as valued member of the Physical Education department and I would like to thank him for the contribution that he has made to both the curriculum and to extra-curricular activities.

I am also very sorry to announce that Mrs Dyer-Price is currently off school and recovering from an operation. Mr Kevin Croker will be covering for Mrs Dyer-Price until she returns to school in the new year. We wish Mrs Dyer-Price a full and swift recovery.

Kevin Downes has decided to step down from his role as Head of Physics with immediate effect. He will however continue to teach within the Physics department for two days each week and lead the engineering work of the school. Mr Downes had planned to step down from his full-time role after Christmas, but due to a number of family commitments has decided to bring that date forward to now.

I would like to thank Mr Downes for all his hard work as Head of Department over the past few years and I am very pleased indeed that he will continue to teach physics and lead our engineering work at the school.

Parents will be very pleased that an external audit of the school, based on the new Ofsted framework for evaluating schools, was carried out at the end of September and has judged that all areas of the school are outstanding. Those areas include: teaching, learning and assessment; school leadership and management; governance; the behaviour and safety of pupils, and the quality of the Sixth Form. We are delighted with this outcome and I am grateful to my staff who work tirelessly to ensure your son / daughter achieves their very best.

Academic Mentoring Day was established over 10 years ago to help with the process of target setting. We have recently carried out a full review of these two days with parents and staff, and have concluded that these two days are no longer as effective as they once were. Therefore we have decided that the two Academic Mentoring Days scheduled for this year (Friday, 20<sup>th</sup> October and Friday, 17<sup>th</sup> June) will now not occur and will become normal teaching days. All pupils will therefore be required to be in school on both those days for all of their lessons. The two Academic Mentoring days were designed to give an opportunity to both pupils and their tutor to set targets in all subject areas at a time when target setting was not a routine part of the culture of the School. However, over the past decade, target setting has indeed become a routine part of the students' experience at The Crypt School, rendering that meeting, although valuable, to a greater extent redundant.

Parents may be aware that schools are coming under increasing financial pressures – budgets are tightening and costs are set to increase. For example - the money we receive for each Year 12 and Year 13 student has been falling over the past two years and national insurance and employer contributions to the teacher pension fund are set to increase significantly this year and next. With these pressures in mind, I shall be sending home a letter to all parents/carers in the next few weeks asking you all for a voluntary financial contribution to the School to help us both sustain and improve over time our broad and varied educational offer. With your support, we will be able to continue to offer the very best education within the state sector and indeed continue to improve that offer over time. I do hope that you will be able to contribute whatever you feel able to, to help support your school during this academic year.

I am very pleased with both the behaviour and the very positive way in which all our pupils and students in the sixth form have conducted themselves since their return to school in September. They are all a real credit to both the School and to their parents and families.

Everyone within our school community – pupils, staff and parents – can look forward to a successful year ahead. I wish all pupils and students in the sixth form, the very best of luck in all that they undertake this year – I know they will, both individually and collectively, rise to whatever challenges they may face and they should all have great confidence in their ability to excel in all that they do this year.

With best wishes



Headmaster

#### **Pupil Entry into School**

Please would parents remind their sons and daughters of the need to take care when entering and leaving the school site.

Those who either drive a car, ride a motorcycle or cycle to school, should be particularly careful when entering or exiting the site and take care not to travel too fast – the speed limit on the drive is 5MPH. There are no vehicle movements on the school site between 3.10pm and 3.25pm each day, to allow for the safe movement of all pupils off the site.

Please can parents also give consideration to local residents by **NOT** parking across driveways blocking access to and from their property. Thank you

## Dates for your Diary :

8 <sup>th</sup> October	Y7 Laptop and CSPTA evening – 6.00 p.m.
12 <sup>th</sup> October	Y12/13 PP (Pupil Progress) grades issued
13 <sup>th</sup> October	Early closure at 1.10 p.m. for all students in preparation for Open Day
14 <sup>th</sup> October	Open Day for Year 5 and Year 6 boys and their parents
19 <sup>th</sup> October	Yrs 7 – 11 PP grades issued
20 <sup>th</sup> – 24 <sup>th</sup> Oct	Y9 visit to Koln
21 <sup>st</sup> October	CSPTA meeting – 7.00 p.m.
22 <sup>nd</sup> October	Music Evening – 7.00 p.m. free tickets available from the school office.
23 <sup>rd</sup> October	End of Term 3.15 p.m.

26<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> Oct Half Term

2 <sup>nd</sup> November	Inset Day – no students in school
3 <sup>rd</sup> November	School Return – 8.35 a.m. – Week 1
5 <sup>th</sup> November	Senior Maths Challenge Y8 Parents' Evening – 5.30 – 7.30 p.m.

### Parliament & Languages Day – Mrs Reynolds

We are pleased to host the UK Parliament outreach facilitator on Weds 30<sup>th</sup> September. She will be speaking to our year 9 cohort in assemblies and workshops throughout the day on issues such as: understanding of democracy, debating skills, political parties, voting systems and campaigning for change. This day will help develop skills of political awareness and an understanding of fundamental British values.

### Careers Fair – Wednesday, 27<sup>th</sup> January 2016 – Mrs Reynolds

We will have representatives attending from the university and college sectors, as well as apprenticeship providers, gap year organisations and a host of local and national career organisations including the forces. All students in KS4 & 5 will have a dedicated time slot in the hall, and the lower school students and parents are warmly welcomed to attend during the lunch hour. This day is exceedingly useful for future career planning, and to discover the skills required to access courses and employment.

We are always looking for new companies, Further Education providers, and apprenticeship leaders to attend and give our students careers advice and guidance – therefore if any parents feel they have the skills and the time that they could offer at our Careers Fair, please contact Mrs Wales on [swales@crypt.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:swales@crypt.gloucs.sch.uk), who will then send further details.

### Invictus

We were delighted to be presented with a copy of W E Henley's poem Invictus signed by Francois Pienaar, which also has a picture of Francois shaking hands with Nelson Mandela. There are only 10 signed copies, which have been brought about by Paul James, an Old Cryptian and Chair of Gloucester City Council, who bumped into Francois Pinnear in Villamoura Marina when on holiday and subsequently made contact. Marketing Gloucester via Jason Smith did the hard work of putting the print together ready for signature. The Crypt School's copy will be displayed in the Henley Room.

*Out of the night that covers me,  
Black as the pit From pole to pole,  
I thank whatever gods may be  
For my unconquerable soul.*

*In the fell clutch of circumstance  
I have not winced nor cried aloud.  
Under the bludgeonings of chance  
My head is bloody, but unbowed.*

*Beyond this place of wrath and tears  
Looms but the Horror of the shade,  
And yet the menace of the years  
Finds, and shall find, me unafraid.*

*It matters not how strait the gate,  
How charged with punishments the scroll,  
I am the master of my fate:  
I am the captain of my soul.*

*William E Henley*

# MUSIC

**Year 7 instrumental showcase – Mr Whittaker** Year 7 pupils were treated to a lively afternoon concert and demonstrations from each of our visiting music teachers. Each of our music teachers gave a demonstration on how to play the instrument, the key features and then performed some exciting pieces; from classical to jazz! It was impressive to hear the sheer skill and virtuosity of the Crypt School music staff and the pupils sat enthralled giving resounding applause after each performance! From the trombone to bassoon, violin to organ, the full range of instruments we offer tuition on was demonstrated. Star students Liam Fleet and David Crowe demonstrated what ambition, hard work and enthusiasm can lead to as they gave superb performances on the bassoon and euphonium! It was also heart-warming to see Oliver Feighan duet with Mrs Gillett-Smith on the violin, on a sonata by JS Bach, before he performed some mesmerisingly fast folk tunes. The pupils clapped along with huge smiles on their faces! It really was a wonderful afternoon and an inspirational experience for the pupils. The benefits of learning a musical instrument are endless and research has shown that academic performance, wellbeing and confidence can improve as a result. It is pleasing to note that many pupils in year 7 are taking in the opportunity. If you would like your son to learn an instrument, please contact Director of Music, Mr Whittaker. New learners are always welcome.

**Year 7 endangered instrument competition** We have managed to secure funding to provide 15 weeks free tuition and the loan of an instrument free of charge to 15 year 7 and year 8 boys. These include the low brass instruments; euphonium, trombone and tuba. The lessons have started enthusiastically and the boys will be performing together in a concert soon.

**Music Evening Thursday October 22nd 7pm** Main Hall. We have had an incredibly vibrant start to the year. The orchestra and choir are very busy, working on pieces by Mozart, Tchaikovsky and Rutter for their debut performance of the term. Some exciting new ensembles, led by students will also feature, including the brass, woodwind and percussion ensembles, plus string group. Our new big band, led by Edi May and Mr Snow, will also perform, before preparing for the National Concert Band championships in Cheltenham, on November 15th. The concert will display an exciting array of musical talent and is not to be missed! Ticket are FOC and available from the Main School Office.

**Choir performance at Olympic Park. Saturday November 7th** Thirty singers from The Crypt will be joining other schools from Gloucestershire and across the country on November 7th to perform at the England v New Zealand rugby match. Very exciting indeed!

**Music Concert Tour to Salzburg: July 3rd-8th 2016.** We are about to launch a concert tour for the choir, orchestra and jazz band to Salzburg, Austria, during activities week, 2016. We shall be performing at one of Mozart's churches with the choir and orchestra and the choir hopefully be giving an unaccompanied recital of choral music written by Gloucestershire composers, in Salzburg Cathedral. This tour is strictly first come first served and promises to be musically and culturally very rewarding. We will also be visiting Mozart's birthplace and other culturally significant places of interest. One not to be missed for our flourishing musical community.

### Non-uniform Day & Cake Sale

Many thanks to all who contributed to the cake sale and wore non-uniform on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> September to raise funds for CMT (Charcot-Marie-Tooth disease) and also the township in South Africa, which our tour will visit in 2016. Sam Baller, Y8, who suffers from CMT introduced the charity to the school in full assembly, and also spoke about how the disease affected him. Sam's CMT cake sale raised £218.91 and non-uniform raised £864.43. So CMT will get £653.34 and South Africa £430, both wonderful amounts for excellent causes.

### The Future is Wild – Year 8

This is once again going to run during the week beginning 16<sup>th</sup> November, with a Celebration of the students' work on Thursday, 3<sup>rd</sup> December at 6.00 p.m. Also on this evening will be our **Christmas Fair** – more details on both events to follow shortly.



*Follow the latest news from Crypt School on Twitter! The @cryptschool Twitter feed is up and running again so you can keep up-to-date with our many events and celebrate our students' achievements as they happen.*

## Sports Report

**Athletics 2015 – Mr Hart** Again athletics at Crypt goes from strength to strength with both team and individual success.

Our Junior and Intermediate teams both achieved an outstanding performance in the schools cup. Both teams made it through to the regional final with our junior team making the A final. The intermediate team eventually came 3<sup>rd</sup> with some outstanding individual performances but the stand out team was the juniors. They made the A final and missed out on winning that by a mere 13 points. Success at that would have meant a place in the National Final but to be ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Southwest is outstanding. They deservedly went on to be Crypt Sports Team of the year.

Individuals

2 students deserve a special mention this year by reaching the English Schools final. To achieve this they have to achieve a qualification standard and be ranked in the top 3 in the Southwest. Joel Townley competed in the triple jump and with a jump of 12m 12cm came 9<sup>th</sup> but his seasons best of 12m 81cm would have placed him second. He finished the season ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in the country. George Barton is relatively new to athletics but his progression at Hammer is incredible. In just 2 years he has improved his throw to an incredible 44m 52cm this ranks him 13<sup>th</sup> in the country and he came 10<sup>th</sup> on the day. We are all ready in training for 2016 so good luck to all our athletes.

**Sports Awards – Mr Hart** This is our 3<sup>rd</sup> year of celebrating the sporting success of our students and one of the most memorable. Apart from congratulating all the students on their efforts and achievements we were all inspired by our guest speaker Jamie McDonald. He is a world record fund raiser and some of his endurance challenges are mind blowing. There were numerous awards given out for specific sports both in and out of school as well as PE awards for continued effort. The most sought after awards were for Junior and Senior Sportsperson of the year, as well as Team of the Year. This year it was very competitive, but well done to all those achieving the following awards. Photographs will be in the School Magazine, produced in June 2016.

**Junior sportsperson of the year**

Gold : George Barton

Silver : Harry Atkinson

Bronze : Leon Levell

### **Senior Sportsperson of the year**

Gold : Luke Stephens

Silver : Dan Annfield

Bronze : Jevaughn Gayle

**Team of the Year** : Junior Athletics Team.

**Olympic Stadium Tournament – Year 7s** On Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> August, the Year 7's participated in a 12 aside touch rugby tournament at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. Despite the early 6:00am start, the boys were still enthusiastic and determined to show the rest of the school what they are made of.

Mr Hart and Miss Barton, alongside our guest coach and referee Mr Barton, led the team of mixed ability in speed and skills, through an undefeated streak without conceding any tries. A combination of footballers, rugby players and members who hadn't played rugby before were able to unite and do not only Crypt proud but also themselves and their families. Mr Harts Olympic drive alongside Mr Barton's experience and Miss Barton's love for the game enabled a solid foundation to be laid, for the boys to excel in the sport throughout their time at the school.

The boys not only had the pleasure of meeting an ex-England and British Lions player but were also able to watch the Samoa v Barbarians international World Cup warm up match – something which was undeniably a great experience for them. Watching the boys stand up with their hands on their heart singing the British national anthem was definitely a proud moment for all three coaches that day.

Photographs will be included in our School Magazine published in June 2016.

### **Rugby Report September 2015 - Mr Bawden**

It has been a mixed start to the rugby season for the different year groups so far. The senior rugby team have had a very difficult start, losing quite heavily in their first two heavy defeats, to Cokethorpe and Hartpury. However the results do not reflect the performances and the efforts made by the boys in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> XV. It is hoped that an improvement in players training and everyone pulling together will quickly turn the senior team's performances around especially as many players will be touring to South Africa next summer.

In contrast the Year 9 rugby team have had the best start possible to the rugby season. After winning all 3 games so far and scoring 121 points and only conceding 42 the squad have made the perfect start and have set a good foundation for the forthcoming EDF county cup matches. The year 10 team have also had a good start to the season with the A team convincingly beating Cokethorpe and the U15 B team narrowly losing to Hereford Cathedral. From a Year 8 perspective they won their first game against Cokethorpe and then both the A and B teams lost last week to Bournside.

Numbers continue to grow at training with Year 7 after school on a Monday and Year 8 and 9 on a Tuesday. New and experienced players are always welcomed and encouraged to join the school teams.

The summer witnessed some excellent performances in the county cup with the year 10's reaching the semi-final. The year 8's lost to a strong Beaudesert Park team in the quarter final and the Year 9's lost to Newent in the semi-final. The Year 7 had a great start to their school Cricket, culminating with defeating KLB in the County Cup Final. They will now play in the national competition next summer.

The 1<sup>st</sup> XI played Gloucestershire Gipsies for the 1<sup>st</sup> time and also beat QEH Bristol in a T20 game. Many boys played District Cricket and Will Helmke and Nathan Rose-Innes represented Gloucestershire.

We launched the 2017 Barbados tour to students in the current years 10 – 12, we currently have 12 player signed up so we still have room for a couple more if students are interested.