

# **Newsletter**

October 2022 www.brymoreacademy.co.uk



Diligentia et Labore





# Message from the Headteacher

### **Dear Parents**

It seems that whenever I listen to the news at the moment, I hear the Prime Minister talking about the need for stability. Stability can often be seen as mundane or dull to those that seek the excitement of change or something new. I have always felt that my role at Brymore is to continually balance the two, embrace new ideas and constantly look to improve whilst maintaining the very foundations on which the school was built. The need to instil resilience, resourcefulness and responsibility, underpinned by the ethos of 'Diligentia et Labore' remains, in many ways more than ever.

The pandemic, along with the two lockdowns, the war in the Ukraine, the death of Queen Elizabeth II and the current cost of living crises have all contributed to the current feeling of instability. The problems we all face are very real and, having spoken with many fellow Headteachers recently, they are clearly having a big effect on young people and schools. That is why at Brymore the focus last year was on getting 'Back to Brymore' or more simply back to normal. That continues to be the focus this term, but what does back to normal mean?

For the boys it means completing at least one Chad's every week - this is the minimum commitment that we expect with many boys doing considerably more. It also means fulfilling their responsibility to carry out garden and farm duties. These three activities are what set us apart from other schools and they are integral to developing the three 'R's' in the boys. Boys must also 'step up' when it comes to whole school events, many of which are on a Saturday. It is not simply about attending, although that in itself is essential, but these events also contribute significantly to the school's ethos. More importantly boys need to take an active role, as the Year 7's and Year 10's did recently during our two Open Mornings. It was good to see the Year 7 boys contributing to the running of both mornings and already showing the traits expected of a Brymore Boy. It was also good to see so many boys standing up in front of hundreds of parents, staff and boys at the recent Harvest Festival and many others representing their house in the cross-country champion-ships.

What else is 'normally' expected of a Brymore Boy? Good manners and being respectful, hard work in lessons and taking part in a range of activities, helping others both individually and on a wider scale through charity work, for example. This has all been evident this half term, however it is essential that *every* boy understands what is expected of him. I have had the pleasure of watching several of Year 11's rugby matches recently, as well as reading out match reports from all other year's groups. We have also seen a resurgence in hockey, thanks to Miss Doble and Mrs Featherstone, having had two matches so far this term.

Brymore being Brymore also has an expectation on parents as well. I always promise parents at induction that staff will work tirelessly to produce hard working, polite, well-mannered young men who will achieve the best exam results they can when they leave in Year 11. However, I also say that this is only possible if parents work with us to support their son. Encouraging him to do Chads and duties are a key part of this and yet again, it was fantastic to see so many of you supporting your son, and the school on the Saturday. The support of parents is another key ingredient in the success of Brymore.

So, I promise that we will continue to strive to produce the normal Brymore experience and hopefully the stability that goes with that, in what is currently an ever-challenging world. I hope you all have a really good holiday and where applicable, a really successful harvest.

Man.



# **Boarding**

After a long hot summer, it was great to see the boys return and it has been a busy time helping them settle back into things, as well as so many new boarders beginning their journey. Yet again, the older boys have been so helpful either by osmosis or with their helpful mentoring of the younger years, in addition to the many countless times an older boy has been sought for advice. It is with great pride I see this daily here at Brymore.

The new boys have settled well and this has been helped by lots of exciting things going on. Their first week was Induction week and it was lots of fun, with the boys rally racing and tractor tyre flipping, as well as a tug of war with all boys working well together. From the many activities taking place to the exciting events and fun happenings in respective boarding houses. Whether it is stop motion carpet farming competition in Kemp House, raffle ticket selling in School House or milkshakes in Reid House, boys are working together and having fun.

Boys have been very busy completing their weekly Chads Hill runs and doing their fitness, as well as competing in rugby matches and practise. Well done to those boys who have completed at least one Chads a week. Every boy should be on at least six by now! Mr Spridgens knows only too well that those boys who keep up with such commitments are the same boys who pass their exams with flying colours.

There has been a large amount money invested in facilities and equipment over the past few terms including RC cars / rock crawlers / gym equipment / RC construction vehicles / scooters / new BMX's and the list goes on. This term we have been fortunate enough to have had the bike track redesigned and re-surfaced with boys looking forward to using this when they return after the half term break.

It is this time of the year the many student leadership roles are gaining momentum and



establishing their meetings. House Improvement Team, Debate Club in Kemp, Charity Meetings, House meetings, Mentor meetings and Food meetings. Involving boys in the running of their boarding school is key to them feeling part of something bigger than themselves, which is our intent.

We say goodbye to Ms Holland and wish her well, as she has secured herself a new job training race horses, and we hope by the start of next term to have a new House Tutor in place to support in Reid House during Sundays. We look forward to the half term break and wish all well as the winter months approach whilst autumn takes a firm grip first, fierce winds shaking the leaves from their very branches completing the cycle that began last spring. We also look forward to new and positive challenges and events during the next half term where we gear up towards a magical time of the year, that of Christmas time. (Mr Watts)





### **Farm**

### Dairy

We started calving in September and now have nine cows milking, with some due to calf later in the season. All the calves are doing well with the boys monitoring weekly live weight gains and the general health of the calves. We have also purchased Flossy, a new Friesian fresh calver, to add some more milk to the tank.

### **Turkeys**

The turkeys are growing on well this year. We have two breeds Norfolk Blacks and Roly Poly Broilers. We would like to thank the parents for their speedy response in booking your turkeys and encourage you to pay your deposit to guarantee Christmas lunch this year!

### Sheep

The Rams are in! The boys have completed the pre-breeding checks including dagging and foot trimming in the lead up to turning out the rams. We continue to monitor the yellow bums and look forward to lots of lambs. This will mean next year Lambing Day will be Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

### **Pigs**

This year we will be replacing our sows and boar with some new young blood into the breeding programme. We will be taking the last litter of piglets through to finished with the boys also monitoring their weekly growth.

### Chickens

We have moved the hens into the shed as an additional level of security from the concerning Bird Flu that has been recorded in Somerset. We will continue to monitor the changing requirements to ensure we remain ahead of the required needs to protect our hens. We continue to sell eggs at the Lodge.

# **Boarding House Charities**

Each year the boarding houses support a charity, chosen by the boys, and throughout the year there are a number of fund-raising activities for their particular charity. This year the boys have all chosen farming charities. No surprise there really!!

School House are supporting The Farmers Community Network and have got off to a great start with their tuck box raffle. They have raised £226 so far. This charity supports farmers and their families with both practical and pastoral support in times of need. Reid House are supporting Yellow Wellies which is a UK based charity dedicated to raising awareness of farm safety and mental wellbeing in farmers. Their boarding house have had a regular milkshake and cake evening and have raised £130. In the term ahead they plan to have sausage rolls and hot chocolate as an alternative.

Kemp House are supporting Forage Aid which is a charity connected to one of the boys in the house. It is a charity that co-ordinates the distribution of emergency forage and bedding to farms where

extreme weather events (such as this Summer's prolonged hot weather) or natural disasters, have impacted their business. Kemp House are encouraging their boys to do a number of sponsored events over the next half term and are hoping that the boys and their families get behind the charity and raise as much as possible!!! The Year 7 and 8 boys have been sent home with a sponsorship form and their total will depend on the outcome of their individual sponsorships. The idea of having the boys support a charity is not only to support the charity itself, but to give our boys an opportunity to consider others who are less fortunate and in need. It can be incredibly rewarding to make a difference in the lives of others and to encourage their social conscience. We want to our boys to be generous and to think of others, as well as give each boarding house a sense that they can make a difference to the charity of their choice. (Mrs Webb)



# **Cross Country and Harvest Festival**

The Autumnal sun, and a little bit of rain, came to join us for our annual Harvest Festival and Cross Country day. Both the upper and lower school services at St Mary's Church were well attended by families, and boys did superbly with their readings. Every year we hold a collection and this year we raised over £600 for St Mary's Church in Cannington, where the service was held, and the local Salvation Army.

By 11.30am the starter pistol signalled the first race and our Year 7 boys were off on their first ever cross country. All the other years battled hard during their individual races and the overall points when totted up, meant that Taylor house won the coveted trophy! Grateful thanks go to FoBSA volunteers for their efforts supplying tea, cake and pasties to all the families in attendance and for raising even more money that will be fed straight back into the school. (Ms Warren)





# **Work Experience**

Well done to the students who have already returned forms, having found a placement, taken the forms to be signed, checked that they have Public Liability and Employer's liability insurance. We need to have any outstanding forms returned by the end of November please.

Be aware that other school students are also looking for work placements too, so the longer you leave it the less chance you may have to get one where you want to go. Think broadly, do not go for the easy option (where you have worked before or where a family member works). Use the website to give you lots of ideas but above all else, please do not forget to get the forms (which you have all received) completed and returned. (Rev Briggs)

### **Drama Club**

Drama club was launched at the beginning of term. We have been meeting on a Wednesday after school to learn different dramatic techniques and styles. The boys have tried different games, mime, impro, characterisation and had lots of fun. The group have been working on creating a silent movie, devising their own characters and comedy.

"Drama club has helped me expand my already impressive acting ability" says Ben (Mrs Taylor)



# **Duke of Edinburgh**

We have a good number of Year 9 boys apply for their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award and have opened up applications to the Year 10 boys to ensure lots have this as an opportunity. Employers and colleges look very fondly on the award and we would encourage parents to discuss this with their son. (Ms Warren)

# Racewalking

Earlier in the term Aidan C from our current Year 11, along with Seth H from Year 9 and previous Year 11 Aidan G, went with Mr Williams to the National Schools Athletics Championships in Bedford.

Having had some expert tutelage from Alex Wright, our old boy and International Racewalker who has represented Ireland at the Olympics, the boys took to the track for their races.

All boys did so well to make it to the finals but we were delighted that Aidan C, came away with a bronze medal after placing 3rd in his race. He follows a great Brymore tradition of racewalkers and we look forward to seeing what the future holds for our athletes. (Ms Warren)





# Horticulture

These are exciting times in the Horticulture department with many new projects being undertaken, more planned, and a rejuvenation of the beds and borders.

In terms of the curriculum, classes in Year 9 have started work on a wildlife pond in the walled garden. This is part of a scheme of work linked to conservation within gardening and promotes a pond as a form of organic pest control, providing a habitat for frogs and toads to eat the many slugs that devour our leafy crops within the walled garden. Students have greatly enjoyed the project and we are all looking forward to watching the pond mature over the year.

Year 8 have been hard at work creating borders in the walled garden for a collection of climbing fruit featuring loganberry, tayberry, boysenberry and thornless blackberry. They have been learning about aspect and location and the significance of the Walled Garden as a horticultural function. Year 8 have also been busy landscaping sections of the area surrounding the school's re-furbished swimming pool, focusing on health and safety risk assessments as well as studying and applying the basics of garden design for such a focal area. This will be a year-long project and I am hoping that by the swimming gala in July 2023, the aesthetics will be significantly improved.

The Year 10 students who opted to study Land Based Studies have been busy taking softwood cuttings and propagating their own plants, all the time reinforcing the theory needed for their written assessments later in the year. They too have helped in the initial swimming pool landscaping process.

The Year 7 boys (much like me) have been exploring the gardens and grounds, and have spent lessons orientating themselves amongst our significant facilities. They have also had great fun in processing the windfall apples from our orchard into bottled apple juice and learning about the step by step process which allows us to make the most of one of our most productive crops. They were even allowed a taste of their efforts!

Garden duties have begun and with an immediate effect, the grounds look neater for the additional attention. Any boy involved in garden duties whether as a Year 8 student or HoD, should feel a great sense of pride in this. It is through their efforts that the grounds are kept looking sharp and smart. If gardens are a reflection of their keepers, then the Brymore Boys should feel very pleased with themselves. With a view to the operation of garden duties, I would like to remind parents that should your son not be able to undertake their duty, they need to inform me in person, and should substitute for a different day in that week. Failing this, two garden duty sessions should be undertaken in the following week. We do keep a stringent check on this.

It was an exciting end of term as we found out we won the Viridor School Composting Trophy as part of our work with Cannington in Bloom (who won the gold award!).

I have greatly enjoyed my first half term at Brymore and have been made to feel very welcome by staff and students. The horticulture department is a constant hive of industry; a clear cornerstone of the school with lots going on and I look forward to sharing more events with you in future newsletters.

(Mr Naum)





# Message from the Head Boy

With the first half of the autumn term coming to a close, it concludes six weeks of hard work completed by all the boys. This new year has had a fantastic start, with everyone putting in their all. I am so proud of everyone that came together to put together any events, from open mornings to the harvest festival.

Coming back to an array of teams, from the farms and gardens to the library assistants, as enthusiastic as they are is simply awe-inspiring. It's amazing to return to such a productive, driven force of young men. With many tasks and responsibilities under our belt, duties and overall behaviour, we all worked with one another to attain the common goal of success.

One key event that the school hosted was our open mornings, held on two occasions. Both were a privilege to take charge of, meeting and greeting the parents and grandparents. It was truly heart-warming to see all the Year 6's wishing to come to our school; this filled us all with immense pride and gratitude for our place in the school. Namely, Year 7's and 10's are to be thanked for their extraordinary effort and contribution towards the touring aspect of the morning. Just from the parents have I heard how well the these year groups did, having shown great initiative and responsibility.

The Harvest Festival was a great success, having been a great homage to those who are struggling, giving our thanks for what we have, and praying for what others don't. Although our first service without the planning power of Mr Willcocks, we still pulled through stronger than ever, relying on each other with the utmost trust. Another great victory for Brymore.

Upon our return, we will come back harder than ever, with Children In Need day just around the corner. Having had six weeks of hard work behind us, I would say it is apt for a good two weeks of well-deserved rest. Thank you, boys and staff. (George McCormack)

# **Agriculture**

This year has seen a change to the Agriculture Curriculum. We have moved to a Level 2 City and Guilds Certificate in Agriculture to replace the historic BTEC in Agriculture, after it was withdrawn by the exam board. This course offers the same opportunities to gain a qualification in Year 9 for all students and assesses both practical and academic skills. The boys' first assignment on Farm Livestock Husbandry is due at the end of half term. Year 9 have also been completing their assessments in tractor pre-start checks and tractor driving.

The Year 7 students have settled in well, completing a week of introductions and familiarisation of the farm buildings, and a week learning the breeds of animals that we have here at Brymore. Next half term the focus will be farm safety and a visit to Sedgemoor Market.

Year 8 have completed the Sheep unit this half term, looking at production systems, breeds, and sheep selection for finished lambs and for breeding. Next half term the focus is on Dairy production.

Year 10 Land Based Students have started the course by introducing Land Uses and how these have changed over time. We have also been looking at Cells and function before moving on to plant structure and function.

Year 11 Students have continued to complete a range of practical activities and those who are retaking their exam this year have been working through pass papers and reflecting on their answer quality. (Miss Marks)



# **Open Mornings**

It was fantastic to be able to welcome prospective families back into the school this half term during our Open Mornings and for the boys to be able to tell them about their Brymore journeys. We welcomed over 140 families to look around, they were greeted by our Senior Student Leadership Team and then our new Year 7 boys along with Year 10's toured family groups around. Mr Thomas then spoke to them in the hall giving a rousing presentation about Brymore life and everyone had the opportunity to sip a cup of tea whilst chatting to boys and staff. We always say the boys are our greatest advocates and they really never let us down during Open Mornings. (Ms Warren)



### **Bike Track**

Our Student Council last year decided that some of their fundraising would go towards upgrading our bike track. So for the week before we finished for half term, we had a contactor, Architrail, working in the woods making additional jumps and re-surfacing worn away areas. The result is a great improvement and the boys agree that it has been worth it. (Ms Warren)



# **Brymore Lottery**

Look out on MyEd for a message coming out shortly with instructions on how to join the Brymore lottery. You have to be in it to win it and every penny of profit goes back to the school. So, if you are not already a member please consider joining to support the school. For further information please email: lisa.nash@brymoreacademy.co.uk (Mrs Nash)

The winners for this half term are:

1<sup>st</sup> prize £40 A Twisk 2<sup>nd</sup> prize £25 M Burt 3<sup>rd</sup> prize £15 A Tribe

### **Christmas Turkeys**

We have a very limited number of Brymore 'barn reared' turkeys for sale this year. These will be sold on a first come, first served basis.

The price is £11.00/kg.

If you would like to order a turkey, please ring the farm office on 01278 652428 or email:

rachel.crews@brymoreacademy.co.uk

Once confirmed, a deposit of £30 will need to be made (Please make cheques payable to Brymore Academy).

We will also have some sausages and other meats available, so if there is anything you would like please contact me. (Ms Crews)



# **Sports News**

We have had loads of fixtures occurring for all year groups, but especially Years 9-11 as they missed out so much with the pandemic. The Year 7 and 8 fixtures will ramp up from here but numbers at training are low for Year 7s, so please encourage your son to attend. Year 11 have shown huge strength, with all the years showing great progress which shows that the practice really has benefited the teams.



Hockey matches are booked in and Miss Doble is taking the lead on this particular sport - training is a Thursday after school in the MUGA.

The Year 7 boys had the opportunity to get in the pool and complete the Brymore swimming test which was very encouraging and only a handful of non-swimmers, who were all resilient and improved their water confidence by the end of the session.

We have had good numbers at Chads, however there are still some boys not participating after



school in this activity and we would encourage all parents to ensure their son has run once per week. Younger members of the school need to try to remember to run the exact course and wait at the crossing with the allocated light person until it is safe to cross. Numbers of Chads run will be placed on SatchelOne at sporadic points throughout the year, please contact your son's tutor should you have any questions about figures.

Our newly crowned Head of Inclusive Sport, Dr Grant, and I took a group of students to the County Ground in Taun-

ton in September to try out a variety of sports but they also got to meet some professional cricketers and came home with signed bats.

All years have an opportunity to practice the cross country course before taking part and in PE lessons we have been undertaking fitness tests, front drive/back drive and badminton.

Year 11 boys who are doing PE as their GCSE option really need to be on top of their coursework

and they have had this information via TEAMS, SatchelOne and in a written statement to ensure they fully know how they can achieve this course. Parents can view this via these so if in doubt please encourage your son to complete outstanding tasks. (Mr Williams)

## **Forest School**

It has been lovely to welcome the new Year 7s to Forest School at Brymore. The boys have been learning about den building and safe tool use, as well as some conservation work in the grounds. Forest School and conservation is now available as a Friday activity for Years 9-11 and the boys are enjoying being out in the grounds. The hot chocolate and biscuit are of course an added bonus. We are venturing out this year and will be offering many pairs of hands at Steart Marshes, our local WWT area during some trips that I have planned. Please remember that all boys need full waterproofs during the next few months, as we are outside as long as it is safe! (Ms Carter)





### **Careers**

This first half of term the Year 11 boys have had to really start thinking about their next steps beyond Brymore, a difficult concept given that they are only just at the start of Year 11. However, local colleges are busy hosting open days, and the application process is well underway with many receiving a conditional offer by Christmas. It is therefore essential that our senior boys start to explore their options and course ideas early so they can make informed decisions.

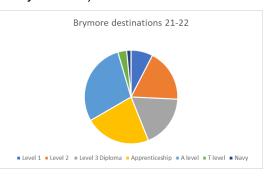
As parents, planning for life after school can be just as daunting as it can be for the boys. A reminder that our website holds a wealth of information to help support both you and your son with this process. In addition to this, some parents may find the 'The Parent Perspective Podcast Episode 1: The Choice - what are your child's options post 16?' A useful resource. Rachel Burden leads the conversation, kicking things off with a brilliant episode about workplace opportunities and the options available to school leavers. It's a great introduction to what promises to be a series packed full of useful support and guidance for parents and carers!



In the second half of the Autumn Term all Year 11 will receive a 1:1 careers guidance meeting provided by a company called Future Smart. These meetings will be held by level 6 or 7 qualified advisors and are designed not only to be supportive but completely unbiased, to ensure that boys have fully explored all avenues open to them. We also have bespoke events designed in the diarry to further support and inspire career curiosity. For example, this half of term we have held Apprenticeship clinics to ensure those boys wishing to find an Apprenticeship are signed up to the national data base and understand the process. After half term boys can attend an Army focus group and will attend assemblies on T levels and post 16 options.

At this time of year, we also get confirmation of last year's leavers destinations - the data below right, shows a great breadth of course level and type. (Mrs Taylor-Lane)







### **Future Careers Events**

### **COLLEGE OPEN DAYS AUTUMN TERM:**

Bridgwater and Taunton College: 12<sup>th</sup> November, 10.00am - 1.00pm Cannington Centre

Strode College: Open Evening 17<sup>th</sup> November

Taster/Experience Days: 9<sup>th</sup> November, 8<sup>th</sup> December

Yeovil College: 17<sup>th</sup> October, 16<sup>th</sup> November

Richard Huish: 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> November

Weston College: 8<sup>th</sup> November, 5.00pm - 7.00pm

Hartbury College: Open days already fully booked! Contact them directly.



8th Nov 2022 - Westlands, Yeovil 23rd Nov 2022 - J24, Bridgwater

Open 9am - 6pm

# Somerset Careers Fair 2022



## Come speak to the experts

With over 50 amazing exhibitors including the Armed Forces, Local Employers, Universities, Schools/Colleges, FE Colleges, and Training Providers we have plenty of experts for you to talk to.

For more information visit the Somerset EBP website











# Weekend Activities Term 1b 2022

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	Pumptrack		BASC		Cinema Bridgwater
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# 2022/23 Upcoming Important Dates

### **Autumn & Spring Term**

### Monday 31st October (INSET DAY)

6.00 pm Palmer & Howells available to meet with parents (Dining Hall)

6.00 pm - 9.00 pm Year 7, 8, 9 10 & 11 boarders return

### Tuesday 1st November

8.30 am All out-boarders return

4.00 pm - 6.00 pm Year 7 Parent Consultation with Registration Group Tutors via SchoolCloud

Academic Progress with Senior Leadership Team (Selected Year 11 students only)

Friday 9<sup>th</sup> December

4.00 pm School transport departs for Year 9, 10 & 11 students

4.00 pm Lower School<sup>2</sup> Christmas Service, St Mary's Church, Cannington, TA5 2HP

5.00 pm (approx.) Lower School<sup>2</sup> depart for Christmas holidays

### Saturday 10th December

10.30 am Upper School<sup>1</sup> Christmas Service, St Mary's Church, Cannington, TA5 2HP

12.00 pm (approx.) Upper School<sup>1</sup> depart for Christmas holidays

12.15 pm (approx.) School transport departs

### Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2023 (INSET DAY)

3.00 pm - 6.00 pm Year 11 Parent Consultation via SchoolCloud

6.00 pm - 9.00 pm All boarders return

### Wednesday 4th January

8.30 am All out-boarders return

5.00 pm - 7.00 pm Year 11 Parent Consultation via SchoolCloud

Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> February

5.00 pm - 7.00 pm Year 8 Parent Consultation via SchoolCloud

Friday 10<sup>th</sup> February

12 noon All students depart for Spring half-term

12 noon School transport departs

1.00 pm - 4.00 pm Year 8 Parent Consultation via SchoolCloud

### Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> February (INSET DAY)

3.00 pm - 6.00 pm Year 10 Parent Consultation via SchoolCloud

6.00 pm - 9.00 pm All boarders return

### Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> February

8.30 am All out-boarders return

5.00 pm - 7.00 pm Year 10 Parent Consultation via SchoolCloud

Friday 31<sup>st</sup> March

3.45 pm Students depart for Easter holidays



### **CONTACT**

Brymore Academy, Brymore Way, Cannington, Bridgwater, Somerset TA5 2NB

T: (01278) 652369 F: (01278) 653244 E: office@brymoreacademy.co.uk

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Upper School (Years 9, 10 & 11)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Lower School (Years 7 & 8)