

July 2010

Dear Parents/Carers

“What a good year you have had at Bournville” a colleague from another school commented the other day. And it is true that, over the last 12 months, the school has gone from strength to strength. The highlight of the year, for Bournville, has been being judged “Good with outstanding features by Ofsted. In fact, someone who is an Ofsted expert has been in touch with us to make sure we understand just how “good” this judgement is. It is apparently very unusual to have so few areas to improve as we were given. We were absolutely thrilled by this because it shows the school as it really is – a good place to be, where there is excellent teaching and learning and children make really good progress.

Our successful Ofsted was followed, only a couple of weeks later, by our successful re-designation as a Specialist College. That is the recognition of all the work the school does day by day through Business Enterprise and Music to develop youngsters’ workplace skills and creativity. Music at Bournville is often on show, and rightly so – the standard our musicians produce is superb. A visitor at a concert recently commented to me “I used to go to the Grammar School for Boys and we couldn’t do anything this good”. Our work in Business and Enterprise is less to showcase. But it is also summed up by the comments of a visitor who said children at Bournville were more able to cope with the tasks she had given them than in any other school she had worked in.

It has been a good year all around the school. Youngsters have enjoyed some very high profile visits to the USA, Iceland, and France. As I write another large group are finishing the school year in sunny Spain. Besides these there have been invaluable trips and activities to enhance learning and learners’ school life – in the last couple of weeks along youngsters have gone to London (Art), performed at Symphony Hall (choir) and been part of the crowd watching England do brilliantly at Edgbaston and less well at Wimbledon! – to mention just a few. And, in addition, there have been trips and activities for fun and to reward children for excellence – including 150 Year 8s who have done well going to Alton Towers. Some of you will have enjoyed an excellent Media Show, our Art Show, our stunning “Smooth” concert or come in at the end (or before the beginning) of the day to see the school alive with sports activities. And all this is the icing on the cake of our core business of teaching and learning. This summer alone, almost 6,000 different exams were sat, and we are very hopeful of our results at the end of August.

A number of colleagues are moving on from Bournville this summer and we wish them well in the future. Mrs Cross, who has been at Bournville for a very long time, will be retiring this month. Mrs Cross (not to be confused with Ms Cross) has been here full-time for 20 years, but worked at Bournville part-time before that and actually came here as a pupil sometime around 1960! Other long standing colleagues leaving include Mr Kilby (Maths) going to be Director of Maths in Solihull; Mr Dwyer (Business) going to be Head of Business in Solihull; Miss Stirling (Art) going to a full-time post in Rugby and Mrs James (Learning Support) is retiring (again!).

A small number of our staff are leaving Bournville to embark on a whole new life : Mr Azor (MFL), Miss Tigzier (MFL) and Miss Ewing all have plans to settle abroad. Mr Azor, you will remember, led the whole school so movingly in fund raising for Haiti and he is returning to be a teacher in the Caribbean, closer to his Haitian family. Miss Hewitt and Mrs Hamel Cooke have both been fortunate to have the opportunity to move into a new field – fortunate because, in this time of recession, such opportunities are rare and highlight their quality. Miss Hewitt, teacher of Psychology is fulfilling her long held ambition to move on to become an Educational Psychologist and Mrs Hamel Cooke is taking up a place for a Higher Degree.

We wish them all well in their new opportunities. In addition we send our good wishes with a number of staff who have been with us for only a short while – Miss Hansel (English), Mrs North (Drama), Miss Smith (English), Mrs Jenks (Maths), Mss Brookes (Science), Miss Mullin (MFL), Miss Daka (Learning Support), Mr Ward-Davies (Science Support) and Mr Kozakiewicz (Site support).

It has been a very demanding year – all that snow! And Ofsted and re-designation and so many fabulous activities for young people. Staff have worked exceptionally hard and not just on all the “special” things, but also in providing a learning experience day in and day out in their classrooms and exceptional pastoral care for children. We are just “dotting and i’s and crossing the t’s” on our Development Plan, which is to do even better next year.

You will have had a letter from my colleague, Mr Woodburn, with some of the details of the last day and first days back in September. The staff training at the beginning of the new school year will be with Dylan William from the University of London on “effective Classrooms”. Mr William is an internationally renowned speaker so this is a superb opportunity for us.

Over the holidays, you may like to direct your child to the activities on our website for links to other learning sites or remind them of ideas staff have given them for keeping up to date in the holidays.

We look forward to working with you again in 2010/11 and to seeing your child all ready for the new learning year in September.

Yours sincerely

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Headteacher