



# WOLVERHAMPTON

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# GRAMMAR SCHOOL

April 2010

Dear Parents,

As the clocks go forward and we can begin to believe that spring is finally here, I write to you with highlights of another very busy and successful term.

**Music** - in my February letter, I raved about the wonderful production of *Godspell*, (we hope to have the CD recording available soon!) and our superb musicians have continued to excel and entertain us in the second half of term. The Soloists' concert witnessed some smashing individual performances from our senior musicians with Susie Raymond Barker's rendition of *La Cathédrale Engloutie* by Debussy being a particular highlight. Felicity Maidment also sang so beautifully that we simply had to ask her to sing at last week's assemblies to ensure that no one missed her magical voice.

The Orchestral and Band concert was another evening of spectacular music. It is so encouraging to see so many students playing and, just as importantly, enjoying their music. We witnessed the tremendous potential of our Junior Concert Band, the increased confidence of the Intermediate Band, and the fluency of our Senior Concert Band. Our String Ensemble and Orchestra also played with much energy and skill.

Then, on the last Tuesday of term, the members of the Choral Society took to the stage. The 80 strong Choral Society under the direction of Rosie Mosley was in exceptionally fine voice this year. The choir began with Vaughan Williams' jubilant *O Clap Your Hands* which was enriched by the fanfare-like sounds of the school organ. The audience was then treated to three jazz and soulful pieces beautifully performed by the Lower School Trio and Middle/Upper School Jazz Quartet. Miranda Roberts from Year 7 produced a stunning performance that belied her years. Not only did she accompany herself on the piano, but sang in a far more accomplished style than most X Factor/ Pop Idol winners.

The Choir then produced a highly effective performance of Chilcott's *A Little Jazz Mass* which was sung with precision and panache.

The main work of the evening was Karl Jenkins' *The Armed Man*. The piece, which contains heartfelt readings, was dedicated to the victims of the Kosovo conflict. The choir performed with a combination of subtlety, menace and grandness of sound. I must give a special mention to the beautiful solo singing of Jordan Moxey who set the scene at the opening of this evocative work.

Such wonderful performances are the product of individual practice, considerable time spent rehearsing, commitment and talent so it was slightly disappointing that these events we were not sold out. Please, support your sons and daughters in all that they do at the school. We are blessed with such talent and it's a pity that more families don't come along and enjoy these evenings.

Having performed so well throughout the term, our singers and instrumentalists deserve a well-earned rest. Well done to all and many thanks to our instrumental teachers and particular thanks to Ms Guidotti, Mrs Mosley, Mr Pawluk, and of course, our maestro and Director of Music, Mr Proverbs.

Little rest for our actors, however, since rehearsals for our Junior Play *Dracula* in May are already underway.

**Sport** – our footballers have fared well in the City Cup Competitions. The U12's have reached their first cup final but, like the 1<sup>st</sup> XI, they will have to wait until after Easter to play the final of their age group. The U15's have also reached the semi-final stage. Under Messrs Hills and O'Malley, the U12's have shown tremendous fighting spirit and no little skill. The U13's, marshalled by Messrs Munson and King, have shown tremendous character and made real progress this season. The U14's, with Messrs Hall and Johnstone in charge, are playing an exciting brand of football and I've particularly enjoyed watching the U15's play very attractive football under their coach Mr Davies. Under the experienced team of Messrs Browning, Carey and Benfield, the 2<sup>nd</sup> XI enjoyed an excellent season with victories over some very strong football schools and, as always, the Mourinho and Ferguson of school football i.e. Messrs Crust and Johnson, continue to set the standard for

the 1<sup>st</sup> XI and school football demanding a real commitment to how the game should be played from all our teams. Representative honours in the West Midlands ISFA U13 go to Dimitri Patsiogiannis, Alex Buckham and Roshan Jakhu.

Once again, our Netballers have swept all before them in the City Championships. The A teams in Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 won their age group finals and the Sixth Form A and B teams both won their finals. Our netballers also claimed the notable scalps of Cheltenham Ladies College and KE Birmingham. Wonderful performances by all our girls and special thanks go to Mrs Dalzell, Miss McAllister, Ms Munden and to Mrs Harris and Miss Whittaker who help with the seniors and Miss Ward and Miss Jones who help with the Juniors. All of the above give up so much of their time to coach and encourage the girls to reach such a high standard. Representative honours: Jordan Moxey – England Triallist and West Midlands NTL.

Rugby too continues to prosper at WGS. The U12s enjoyed a particularly successful season performing very well against established 'rugby' schools. Highlight of the season came in the prestigious Marches Sevens Competition at Hereford Cathedral School where our talented youngsters went on to win the Plate Competition. Not to be outdone, our senior rugby players continue to take on and defeat powerful local XV's – indeed their last match of the season saw them score a notable victory against Shrewsbury's 2<sup>nd</sup> XV. Congratulations to Benji Pearson on his selection for the County U16 team. Well done to captain of Rugby, Freddie Gough and thanks to Messrs Ryan, Page and Pawluk for their ongoing enthusiasm.

Our Girl Hockey players have done us proud again this season – under the inspirational leadership of Phoebe Kidson, the 1<sup>st</sup> XI made real progress this season and the Under 12's and 13's did well against very strong schools. Representative honours: Sarah Hickman was selected to play for the County. Our senior boys found it hard to maintain the excellent form they'd shown at the start of the season but they fought on nevertheless. Representative honours: Nick Bandurak – England U16 squad, Tom Weston – Midland U15's and Matthew Pritchard – Staffs U18's, Gurpal Mann, and Jake Rowlands, Black Country U14, U15's respectively. Thanks again to Mr Anderson, Miss McAllister, Miss Munden and Mrs Hannah for all they do to support and promote Hockey in the school.

Fives continues its remarkable revival under the coaching of OW Mark Yates. The U13 boys competed very well in the National Championships and our new Senior Girls team, drew against Shrewsbury in their first match and performed credibly in the National Finals. It is also heartening to note how Badminton is progressing in school. The boys have had some great results in the league but final standings have yet to be decided.

Our Cross Country runners, have enjoyed strong seasons. Dan Genner won his age group in the City Championships, Andrew Shave won the Year 7 boys' section and Eve Webb came 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Girls' race. Full league results are pending. WGS also hosted the City Gymnastics Championships. Our students won a number of events and thanks go especially to Miss McAllister who did so much to organise this event.

So, despite the weather, a very busy term for sport and we very much look forward to our Summer games programme which begins towards the end of the holiday with Mr King in charge of the school's cricket. The 1<sup>st</sup> XI, U15 and U13's take on Solihull school on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> April.

**Intermediate UK Maths Challenge** – it was a pleasure to present 14 Gold awards to students in Years 9, 10 and 11 for their excellence, with Alistair Macaulay achieving best mark in school.

**Chess** – The U12 Chess team has had an enjoyable season so far having taken part in three matches against schools in the Birmingham area, winning one match and losing two. In addition, the team had fun participating in three different types of tournament, the highlight being the Lightning Tournament in which they came second.

**Charity Fund Raising** – Every year, WGS students devote much time and energy to raising money for charitable causes both at home and abroad. Once all the returns for last year's Coast to Coast came in, over £7,000 had been raised for Compton Hospice and the Air Ambulance Campaign. Students and staff also combined together superbly to organise the Concert in aid of the Haiti Earthquake Fund and the Battle of the Bands. As always, a huge effort went into raising funds for the Lords Meade School in Uganda. How wonderful it was that the Head of Lords Meade, Mark Malinga and two 16 year old students, Francis and Rosemary, from the school were able to be with us for a week. In total, we raised over £5,000 for Lords Meade and Mrs Fogarty's report (overleaf) provides much more detail.

Having been kidnapped by parental pirates, in aid of Heart Research, this unfortunate Head is soon to be replaced for a day by James Anderson, a Year 7 student. It's not that I worry he'll do a better job – he's bound to – but I'm really worried about double chemistry – who wouldn't be?

**Trips and Visits** – following the Ski trip during half term, the Geographers in Years 7 and 8 visited Bridgnorth and Dovedale respectively and the Lower Sixth participated in an excellent week of fieldwork on the Isle of Arran. The Year 8 Historians visited Worcester and the Senior Prefects enjoyed their Leadership weekend in the Rother Valley Country Park. Over the Easter break, our Exchange Party will set off for France and the Art and Culture trip to Amsterdam leaves on the 5<sup>th</sup> April.

**Staff News** – As parents may already be aware, Mr Hopkins will be leaving WGS at the end of the academic year to become Director of Studies at Bablake School. We congratulate Alistair on this promotion and thank him for all the work he has done at WGS.

Mr Mark Benfield, a hugely experienced teacher and Principal Examiner is taking over as Head of English. Mr Mark Payne, currently in his fourth year of teaching at Heybridge School, will be joining us to teach English in September and Mr Philip Lovesey is also staying on to teach English next year. Congratulations to Dr Hinchliffe who will be replacing Mr Benfield as Head of Sixth Form from September.

This term three of our valued visiting music teachers are leaving for pastures new. We say goodbye and best wishes to Louise Warren (singing), Kate Moran (violin) and Jean Lowe (piano) and thank them for their years of service and professionalism.

**Quincentenary** – The Quincentenary Committee are continuing to plan for our 500<sup>th</sup> year in 2011-2012 and please find enclosed with this letter a flyer for the History of the School, written by Paul Cheeseright, which is due for publication in November. I realise that £35 is a hefty price but pre-ordering does bring a considerable saving.

**Friends** – the Friends of WGS (our Parents' Association) are planning to hold an information gathering event in May and will be inviting parents, chosen at random, to a social evening when matters of mutual interest and concern can be discussed.

We are also intending to conduct a survey of parental views about the school, courtesy of Kirkland Rowell Consultancy Service. Remember too, that in June we will again host a Parents' Forum when my senior colleagues and I will be available to respond to any questions, comments or ideas, parents might wish to raise with us. As last year, we will publish the questions and responses on the website.

We remain committed to developing the many strengths of the students and the school and thus we must constantly strive to improve all that we do. To that end, I always welcome your views, comments or questions about any aspect of school life by whatever form of communication parents find most convenient.

Wishing everyone a happy and relaxing Easter break with a reminder that the **Summer term begins for all students at 8.45am on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> April.**

Yours sincerely,

Vincent Darby  
Head

**Key Dates** – the complete summer calendar will be available at the start of term but here are a few key dates for your diary:

### Summer Term 2010

#### April

Mon	19 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Term Begins</b>
Weds	21 <sup>st</sup>	GCSE German revision, Hallmark, 4.15pm
Thurs	22 <sup>nd</sup>	Parents' Information Evening for Coast to Coast, John Roper Room, 7.00pm
Fri	23 <sup>rd</sup>	Maths Team Challenge HPV immunisations, Big School and John Roper Room, 9.20am French Exchange visitors arrive from Savenay at 5.30pm
Sat	24 <sup>th</sup>	OW's 1990 Reunion, Big School, 12.00noon – 3.00pm

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Tues	27 <sup>th</sup>	Year 9 Geography Field Trip to Elan Valley, all day
Weds	28 <sup>th</sup>	French GCSE intensive oral practice, various rooms, 4.15pm
Thurs	29 <sup>th</sup>	Junior Maths Challenge, New Block, am Lower School Spelling Bee, Cineworld, am AQA Business Studies revision, Sixth Form
Fri	30 <sup>th</sup>	Non Uniform Day Economics Trip French Exchange visitors depart at 6.15pm

#### May

Sat 1<sup>st</sup> **May Day**

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Mon	3 <sup>rd</sup>	<b>Bank Holiday – school closed</b>
Tues	4 <sup>th</sup>	A2 Art Sessions start GCSE Language Orals French A2 Oral Picnic, Room 54, 4.15pm
Weds	5 <sup>th</sup>	Lower Sixth Theatre Studies Exam Part One, Hutton Theatre, 5.30pm
Thurs	6 <sup>th</sup>	A2 Art Session finish <i>Big Six</i> Parents' Evening, <i>Big Six</i> classroom & Jenyns Library, 5.00pm Lower Sixth Theatre Studies Exam Play Performance, Hutton Theatre, 7.00pm
Fri	7 <sup>th</sup>	Art GCSE coursework due in Years 9/10 Towers Outdoor Education visit to 9 <sup>th</sup> , leaving at 4.15pm

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Tues	11 <sup>th</sup>	AS/A2 Language Orals A2 Art sessions
Weds	12 <sup>th</sup>	GCSE Language Orals finish French AS Oral Picnic, John Roper room, 4.15pm
Fri	14 <sup>th</sup>	Lower Sixth and Year 11 Study Leave begins, 4.00pm

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Mon	17 <sup>th</sup>	New year 7/8/9 Parents Evening, 7.00pm Friends' Information Evening, Social 2, 7.00pm
Tues	18 <sup>th</sup>	AS Art Session 1
Thurs	20 <sup>th</sup>	AS Art Session 2 Year 7 History Trip to Warwick Castle, all day Upper Sixth Leavers Lunch Big School, 12.30pm
Fri	21 <sup>st</sup>	Year 8 Towers Trip

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Sun	23 <sup>rd</sup>	Play Technical Rehearsal, Hutton Theatre, 10.00pm – 6.00pm
Mon	24 <sup>th</sup>	Play Dress Rehearsal, Hutton Theatre, 4.00pm – 10.00pm
Weds	26 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Play: Dracula, Hutton Theatre, 7.30pm</b>
Thurs	27 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Play: Dracula, Hutton Theatre, 7.30pm</b>
Fri	28 <sup>th</sup>	Coast to Coast run to 31 <sup>st</sup> leaving at 10.30am <b>Play: Dracula, Hutton Theatre, 7.30pm</b>

Mon	31 <sup>st</sup>	<b>Half Term to Friday 4<sup>th</sup> June</b>
<b>June</b>		
Thurs	10 <sup>th</sup>	New <i>Big Six</i> Parents meeting, <i>Big Six</i> classroom/Social 2, 7.00pm
Sun	13 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Week 8:</b> Assembly theme: <i>Trust</i>
Mon	14 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Staff Training Day, School closed</b> Friends' Meeting, Social 2, 7.00pm
Tues	15 <sup>th</sup>	<b>School Exam week</b>
Thurs	17 <sup>th</sup>	Parents Forum, Social 2, 7.00pm
Sat	19 <sup>th</sup>	Summer Solstice Concert, Seisdon, 6.00pm
Mon	21 <sup>st</sup>	Year 10 GCSE trip to Jackfield Tile Museum, Ironbridge, all day
Tues	22 <sup>nd</sup>	Year 7 Snowdonia Camp to 25 <sup>th</sup>
Thurs	24 <sup>th</sup>	Year 11 induction to the Sixth form, Hutton Theatre, 9.00am Year 10 Field Trip to Smestow Valley. 9.15am Year 11 clearing, Derry Hall, 10.00am Year 11 Prom, Park House Hotel, Shifnal, 7.00pm
Fri	25 <sup>th</sup>	Year 10 Field Trip to Smestow Valley. 9.15am Upper Sixth Leavers' Dinner, Molineux, 7.30pm
Mon	28 <sup>th</sup>	Work Experience week 1 <b>Senior Prize Giving, Big School, 7.00pm</b>
Weds	30 <sup>th</sup>	Sports Day Field Events, pm
<b>July</b>		
Thurs	1 <sup>st</sup>	Sports Day - Track Events, 9.30am – 12.45pm – <b>No afternoon school</b>
Fri	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Year 7 trip to Chester Zoo, all day Year 10 Art GCSE trip to Jackfield Tile Museum, all day Jazz Spectacular, 6.30pm
Sat	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Art Exhibition 12.00noon – 3.00pm Battlefields Trip to 6 <sup>th</sup> 6.30am
Mon	5 <sup>th</sup>	Work Experience week 2
Tues	6 <sup>th</sup>	Lower Sixth Art Trip, London, all day Lower School Music Concert, Big School, 7.00pm
Weds	7 <sup>th</sup>	Walker Memorial Mile, 1.00pm
Fri	9 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Term Ends 12.30pm</b>

- Tickets for the Play,
- Jazz Spectacular and
- Lower School Concert  
can be obtained by the students at break or lunchtime.

## Supplementary Information for Head's Letter Easter 2010

**Student Parliament** – the agenda for Student Parliament remains wide and varied. Items/ideas discussed this term included:

- Plans for the Quincentenary
- The content of the Student Planner
- Independent Learning
- Improvements for the toilets
- Shorts in the summer
- Fencing and other sports
- Ideas for floodlights/swimming pool/cookery
- The lunchtime menus

**Big Six Newsletter** - Parents may not be aware, but *Big Six* do publish a fortnightly newsletter which is on the school website which allows you to keep up to date with all the happenings in the Big Six department. Why don't you have a look?

### Work Experience for Yr 11

Many thanks to all those students who have been completing their Placement Forms on [www.squidman.co.uk](http://www.squidman.co.uk) for their Work Experience placements. However, there are still many students who have not filled in the Placement Form, and the deadline to guarantee that the safety checks will be completed is the 25<sup>th</sup> April).

Clearly, students cannot go on placements if the safety of it has not been checked. It is therefore essential students get this information to Dr Camm a.s.a.p.

Students organising medical/dental placements through Emma Hussey, do not need to fill in the Placement Form, they just need to e-mail JPC through the work experience link on [www.squidman.co.uk](http://www.squidman.co.uk), so that we know the checks are being done separately.

If students have not yet organised a placement, the Easter break is going to be your last opportunity to sort one out. Remember, Work Experience is a very important way to make your curriculum vitae stand out from the crowd. Failure to carry out a placement leaves a very obvious gap on any application forms and suggests a student who lacks ambition or initiative.

If there are any problems or students wanting advice, they should see Dr Camm as soon as possible, or use the Work Experience e-mail link on Squidman. Good luck