

Brymore

experience to last a lifetime



Newsletter March 2015

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Message from the Headteacher - Mr Mark Thomas

It has been a real privilege this week to interview fifteen boys for the position of Head Boy. Listening to the boys talk about their experiences and what they could offer Brymore gave me time to reflect on the way the school has evolved over the past few years. When I first arrived (nearly five years ago) only three boys applied to be Head Boy. There was no Senior Student Leadership Team and when it was introduced some of the places were filled with boys who it was felt the additional responsibility would help improve their behaviour. Nowadays it is very different with much higher expectations. Boys with a poor behaviour record, who go out of bounds or who do not act as good role models will not be considered for any senior role including prefect. It does not mean that those who make a mistake lower down the school cannot apply, but they must demonstrate that those mistakes are behind them over a sustained period of time. Many years ago 'monitors' were often chosen because of their physical presence, today qualities such as compassion, fairness, leadership potential and the ability to work as a team are far more important.

Joe, Jason, Alistair and Cameron have a difficult task following the current SSLT who have made a considerable, and I hope lasting, difference to Brymore. Silas, well supported by Bertie and Daniel has led an exceptional team of prefects and senior prefects. In my opinion the key has been that they had a clear purpose due to the vision set by Silas, and they worked well as a team to deliver that vision. They often disagreed, which is inevitable when the team consists of many strong characters, however they supported each other. They have virtually eradicated boys going out of bounds at break and lunchtimes, through consistently turning up to duty and sticking to what they believe in. Their collective strength, through supporting each other, meant that picking boys due to their physical presence was no longer necessary.

Interestingly senior boys are now presenting my Senior Leadership Team with new challenges. Complaints about food, wanting more activities or improved boarding facilities are now much less common. They have been replaced by the need for more time to do revision, the pressures of the additional responsibility of being a prefect, a mentor, an HoD, carrying out duties and attending all of the additional work sessions being run by staff. In short, their determination to do well academically as well as benefit from everything else Brymore has to offer is clear. I have therefore agreed to meet with Silas, Bertie and Daniel to carry out a review of the year and see if there are ways we can support boys even more in the future. This sums up the current team, still trying to support the school, and the boys in particular, even though they will soon be leaving.

Having interviewed fifteen of the current Year 10 this week, I am confident they will be able to maintain the excellent work done so far, and lead Brymore forward. I say it often but I must say it again, I am proud to lead these boys and I look forward to working with Joe, Jason, Alistair and Cameron as we strive to improve their school so that all current and future boys aspire to be in their position in the future.

I hope you all have a good Easter and I look forward to seeing you all back next term.

World Book Day and Readathon (Ms Warren)

On Thursday 5th March we marked World Book Day by supporting the national Readathon initiative and we raised £485.67. Boys from Years 7 and 9 were encouraged to gain sponsorship for their reading during this day and were given time during lessons to pick up their books and engross themselves in another world for a while. Whether down on the farm, working in technology or sat in a classroom all the boys and teachers involved really enjoyed this experience and hopefully it sparked an enthusiasm for them to continue reading outside of lessons too.



Farewell from the Head Boy (Silas Lawson)

It has been a very successful year in my opinion; I started the role of Head Boy with a goal for all bullying to be stopped and to make the school the best it can be and it has been achieved with flying colours! The year had started with myself, Bertie and Daniel picking the senior student leadership team to make a real difference to the school. With every member of the Team carrying out duties every week and stopping most poor behaviour or bullying.

To thank the members of the team they have been rewarded by having a common room with tea and coffee, to be used every break time and lunch; not forgetting a 3 course meal at Blackmore farm which we had just before we broke up for Christmas. Now that our GCSE's are getting closer and closer, there have not been weekly meetings going ahead to maintain improvements in the school due to extra revision sessions. Leaver's service is only a matter of weeks away and then it will really show who has worked hard and benefitted from Brymore. It has been a real pleasure being head boy of Brymore this year; I am so glad that I can leave Brymore knowing that I have made a real difference to the school hopefully not just for now but for years to come. I have no doubt that next year's head boy and senior student leadership team will keep on making Brymore better and better.



Practical Learning in Maths (Ms Warren)

Our Year 10 students have been let loose in Maths this half term. Not for any other reason than to help consolidate their understanding of Pi!

Boys have been out and about around the school measuring circular objects to help them with this topic and Mr Ashton is a great believer that boys learn better through methods like this. The boys were adventurous and used their imaginations to think of what could be circular; they used tractor tyres, bins, tree stumps and even Mr Thomas got a surprise visit when boys asked to measure his head!



Lambing Sunday and West Country Game Fair (Ms Warren)

I took a number of boys to help man a stand and show off some blacksmithing skills, alongside Alistair Weldon, as part of Bridgwater College's Lambing Sunday. It was cold and the rain didn't stay away but the boys stood all day telling people about the school, which was delightful to witness. In addition this month we went to the West Country Game Fair at Shepton Mallet where boys helped on the Brymore stand and also worked with BASC on their interactive gun dog displays. All boys showed great maturity and were a pleasure to take out for the days.



Cricket (Miss Bradford)

After the Easter break cricket season will commence with a mixed years team. If your son wishes to play and is in possession of cricket whites, pads, gloves and his own bat and personal safety equipment, please encourage him to bring them back with him. The school has a limited amount of equipment available for boys to use.

The school is hopeful of once again playing a series of games on a Sunday morning against Wembdon Junior Cricket Club; this will be a team made up of all years staying in for the weekend.

Open Day 2015

Just a reminder to everyone that our annual Open Day and Country Fair takes place on Saturday June 27th from 10.30am - 5.00pm. It is always a good day, come rain or shine, so please invite your friends, neighbours, relatives and anyone else you think may enjoy the day. Please be aware that no exeat will be granted to boys on this day as they will all be required on the day; whether that be for stock-showing, plant sales, blacksmithing or to help with one of the other many things that happen on the day.

Sponsorship (Ms Warren)

Recently we were lucky enough to be presented with some high-visibility jackets from Muller-Wiseman, a great help when the boys run Chads or down on the farm.

Additionally Sedgemoor Tree Services have agreed to sponsor our First Team rugby tops and Mr Williams is sorting out the ordering of them as we go to print.

We have also been lucky enough to secure some rugby flags from North Petherton Rugby Club which will be well used during the rugby season.



Meningitis C Vaccine (Matron)

Nurses will be coming into the school on Tuesday 12th May to administer the Meningitis C Vaccine to boys in Year 9. Letters have gone home to all parents and the consent slip must be returned to the Matrons to ensure that your son has this vaccination.

Year 11 Leavers Hoodies (Miss Bradford)

The money for year 11 Leavers Hoodies must be paid the first week back after Easter. It can be cash or a cheque made payable to Brymore Academy £19.00 for a single colour or £20.00 for dual. No money can be taken from Activities unless a parent or guardian calls the finance office to authorise.

The money/cheques should be paid to me in the LRC.

The Learning Resource Centre (Miss Bradford)

There has been a huge increase in the issuing of books since September this, unfortunately coupled with an equally large increase in the non-returning of books. If your son has a Brymore Library book at home please can you ensure that he returns to school with it; Year 11s especially.

As I write we are three days into the Scholastic Book Fair, sales so far are going well. Next term I will be weeding books from the shelves - look out for a Second Hand Book Sale on Open Day!

New Senior Student Appointments (Ms Warren)

Every year the competition for the top senior position within the school becomes more fierce; and this year was no different. Fifteen boys put themselves forward for Head Boy and stood on the stage in assembly to tell staff and their fellow students why they should be voted for, once this was completed they then had to face a round of interviews with Mr Thomas, Mrs Davis, Mr Winter, Mr Watts and Silas Lawson (outgoing Head Boy). I don't think any of the panel felt it was an easy decision making process but eventually Joe Parkman was announced as Head Boy. Joe will be ably assisted by Jason James-Goddard as Deputy Head Boy and Cameron Weldon and Alistair Rook as Assistant Head Boys. A number of Senior Prefect and Prefect appointments have been made and there will be more opportunities for other current Year 10 boys to join this elite group that makes up the Senior Student Leadership Team.



Navy and Road Safety Visit (Mrs Jones)

Representatives from the Royal Navy and Royal Marines came to see our Year 11 students and gave an excellent presentation outlining to the boys the wide and varied opportunities available to them should they consider a career path within the Royal Navy. They gave the students a clear insight into the different post-16 routes they could take through the organisation and the skills and qualifications necessary to apply. They also explained the ongoing training and really diverse careers available once in the Royal Navy itself.



The Road Safety team from Somerset County Council also came in to work with students in Years 10 and 11 to begin the process of ensuring boys are considering their roles and responsibilities within the vehicle as passengers, whilst also beginning to get them to consider the role of the driver as many of them will be taking to the roads as drivers over the next couple of years. Topics covered were distractions in the car, drink driving, use of mobile phones and not wearing seatbelts.

Brymore YFC (Miss Bradford)

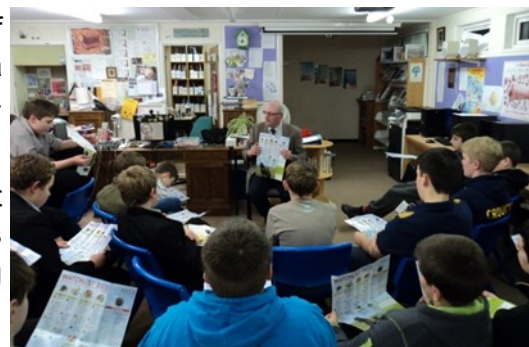
This half term the Brymore Young Farmers Group have been lucky enough to have had excellent speakers: Mrs Kate Whyte with her popular Soap Felting.



Phil Vickery, Area Manager for Kverneland, manufacturers of Farm Machinery speaking about the history of the firm and the many and varied pieces of machinery that they produce around the world;

Richard Broad Field Officer for Wales and the South of England for the Rare Breeds Survival Trust who spoke about the importance of ensuring the continuation of these breeds. We were also told of a major supermarket whose best beef comes from the British Short-horn.

Rachel and Danni two Community Police Officers who spoke about the danger of 'Legal Highs' and our final speaker before Easter was Stuart from Paul Helps Ltd with a presentation of Chain Harrowing and Rolling.



Horticulture (Mr Willcocks)

This has been a busy term again with many seeds sown, seedlings pricked out and plants potted on. Crops have been planted in the walled garden with a variety of mulches being used as well and many of the boys plots are now looking much tidier. We have been using wood chip to mulch the flower beds around the school and Mr Williams has been repairing the raised beds in the walled garden. The plants for the Cut Flowers project for sale this summer are progressing very well. We await a warm, dry, still day to be able to reroof the poly tunnel cover that came off at Christmas. The Herb Garden is gradually being rejuvenated and a seating area has been created nearby.



Years 7 and 9 have visited Garden Centres, Sanders Garden World and Monkton Elms. It was very interesting to see mulches used, a large variety of plants and also to talk to staff about their jobs. Boys in Year 10 & 11 have been mowing and are progressing well with their BTEC assessments. Boys in Year 9 planted bowls of daffodils in readiness for Mothers Day. We hope the mums will enjoy the daffodils as they come out. Year 10 boys have helped Spaxton Primary School to prune their willow dome. It was more of a hack than a light trim! Their dome was very much overgrown and needed major surgery. The new Year 10 HoDs have settled in well and are doing a good job during duties.



The trolley has been out each Saturday afternoon and we are grateful to those parents who support us by buying produce and plants. We still have plenty of plants for sale or if there is something specific you want then please ask Mrs Stanley.

We were visited by representatives of Monkton Elm Garden Centre who donated refurbished tools to the department and for which we are most grateful.

Many thanks to all the team for all they do over and above their required jobs of work and a reminder to all boys that overalls and steel toe capped footwear are still required for every practical lesson AND for duties as well.



Your views matter: Parent View for Ofsted

Last term we fully expected Ofsted to come in, due to us being in our fifth term as an Academy, however they did not. In anticipation that they will come in soon we are very much hoping that inspectors will see how hard we have worked to raise standards and to ensure that every Brymore boy receives the best education we can offer him, in all aspects of his life here. Every boy is entitled to the kind of academic challenge in the classroom which builds his ability to succeed. In the last four years we have widened the range of extra-curricular opportunities on offer, whilst retaining the greatest of Brymore traditions such as Chads, 'fitness', Harvest Festival, Carol Service and so on. For so many of the boys here, Brymore is their 'home from home' and our pastoral care has focused on ensuring that boys support each other and know that they will be listened to. We may not always get it right but we do always strive to listen and to keep on improving. Hopefully, the upcoming inspection will identify the school's strengths and allow the boys and staff here to celebrate their pride in Brymore.

The school would not be what it is without the tremendous support of dedicated parents, who have made an active choice to send their son here. Ofsted takes the views of parents and students extremely seriously and your views will be taken into account as part of the inspection.

I am therefore encouraging you to offer your views on Parent View, so that you have a voice in the inspection process. As always, regardless of Ofsted, we value your opinion and we are so grateful to those who have supported us over the last few years - and to those parents who have already offered their support online.

The web-site address is: <https://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk>

Thank you.

Farm News

Calves: This half term we have had three calves born. Ulrika, our Swedish Red cow had a heifer, Blissful, the Ayrshire cow had one of Adrian's calves, a heifer and Tulip had the last calf from Adrian, also a heifer. These calves have been wearing quilted jackets to keep them warm.

Lambing: We started lambing on 26th February and have 64 lambs born so far. Year 9 helped with one difficult lambing which resulted in a very large single lamb weighing over 8.5kg! They are enjoying the warmer dry weather and growing well outside.

New Cow: We bought a Holstein Friesian cow from Sedgemoor Auction Centre. She is a second calver named Poppett and she has settled in well with the other cows and into our farm routine.

Year 7: This half term, Year 7 have been on several trips. Mrs Garrod and the farm staff took a group to see a large Free Range poultry unit where 30,000 hens produce 28,000 eggs. We saw very modern machinery sorting the eggs and an Ultra Violet light spotting cracked eggs so that they could be removed from the production line. The efficiency of the machinery fascinated us all (especially the farm staff!!). We also had a trip to Rodway Farm, Cannington to look at the modern Dairy Unit there. Mr Jones, the Farm Manager explained how the parlour works and showed us the cows and calves and then we went on to another local Dairy farm where the cows are milked by two Robotic milking units. We had a chance to see the one of the machines milk a cow automatically and Mr Bryant was able to explain what was happening.



Eggs: Our hens are laying well with the longer days and better weather. Free Range eggs are for sale at £1 per half dozen. We also have Fertile eggs for sale.



Sports Report (Mr Williams)

In early March a group of boys were taken to Lydeard Hill to run the Quantock Relays Cross Country. Up against boys and staff from Millfield, Blundells and Kings College they performed very well on the day and enjoyed taking part in this. In addition to this some of our boys were also entered into the Clatworthy 5 - a five mile run around Clatworthy Reservoir. It was a beautiful sunny day and the boys once again performed superbly to achieve good placings. Our thanks go to Mr Crow, our Gap Tutor, who went along to help assist.



We took a Year 7 and 9 rugby team to the Bridgwater and Albion Rugby 7s competition; the Year 9 team were runners up in their age group and the Year 7 team came third, which were brilliant results.

Ten students took part in the Projectability Step Into Sport day run by SASP. It was a day to show them how to lead inclusive sports and the organisers were so impressed with our boys that they have been invited to go to Millfield and help run the Somerset Parallel Games. We also had some of our students taking part in the Somerset Parallel Games swimming competition at Taunton School which was a great experience for all of them.



A number of our Year 11 boys are on their way to achieving their School Games Leadership Awards for many hours spent volunteering; the more hours the put in the higher the award. Aaron Hold has volunteered the most and is on course to get his gold award.

House hockey and rugby matches have taken place during this half term with all teams and captains working hard to try and ensure their house plays to the best of it's ability.

Mr Bagshaw took two teams of boys to the Somerset Indoor Cricket Competition and both played superbly especially when it's taken into consideration they have not been playing together for very long. One team lost to Haygrove in the final and with some further coaching planned could be the players to watch over the cricket season. All 13 boys involved were impeccably behaved and a real credit to the school.



At the time of writing, the boys were hard at work preparing for the house rugby and house hockey final, both held on the last Saturday of the term which has just finished. These fixtures have been put on the end of half-terms and end of terms to allow parents to come and watch their boys. The boys really do appreciate when parents make the effort to arrive early and watch the games.

The Year 11 team played its final rugby match on the last Wednesday evening of the Spring term at NPRC. Although this was only a friendly game the school still took a coachload of supporters and everyone enjoyed the game and the final result was a win for North Petherton 26-19.

With regard to Chads, the new road that bisects the front drive is still a good few months from completion and therefore the Chads hill run still takes place every day of the week, including Sunday for the benefit of those on feeding duties. Fifteen Year 7 boys have also achieved the qualifying standard for the front drive, back drive run (5 minutes 30 seconds) which has enabled them to attempt the Chads Hill run and they have produced some very good times.

Brymore Lottery

1st £40 - Mr Clarkson
2nd £25 - Mr Kerr
3rd £15 - Mr & Mrs Selwood

Year 11 students

If your son is in Year 11 then please ensure that he is aware of studying over the Easter break as exams are on the horizon. The Year 11 count-down calendar is on our website and everyone has been given a copy to take home.

FOBSA (Ms Warren)

Following the recent AGM, FOBSA has had a change of personnel. The Chair of the Committee is Julia Birchall-Mann. Meanwhile, Delia Brandwood remains Secretary and Michelle Harris will continue in her role as Treasurer.

FOBSA provide the school with support during big events such as Open Day and Sports Day by selling refreshments and thus raising money that they can donate back into the school. Without the help of other parents the committee will become overstretched, so if anyone wishes to join or help out during event days then please contact Julia via email fobsachair@hotmail.com

Please, if you can help at all; whether it be making cakes, serving tea or helping cook burgers on Open Day then let Julia know.

Staff Farewells (Mr Thomas)

It is always hard to say good bye to staff when they leave, but never more so than when they retire after years of dedicated service. It is with a lump in the throats of all staff that we wish Mrs Walker a happy retirement after over 20 years at the school in the finance office. For the majority of her time here she has run the 'boys bank' and many old boys still recognise her and remember the fact that she was the keeper of their money for all their years at school. In addition, Mr Bryant enters his retirement after nearly ten years at the school working tirelessly on the farm; getting up early to show the boys how to do feeding, often being here through the night for lambing and also during the school holidays. Mr Bryant has been a valued member of the team and visitors will most definitely miss his Open Day milking demonstrations.

Heather Harris, a catering assistant in our kitchens for over six years, is also retiring and many boys will always remember her for being a constant fixture at tea most nights.

Matron Tweedale is also leaving this Easter and it's safe to say that she has made a big impact on the boys after over five years at the school.

Lastly our acting SENCO, Mrs Turnball, has had her last day at Brymore. Mrs Turnball has worked very hard with the Learning Support Assistants to ensure boys have the support they need in lessons and we are very grateful for the dedication she showed to the role.

We have a number of job adverts posted recently, in the main this is because we will have an additional year group in September and this is needed to ensure all boys are taught to a high standard, have the support they need and are well cared for.

Leavers Service (Ms Warren)

For parents on Year 11 boys please ensure that the date of Saturday 23rd May is added to your diary. This is the day that we celebrate the successes and remember the years that your son has spent at Brymore. Colours ties for rugby will be presented, awards will be given to those who have gone above and beyond in various areas of school life and photos from their time here will be shown. It is always a day that creates a lump in the throat, if not tears, for most staff members and parents and all Year 11 parents are invited to join us for this day.

IMPORTANT DATES FOR 2015		
SUMMER TERM		
Monday 13 April		Years 12 & 13 return
Monday 20 April	3.30 pm - 5.00 pm	Year 9 Parent Consultation
INSET DAY	6.00 pm - 9.00 pm	Years 7, 10 & 11 boarders return
Tuesday 21 April	8.30 am	All out-boarders return
Friday 1 May	12.30 pm	Years 9, 10, 11, 12 & 13 depart for Bank Holiday weekend
	1.00 pm - 3.30 pm	Year 7 Parent Consultation
Tuesday 5 May	6.00 pm - 9.00 pm	All boarders return
Wednesday 6 May	8.30 am	All out-boarders return
Saturday 23 May	11.30 am	Years 11, 12/13 Leavers Service
	1.30 pm	Sports Day
	3.45 pm (approx.)	All students depart for Summer half-term
Sunday 31 May	6.00 pm - 9.00 pm	All boarders return
Monday 1 June	8.30 am	All out-boarders return
Saturday 27 June	10.30 am - 5.00 pm	Open Day and Country Fair
29 June - 3 July		Work Experience Week (Year 10)
6-10 July		Activities Week
Saturday 11 July	10.30 am	Swimming Gala
	12.00 pm	All students depart for Summer holidays