

20th March 2008

To: All parents

The penultimate week of this short but busy term saw the joint BGSB-BGSG production of *Les Misérables*. It was a fine production which was greatly enjoyed by the sell-out audience on each of the four nights. We have received a large number of expressions of appreciation – many of which speak of the professional standards which were reached. We particularly congratulate the lead actors from the Boys' School – **Alex Cohen, John Findon, Mark Harrison, Robbie Hernandez** and **Daniel Livesey** – for their fine performances. Such a large production is, of course, a team effort, and I would like to thank all those who contributed to its success – actors, musicians, technicians and administrative staff. (A DVD is available – please contact the School Office staff if you would like a copy.)

#### **1. Further congratulations**

- a) This year's annual Intermediate Mathematics Challenge, which is organised by Leeds University, took place just before half term. 70 of our Fifth Formers were among more than two hundred thousand pupils from schools around Britain who took part in the challenge. 34 of our candidates did well enough to receive an award, collecting a total of 5 Gold certificates, 12 Silver and 17 Bronze. Gold certificates were awarded to **Robbie Hernandez, Nicholas Hobhouse, Alexander Jackson, Joseph Martin** and **Reuben Singer**. Nicholas and Alexander did well enough to be invited to take part in the follow-up round in April and we wish them both every success in that next stage of the competition.
- b) On 7th February the Cambridge Union Schools' Debating Competition held second and regional rounds at Bury Grammar School Boys. Eight teams from schools around the region participated, with **Richard Chew** and **Christopher Stanton** (both of whom have just won offers from Cambridge University) representing BGSB. Two motions were debated during the course of the evening. The first was 'This house believes that all 16-23 year olds should have one year of non-military compulsory community service', and the second was 'This house believes that prisoners should be used for experimental drug research'. BGSB was one of two schools which were successful in both the second and regional rounds and Richard and Christopher went to Cambridge for the finals on 28th February. Schools at the finals included St Paul's, London and King Edward VI, Birmingham. Richard and Christopher did very well indeed – and were named as the 17th best debating team out of the hundreds of schools which entered this year's competition.
- c) Seventh Former **Joshua Okhiria** won three prestigious awards at the 2008 UK Young Scientists and Engineers Fair, held at the Centre of the Cell in Whitechapel, London on 7th March. Joshua beat 30,000 research hopefuls with his study of CVB3 Myocarditis to win the Gold Medal for Scientific Innovation and Creativity and the title of Young Scientist of the Year 2008. The award was presented by Baroness Morgan. Joshua also won the EU

Contest for Young Scientists Prize and will travel to Copenhagen later this year, to represent the UK, where he will compete against the representatives of 32 other countries.

- d) Our U14 Basketball team has had a very successful season – winning the Bury Schools League title and the subsequent play-offs. With this Bury double the team has qualified for the Greater Manchester Basketball Finals in April. Top scorers were Captain **Alex Trafford** and **Taimur Randhawa**.

## 2. Senior appointments

**Mr Tony Young**, our Director of Studies, retires at the end of this academic year. After consultation with my Senior Leadership Team colleagues, and with Governors, I decided to create a new post of Deputy Head (Academic). The post was advertised nationally and generated a great deal of interest. Following two rounds of interviews earlier in the year, I appointed **Mr Richard Marshall**, our Head of Science, to be Deputy Head (Academic) from September. Mr Marshall, who has recently been awarded the National Professional Qualification for Headship, brings much experience and many gifts to his new responsibilities and I am delighted that he will be joining the Senior Leadership Team.

As announced in an earlier newsletter, **Mr Howard McWilliam**, our Head of Sixth Form, has been appointed as Assistant Principal of Darwen Aldridge Community Academy. Mr McWilliam will be stepping down as Head of Sixth Form at the end of this term – although he will continue with his academic teaching until half-term in the Summer Term. He will be succeeded as Head of Sixth Form by **Mr Grant Ferguson**, our Head of Biology.

## 3. Talks about drugs

At the annual conference of HMC in Bournemouth last October, one of our speakers was Mrs Elizabeth Burton-Phillips. Mrs Burton-Phillips's son killed himself after becoming addicted to heroin. She spoke very powerfully to the Heads about the dangers of drug addiction and parents may have seen the coverage of her address in the national press. Mrs Burton-Phillips spends a good deal of her time giving talks in schools. I am very pleased to say that she has agreed to come to Bury in April to give three talks to Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Formers from BGSB and BSGS. These talks will take place on Friday 11th April. On the evening of **Thursday 10th April**, at 7.30pm in the Boys' School Assembly Hall, Mrs Burton-Phillips will speak to parents. I warmly invite you to this meeting which will, I believe, be a very engaging and helpful occasion. We should be grateful if you would complete and return the reply slip at the end of this newsletter if you are intending to be present.

## 4. Non-uniform day

Earlier this term we welcomed **Mr Bob Forrester** to an Assembly. Mr Forrester is an Old Boy of the school and was School Captain in 1946. He celebrates his 80th birthday later this year and, to mark this significant event, he is planning to climb 80 peaks in the Lake District and North Wales in 80 days! He is seeking sponsorship for his climbs and is raising money to support the work of WaterAid in Tanzania. He hopes to raise £10,000. Mr Forrester spoke to us in Assembly about his climbs for WaterAid and we have decided to support him through a non-uniform day. This will be during our first week back at school after the Easter holiday – on **Thursday 10th April**. We would like to raise a significant amount of money for Mr Forrester and suggest that, for the privilege of not having to wear school uniform for a day, each boy pays a minimum of £1.50.

## 5. Founders' Day

Founders' Day, when we celebrate the foundation of the schools, is **Friday 2nd May**. All boys must be in school by 9.30am – ie one hour later than usual. (Buses will run one hour later that morning.) Boys will be free to leave once the Service in the Parish Church has ended – at about 12noon. Buses will depart at 12.50pm.

## **6. Public Examinations and Study Leave**

Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Formers will all be sitting public examinations next term – along with Fourth Formers taking their GCSE French examinations and their Science module examinations. It is, of course, important that the forthcoming holiday is used for revision. While the boys need, and should have, a break at the beginning of the holiday, it is important that they do some serious study after the Easter weekend.

Study Leave begins as follows:

- a) Fifth Formers: 12.20pm on **Thursday 15th May** (except for those who have their RS examination that afternoon).
- b) Sixth Formers: 3.50pm on **Tuesday 13th May**.
- c) Seventh Formers: 3.50pm on **Friday 23rd May** (ie when we break for half-term).

Staff will, of course, be available in school as usual after these dates for boys who may wish to consult them about revision.

## **7. Parents' Association Summer Fun Day: Auction**

The Parents' Association Summer Fun Day will be held on **Sunday 29th June**. A flyer, giving further details of this major fund-raising occasion, is included in this mailing. Members of 2LC, Mr Ferguson's Form, will be holding an auction on the day. They have already collected a number of items for the auction – including two boxing gloves, one signed by Amir Khan and one by Ricky Hatton. They would be very grateful for further donations of items for auction – and are particularly interested in any spectacular 'Money can't buy' experiences! If you feel that you have a suitable item to contribute to the auction, please contact Mr Ferguson at the school.

## **8. National Year of Reading**

In January the Prime Minister launched the National Year of Reading to help build a greater national passion for reading among children, families and adult learners alike. BGSB is supporting the National Year of Reading and Mrs Montgomery, our Librarian, will be keeping the boys informed of various activities to promote reading for pleasure. Members of 2LG are working with Mr Matthews to shadow the Bolton Book Award and, after the announcement of the shortlist in April, Mrs Glancy will be forming the CILIP Carnegie Shadowing Group. (The following websites may be of interest to boys and parents:

[www.yearofreading.org.uk](http://www.yearofreading.org.uk), [www.boltonliteracytrust.org.uk](http://www.boltonliteracytrust.org.uk) and [www.ckg.org.uk](http://www.ckg.org.uk).)

## **9. School uniform and Games kit**

From next term PT's Schoolwear of 14 Market Parade, Bury, will be stocking BGSB uniform and Games kit.

**10. Some Summer Term dates**

- a) **Monday 7th April:** Summer Term begins at 8.35am.
- b) **Thursday 10th April:** Non-uniform day.
- c) **Thursday 10th April:** Talk by Mrs Burton-Phillips at 7.30pm. All parents are invited.
- d) **Friday 2nd May:** Founders' Day.
- e) **Monday 5th May:** Bank Holiday – School closed.
- f) **Friday 23rd May:** Half-term begins at 3.50pm.
- g) **Monday 2nd June:** Staff INSET day – School closed, except for those sitting public examinations.
- h) **Tuesday 3rd June:** Summer Term resumes at 8.35am.
- i) **Monday 9th June:** Sixth Form teaching resumes.
- j) **Wednesday 11th June:** Athletics Sports for First, Second, Third and Fourth Forms. Parents are warmly invited to this event, which begins at 2.00pm.
- k) **Monday 16th June:** Sixth Form Work Experience Week begins.
- l) **Monday 23rd June:** Summer Concert at 7.30pm.
- m) **Wednesday 9th July:** Term ends at 12.30pm.

**11. Enclosures**

- a) Flyer about the Parents' Association Summer Fun Day.
- b) Reports – for Sixth and Seventh Formers.

I hope that you and your families enjoy the Easter break and that the boys will return refreshed for the Summer Term.

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**Talk about Drugs, Thursday 10th April**

I/We\* will be attending the talk about drugs by Mrs Elizabeth Burton-Phillips being held on Thursday 10th April in the Boys' School Assembly Hall at 7.30pm.

Name(s) ..... Date .....

\* delete as necessary