

Brymore

experience to last a lifetime



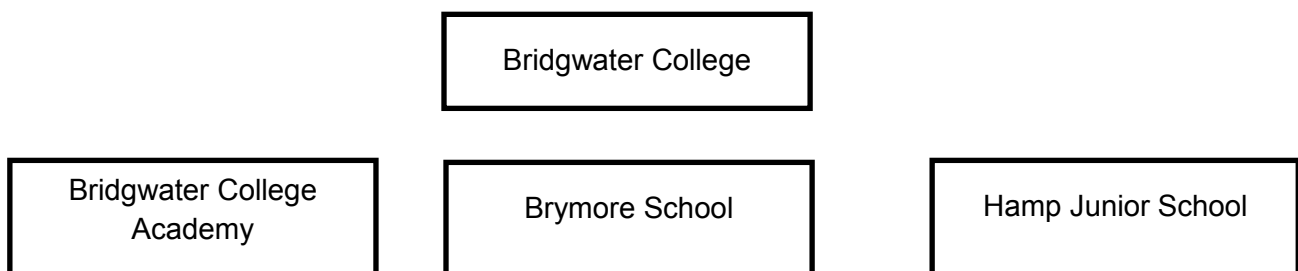
Newsletter February 2013

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Message from Mark Thomas - Headteacher

As you are aware Brymore is currently going through the process of converting to an academy, sponsored by Bridgwater College, with a view to 'opening' in September 2013. The initial application has been approved by ministers and a recent action planning meeting attended by representatives from the Department for Education, Local Authority, sponsors and the school was held in order to begin the planning in earnest. Within the next 12-16 weeks the action plan needs to go back to ministers, an education brief needs to be completed, full consultation is necessary with parents and all other affected parties including local and state boarding schools, before a final decision is made which should result in the funding agreement and land arrangements being signed off.

On the surface, and as far as the boys are concerned, there will be very little change. At a strategic level within the school, things will be very different. There is already an increased sense of accountability when dealing with the Department officials and sponsors, as opposed to the 'old days' under the Local Authority. This can only be a good thing and is something I welcome, even if it is a little challenging. Local parents in particular, will be aware of the new Bridgwater College Academy that was formerly East Bridgwater Community School and I know there has been some confusion in how the relationship across the institutions will work. In effect Brymore will continue to run as a separate entity; however it will be overseen by a board of trustees who also have responsibility for other schools/academies. This can be seen below:



There will be representatives from each school/academy on the board of trustees and each school will have its own directors, who will replace the governing body. It is likely that some current governors and trustees of Brymore will become directors and it may be that new appointments are sought. At the present time we are not appointing new governors, even if we have vacancies, because the old governing body will be disbanded to make way for the new structure. As ever, it is a rapidly changing landscape and I will endeavour to keep parents informed of any significant developments.

Snow

On top of the flooding that has affected our part of the country over the past few months, Mother Nature delivered Brymore (and the surrounding area) some snow during January. Every effort was made to keep things running as normal, and thanks to the onsite team and those dedicated staff that could make the journey, this was mostly possible.



Whilst many schools in the area closed, Brymore put on as many lessons and activities as was possible and the boys thoroughly enjoyed throwing snowballs at Mr Thomas and other members of the Senior Leadership Team!



Bike Trail (Mr Watts)

I took six boys from Years 9 and 10 to an open evening at the Bicycle Chain, a local bike shop, who selected the mountain and road bikes they liked within a £400-£600 price range. They also selected the maintenance equipment and Turbo trainers so that we can work on the bikes regardless of the weather conditions.

The school maintenance team have refurbished room 8 to allow the bikes to be stored securely on site and allow boys to use the room when working on the bikes and our thanks go to them for getting this completed.



We have nine Trex mountain bikes and six Trex road bikes for the boys to utilise. They will be used during extra-curricular activities and also during Saturday activities within the summer. We intend to start a triathlon club and mountain bike club and are looking to use the school bike trail and also ride off road around the Quantocks.

We are also trying to see if we can get some training for the boys on bike maintenance so that we are able to service the bikes on site and in addition we are looking into funding to design and build a high spec bike track within the woods and spreading out onto a section of the games field.

Bulbs for Brymore

Brymore School's Horticulture department have very kindly been donated hundreds of bulbs from a local Garden Centre.

Cheddar Garden Centre contacted the school recently to see if we could utilise their excess tulip bulbs and with a resounding 'yes' we have now planted nearly all of the selection around the school site. Reuben Willcocks, Head of Horticulture, stated 'it is hugely important that the boys get the hands-on experience of seeing and planting different bulbs and seeds but ultimately they undertake the responsibility to look after them once they are grown too'.



Inspirational Brymore

The Poultry Club at Brymore, run and organised by the Brymore Boys (with a helping hand from Mrs Whyte) has inspired another Somerset school to set up a similar scheme.

The Brymore Poultry Club is a long established tradition at the school and is another way of the boys showing off their resourcefulness and responsibility by keeping their own chickens within a set-aside area of the school. There are chicken houses, runs and a free-range area and the boys can breed from the hens or sell the eggs, which encourages the entrepreneurial spirit.

Since September 2012 the Taunton Academy has been using Brymore's facilities as part of their enrichment programme and it was during one of the visits that a group of the Academy students and their teacher, Matthew Naum, were inspired into recreating this in some form at their school. The students researched poultry and found a suitable place in their school to build a run and shelter and along with guidance and chickens from Brymore they now have their own Poultry Club. Brymore Boys, James Kerry and Cyrus Dorrington recently visited the school to show them handling techniques, the basics of poultry keeping and how to look after their chickens.



Piglets for Sale

Brymore Farm have British Lop store pigs (buy to rear) for sale for only £1 per kilo. They are able to leave the farm from half term and start from 30kg upwards. If you wish to consider buying one (or more) of these rare breeds then please contact the farm on 01278 652428.



Library Books

Currently there are 83 overdue library books from the LRC which need to be returned or renewed. The cost of all of these added together means that Miss Bradford is missing over £1,000 worth of stock and that boys are having to miss out on certain books as they are not in the LRC. Should you have a library book please return it as soon as you can or if you know that a book is lost please arrange payment to Miss Bradford.

Salvage Hunters

The new series of Salvage Hunters begins on the Quest channel on 18 February and we have been informed that Brymore features on episode 4 on 11 March.

Goals and Opportunities

On 9 May Miss Bradford has organised a Goals and Opportunities evening for the boys to come and view options for their next steps after their GCSE's.

We have a number of stands which include the military, employers and colleges. It really is a good opportunity for the boys and their families to see what is available after their exams.

Quiz night

A quiz night was recently held in the Kings Head in Cannington raising £248 for the Horticulture and Agriculture departments. Thanks goes to all those who came or donated prizes and Mrs Richards for organising.

One way system

We try and encourage a one way system for vehicles within the school and would like to remind you that you can drive up the main drive through the school and exit via the back drive near the farm during busy periods at the start and end of term. This helps keep vehicles off the grass on the main drive tries to ensure the turf stays undamaged.



Year 10 visit to Hinkley Point Power Station

Brymore School were given a flavour of the future of nuclear power on their doorstep, after a recent visit to the Hinkley Point Power Station organised by Mr Ashton.

Energy suppliers EDF, who own the Hinkley B and C site, toured 48 Year 10 boys around the Hinkley B site; talking them through the way nuclear energy is made, showing them the two reactors and fuel filling machine from up high and viewing the sub-station which sends the electricity out to 1.5 million homes. With Hinkley being so close to Brymore School many questions were answered and facts told so that the students had a real understanding about nuclear power and what the future could hold for Hinkley C.



Activities

Mr Coll, Houseparent and Activities Co-ordinator for the school, has spent a lot of time since he began in September working on improving and organising activities to ensure the maximum benefit to the boys. Weekends, in particular, are now made up of a variety of things to do should boys wish to undertake the options available and this half term they have had choices of caving, fitness at the local Marine base, mountain biking, baking, racing remote control cars, along with many more. Mr Coll is always open to new ideas and is starting an Activity Development Committee for any boys who would like to influence the activities on offer. Coming up soon we will be taking a number of boys to undertake a kayaking qualification.



Reminder of end of Spring Term events

Just to remind parents that we are holding our annual parents Chads Hill run/walk on Thursday 28 March which you are all most welcome to attend. In addition this is also the date of the Year 11 parents English Focus Day so the department can show you how to help your son with his pre-exam revision. Following on from these events will be the house hockey and rugby finals.

DT (Mr Austin)

In DT we have continued the visits from groups of 20 girls and boys who attend Taunton Academy. They come here to experience our extensive workshops and to get an opportunity they possibly could not have within their own school. Each student makes a wood desk tidy frame that is designed to fit the spur motif from our logo. It is always great to see younger students trying their hand at manufacturing skills which may be rooted in the past but are most definitely still relevant in our modern world. The casting of the Brymore spur is the highlight and each student learns to pack the sand tightly before watching as the molten aluminium disappears down the runner before reappearing up the riser signifying a good cast. In discussion with the students we have tried to demonstrate how casting, although a technique developed way back in time, is still used today - we talked about engine blocks and anvils but were brought quickly up to date when a small boy informed us that he knew all about this and had seen it all in the recent 'Lord of the Rings' movies!



Year 11 are now well into their final projects. Manufacturing started in January and it is expected that each project will be completed within the eight week deadline. Students have 16 hours of school time, but can put in extra time after school, during one prep a week and during Saturday activities. The deadline is the end of school on Friday 15 March, after this the boys have two weeks to complete the evaluations and any gaps in their paperwork. Some have started quickly and seem to be very autonomous which is a good sign for future employment but there are others now realising that a bit more planning would have been a good idea. It is up to them to see if they finish - there are many more marks available for a completed project and there is the satisfaction of taking home something genuinely original. Often the biggest problems are getting started or when things go wrong, we are hoping that a Brymore boy will be one who can see beyond these problems by finding solutions, dealing with situations and putting in that extra effort. The deadline will show us who has the resolve.



Rewards (Mr Oliver)

This term has seen the unveiling of new badges for the rewards system. The students were asked what they wanted from a rewards system - one of the responses was: more badges. The Student Council were shown a design and decided to change it from a button to a shield, ensuring that the badges were distinguished in look. Alongside the new badges are newly designed certificates and postcards for students of the week. The students have really taken to the collection of these badges and there has been an increase in students gaining House Points.



Please encourage your son to gain as many House Points as possible. It would be nice to see Walker and Galsworthy give Taylor a run for their money!

Farm News

The wet ground continues to be a problem around the farm and the blanket of snow, even though it looked beautiful, added to the ground water when it thawed.

We have had three calves born in the Dairy herd this term, all Beef Shorthorn X calves from Adrian, our pedigree Beef Shorthorn bull. Eight of our young Beef Shorthorn X cattle were 'pre-movement' TB

tested last week. They all

passed with no sign of a reaction and two were sold at the Store Cattle sale at Sedgemoor Auction Centre last Saturday. The others will be sold this week.

Our Ewes are only a few weeks away from lambing. We expect the first lambs to arrive just after the boys return from their half-term break. One of our pedigree British Lop sows, Liskeard Actress farrowed, giving birth to eight healthy piglets and we are expecting more in the coming weeks.



The Daily Telegraph came to take photos of the farm and spent a good couple of hours with the boys, who modelled beautifully! The photos, unfortunately, were not used in the article due to space but it was an enjoyable experience for all involved.



SSLT Meal (Harry Orr and Gareth Stockton)

As a well-deserved treat, on Monday 4 February, the Senior Student Leadership Team went to the Malt Shovel for a meal out with a selected number of staff; including Mrs Bindon, Mrs Anstice, and Mr Oliver. The Malt Shovel is a friendly local pub and offered a nice variety of food, which enticed the boys to dig into a well-cooked steak and a delicious bowl of Blackmore Farm ice cream, as well as their home made Sticky Toffee Pudding.

The boys and staff alike enjoyed the night and there was plenty of chatter and laughter. It allowed us all to chill out and have some fun.

Gap Students

After the Christmas holidays we had three gap students arrive to work within the boarding team two from South Africa (Michael Truebody and Greg Peatfield) and one from Australia (Dylan Pannam). All have been working hard to adjust to the way of life here and have settled into the school well along with our other gap student Oliver Mahon. Below Michael talks about where he has come from and how he has found Brymore in his first few weeks.



I, Michael Truebody, was born in Sandton, Johannesburg and now live in Centurion (a suburb between Pretoria and Johannesburg) with my parents and younger sister.

I joined my primary school's cross country team in Grade 4 (when I was 11 years old) but only started being competitive in Grade 9 (when I was 15 years old). Thereafter, I went on to represent the Northern Gauteng Provincial team for athletics for both athletics and cross country and ran at the South African Championships for both. My time at Brymore School, although short, has been enjoyable. The staff and boys have been very welcoming and willing to help us settle in. The boys have been inquisitive, but also friendly in their approach to us and I look forward to a great time at Brymore School with many memorable moments to come.

House Improvement Team Update (Mr Fewtrell)

We have now sold over 30 Kitbags which are ideal for the boys' match day kit. As the HIT team identified, boys wanted to walk out at matches looking professional with their initials emblazoned above the school logo which they are very proud to sport.

With their budget and the money raised the team has been able to buy two new suites for Reid House and two new settees for School House. Furthermore the boys have bought lovely clip frames for the John Deere posters that JD had sent us. The H.I.T. contacted several organisations asking them for freebies and posters plus magazines for the common room coffee tables. Every company sent these including JD, Landrover, Gilbert and Agco amongst others. Hawkins Agriculture and Massey Ferguson were also very generous in their giving of freebies including key rings, pens and badges as well as mugs and other items. The H.I.T. are happy for such freebies to be given out to the overall Boarder of the Week after half term. Mr Fewtrell will be meeting with the Gilbert Rep to see what he can do for the school in addition to the Duty Manager of B&Q. Interestingly, Massey Ferguson share their 60th anniversary as well as Brymore - Charlie Coleman will write a thank you letter and find out what we could do together maybe for Open Day and beyond.

Finally we will be selling polo tops, t-shirts and hoodies as well as sweatshirts. All will have a slogan of your choice as well as the school logo - the hoodies can have your nickname down the sleeve. The school can increase its brand awareness up and down the country and enable the boys to wear Brymore clothing to show how proud they are of our fantastic school. The idea came about after careful market research from the H.I.T. boys as to what the other boys wanted. At the same time all profit will be going towards the boys themselves in developing their boarding houses. Watch this space for our new Spring 13 catalogue coming soon. Current and Old Brymorsians should look forward to these.

Sports Report (Mr Spridgens)

The first place to begin with the sports report is to say how bitterly disappointed the whole school, but most especially the senior rugby team, were that the final of the Sedgemoor Cup was postponed. The decision was not ours to make and we pushed for the final to go ahead but unfortunately on the actual day it was decided that it would not go ahead and a new date is yet to be finalised. Once we have notification of this we will let everyone know but hopefully this will not have deterred the team and if anything has made them more determined that this will be our victory to gain.



The Millfield rugby matches were also postponed due to the weather and these have now been rescheduled for 16 March. For further information on upcoming fixtures please check the calendar on the website.

The Race to get to 60 Chads is on and with Gareth Stockton already on over 50 we wait to see if other boys can catch up with him. We have given out a great number of Chads Starter certificates for those boys who have run 10 with a number of boys approaching their Bronze of 25 Chads run.

Attendance at fitness remains consistent and close to 100%. However, dayboys in Year 10 could certainly be doing better on this front.

A member of the British Cyclo-Cross team came into the school for a visit recently and discussed the possibility of holding a Cyclo-Cross event at Brymore in late March. Should this begin to take shape then we will let you have more details once we have them.



Student Voice (Mr Oliver)

The student council has been very active this term. They have designed badges for students gaining high levels of House Points, created a Food Group and also a House Improvement Team.

Their meetings have allowed many positive improvements to the smooth running of the school. Their decision to change the rewards badges to a shield design has proved to be very popular amongst both the students and the staff. Mr Fitzsimons himself would very much like to get hold of The Governors badge for gaining over 500 House Points.

In addition, the School Council has been very active in making changes in the dining room. One of the major changes is that of Sunday breakfast. From next half-term we shall be piloting a more open style breakfast. Rather than all students going at the same time, we are opening up breakfast to allow boarders to attend within a period of time. This will allow students the autonomy to choose when they get up and go to breakfast. After a period of time we will review if it is working.

The House Improvement Team has made great strides in designing and purchasing bespoke Brymore bags. Any profits made from this venture have gone straight back into the boarding houses where new furniture has been purchased. I hope that the students continue to show leadership and responsibility to this standard in the future.

Please can we remind all parents and boys that the right equipment and clothing both in academic and practical lessons is a real necessity. Whether that be overalls, steel cap boots or simply a calculator and pen.

Hillwalking (Mr Ashton)

The Saturday afternoon activity of Hillwalking is still popular among the boys and recently we have had outings to Kilve and to the beach near Hinkley Point. We have also been ably joined by Mrs Austin on a number of our walks and she has captured many good images which are on our Facebook page.



Horticulture (Mr Willcocks)

We have been busy within the Horticulture department potting up rooted cuttings which were taken in the autumn. We now have a wide selection of rooted shrubs which we hope will grow within the polytunnel. In addition we have also been sowing, pruning and digging over the plots.

We have begun to put up the new soft fruit cage, purchased using money kindly donated by the Old Brymorsians, just inside the walled garden gate. We have completed the planting of the tulip bulbs that Cheddar Garden Centre donated to the school, for which we are very grateful, and we look forward to seeing them bloom. Year 10 boys have planted daffodil bulbs on the verge at the entrance to Cannington as our part in working with the village for their Cannington in Bloom project. Additionally, we also have Year 10 boys going to the Cannington Centre of Bridgwater College for work experience during their Horticulture practical lessons.

We hope the boys will get a chance to go mowing after the half-term so please ensure your son has steel toe -capped boots which should be clearly marked on the outside.

Brymore Lottery

February half term winners are:

- First B J Bennett from Sherborne
Second Mr E Reed from Langport
Third Mrs M Herbert from Burnham on Sea

It is never too late to join the Brymore Lottery! The Lottery provides much needed funds for non-essential, but nevertheless, very important items that broaden school life here at Brymore. Membership will cost you an annual fee of £12.00 per number and there will be six draws per year. Please contact Christine Godfrey in the School Office for details.

Arc Welding (Mr Austin)

In future all evening activities in DT will allow students to gain merits. If they attend, behave appropriately and try their best to succeed then they can collect a signature each evening to earn a commendation. Boys should see the member of staff taking the activity.

A good example of these activities is the Arc Welding course with Mr Sherlock. In the last three years 64% of all Year 11 boys have successfully completed the work. In future any boy wishing to use arc welding in their final year major project for DT GCSE will have to have successfully finished this course.



Daily Telegraph

The Daily Telegraph did a small feature recently on the rise in schools getting farms due to the 'celebrity chef' factor of Jamie Oliver and others. Brymore managed to get a small mention and although a photographer came down no pictures were eventually utilised in the article. However, it is always nice to be recognised in a national paper, especially on page 3.

In a similar vein, we are now looking to see if we can secure the services of celebrated chef Rebecca Baddeley to come to the school and cook for some boys using our own produce.

FOBSA (Jackie White)

Friends of Brymore School Association is formed of parents and friends (old and new) as a way of helping to raise extra funds for the boys. We put on events like bingo nights and also provide tea, cake and other refreshments on special days like cross-country and open day. We'd love some more volunteers and not only are we helping the school but often new friendships are formed, so if you can spend even an hour helping then please contact the Chair of FOBSA - Jackie White on 01823 672817 or email topside@tiscali.co.uk

IMPORTANT DATES FOR SPRING TERM

- Sunday 24 February 6.00 pm - 9.00 pm Boarders return
Monday 25 February Out-boarders return
Thursday 28 March Year 11 English Focus Day for Parents
 Parents Chads Hill Run/Walk
 Rugby & Hockey House Finals
 Boys depart