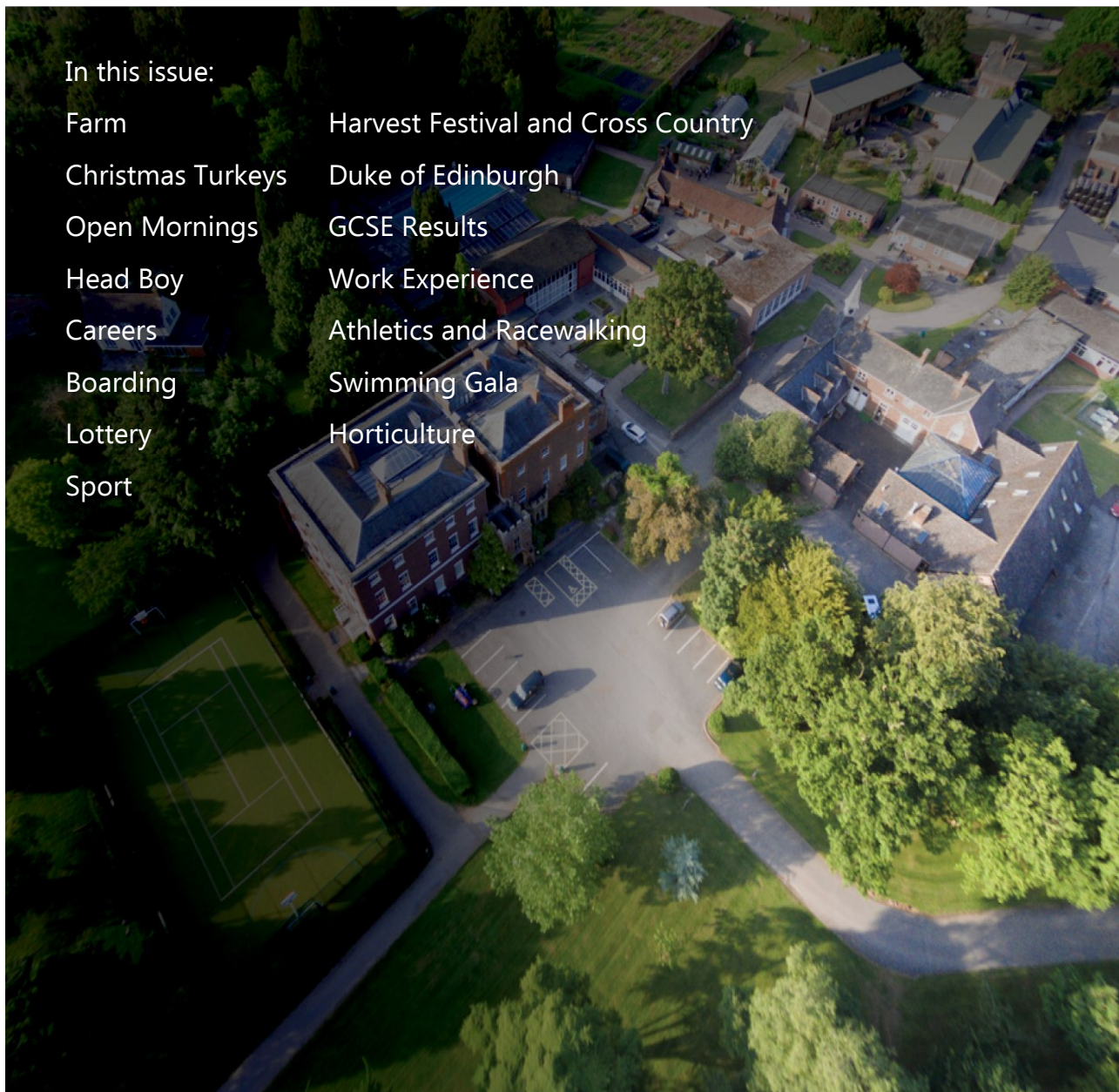


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Diligentia et Labore



Message from the Headteacher

Many thanks to everyone who attended the harvest festival and cross-country championships last week, it really was good to see so many of you supporting the boys at both events. Later that evening I had the privilege of attending the Old Brymorians Pym's night which meant I had a full day realising just how much I am going to miss Brymore. The informal formality of the harvest festival, where boys are prepared to stand up in front of an audience of hundreds to give a reading, the competitive yet supportive nature of the cross-country followed by the history that is Pym's night, sum up all that is good about Brymore. All three events also show case what can happen when the Brymore family come together at these key events in the school calendar.

GCSE results are now published in such a way that although we knew the boys had done well when the results were first released in August, it was only last week when we were able to see just how well the boys had done compared to those in other schools. The results are comfortably the highest in the school's history and they place us in the top 3 or 4% of schools in the South-west of England and around the top 5% of schools in the country. First and foremost, it means that the Year 11 cohort of 2023 should be incredibly proud of what they have achieved. I am extremely proud of them and the staff who have supported them throughout their time at Brymore and I am also proud that the boys were able to achieve such excellent grades and lead a full and active school life, and experience so many activities, trips, and visits at the same time.

The process to find the next Headteacher of Brymore has now begun in earnest. Two current Headteachers were interviewed last week, however sadly neither were successful. I can assure parents that the process is a rigorous one involving three full days of interviews, with many staff, FoBSA and the Old Brymorians involved, in addition to the governors, trustees, and the central leadership team. The next round of application open in December, with interviews scheduled for January 2024. I will provide a further update for parents once the next round of interviews has been completed.

I have been pleased with the way that the Year 7 boys have settled into life at Brymore. My own son started secondary school in September so I understand it can be a worrying time for parents. It has been an unusually busy half term, starting with the swimming gala and annual awards ceremony, postponed from last year and finishing with the harvest festival and cross-country championships, where it was good to see so many boys competing. They have also acted as guides on our two Open Mornings, where they helped show around over 170 families across the two days.

We have now come to the end of a busy half term and, just like when the harvest is safely gathered in, now is the time to pause briefly and re-charge those batteries. It is also a chance to spend time with family and friends which is not always possible during term time, with so much going on. So, I hope you have a good half term holiday and I looking forward to welcoming the boys back, in two weeks' time, as we start an even busier term as we build up towards Christmas.



Boarding

A new school year at Brymore with boarding welcoming back our boys and we have felt extremely privileged to have helped settle the many that have joined us. The new boys have settled very well and the older boys have helped hugely with this, with the new mentors supporting them through their first half term. The Year 7 Induction week really helped settle boys into Brymore life and tries to reduce the obvious nerves of being away from home and at a new school. Tractor tyre flipping and the tug of war were just some of the fun things the boys did during their first week here.

Key to the successful settling of all of the new boys has been the excellence of our older boys in their roles as Junior Mentors and Mentors as well as the Senior Student Leadership Team. Such support has been vital and this has helped with homesickness, and encouraging them with their activity participation, as well as checking they are ok.

Speaking of charities, Brymore will yet again be contributing huge amounts of goodies to our annual Smiles for Christmas campaign, where we ask boys to donate some food-stuffs and new toys for our Christmas Hampers which we will donate to The Salvation Army. Donations can be given any time after half term and boys who donate generously will receive a Smiles Champion certificate!

Boys have been very busy completing their weekly Chads Hill runs and doing their fitness, as well as competing in rugby matches and practice, with circuit training trying something new this year - taking place within the gym for a different experience. Well done to those boys who have completed at least one Chads a week. Every boy should be on at least six Chads by now. During the evenings boys have also been taking full advantage of all the other activities on offer, including using all the new gym equipment, and developing their artistic skills with posca pen paintings, whilst also enjoying more adventurous activities on weekends such as canoeing and high ropes climbing.

All houses have got off to an impressive start with their charity work. Kemp House is supporting Forage Aid, Reid House - Alzheimer's Society and School House - Motor Neuron Disease Association (MND).

In both Reid and Kemp boys have been able to buy milkshakes, lollies and other treats, with the profits going to their particular charity. It is hoped that there will be plenty of people willing to indulge in order to support their charity and raise as much funds as possible!

School House completed a 'Virtual Snowdon Challenge' raising funds for MND which is their chosen charity. The boys have been getting sponsorship for their efforts to complete the 36 laps of the house to represent the 1,085 meter ascent. All boys did a minimum of 11,000 steps which included 110 flights of stairs, with some boys going above and beyond by completing over 50 laps in the two hours. An amazing total of £1,006.50 has been raised during the event!

With School House getting off to such a fabulous start, it is hoped that the boys in Kemp will also get behind their sponsorship event. Each boy has been asked to do an activity or a task over half term and to get sponsorship and raise as much as they can for Forage Aid. The boy



who earns the most will receive a prize. They have a long way to go to get anywhere near the funds of School House, so boys and parents let this be an incentive!

We hope all boys have a relaxing holiday and take the time to reflect on what has been a very busy half term and a shock to the system for



some when returning from the summer holidays, now is the time to recharge the batteries and spend time with family and friends. (Mr Watts)

Farm

September has brought back the boys, but also calving at the farm. We have had seven of the calves born on the farm since returning.

One Year 7 group was lucky to witness our Maiden Heifer Heidi calf during their first lesson on the farm. Heidi has a Blonde x British Blue calf that becomes part of our suckler herd and can be seen in Underwood as you go down the drive. All the other calves are doing well, and the students weigh them weekly to calculate their daily live weight gain. A special arrival came when Percy Dainty calved during evening duties and, with a bit of support from the farm staff, we welcomed twin heifer calves. These are shorthorn crossed Aberdeen Angus and had amazing birth weights of over 40kg each.

As well as monitoring the calf weights boys are also weighing the Turkeys on a weekly basis to check their progress. At the time of writing, there are five turkeys not reserved. Contact Ms Nicholls if you are interested in our Norfolk Black Turkeys.

Year 9 have made a good start to the Level 2 Certificate in Agriculture, with the first assignment due in before half term. They have started to work with the school tractors and initial driving lessons have so far gone well.

Late August saw the Devon Closewool ram being put in with the ewes and the last week of September saw the Commercial ewes paired up with their rams. We look forward to scanning in January to hopefully see how the rams have got on. We have also started our plans for our next Lambing Day in March 2024. We have a supply of Brymore Farm produce available directly from the farm shop on order with Ms Nichols or Miss Marks. We can take orders for individual joints or whole or half pork or lamb. (Miss Marks)

GCSE Results

In the summer our Year 11 boys who left in 2023 received their GCSE results. It was a wonderful celebration of all they had achieved and we really did have boys who had performed outstandingly. George Billett deserves congratulations on a stunning set of results including no less than seven Grade 9s and two grade 8s – a fantastic achievement. Toby Moyle also gained a spectacular six Grade 9s while George McCormack achieved four Grade 9s, four Grade 8s and one Grade 7. Sam Chedghey excelled with Grade 9s in English Language and History, along with a Grade 8 in Science. What sets Brymore boys apart however, is not merely their academic attainment and their ability to achieve the top grades, it is the incredible progress made by all the boys from their starting points, compared with students nationally. This is the mark of true diligence and the greatest indicator of likely success. A staggering 60% of boys in the year group achieved well above their target grades on entry. Leandro Evans was the highest achiever, gaining an incredible 3.5 grades higher in all his subjects than his predictions on entry, including Grade 8s in English and Land Based, Grade 7 in English Literature and a string of 6s – what a tribute to his measured dedication, all while taking a full part in the school outside the classroom.

We are proud of all of our boys for working hard towards their exams, to their buy-in to our revision sessions and for ensuring they have secured their best future. (Mrs Davis)



Cross Country and Harvest Festival

With some recent rain, our Cross Country course was definitely good to soft in some places but we were delighted that so many of our families came to join us for our annual Harvest Festival and Cross Country Championships. 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 Food Bank.

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 - but only just, for a change! 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 (over £1300) that will be fed straight back into the school. (Ms Warren)



Christmas Turkeys

We have a very limited number of Brymore free range turkeys for sale this year. These will be sold on a first come, first served basis. The price is £12.50/kg.

If you would like to order a turkey, please ring the farm office on 01278 652428 or email: Dezi.nicholls@brymoreacademy.co.uk

Once confirmed, a deposit of £30 will need to be made (Please make cheques payable to Brymore Academy) and we need to know rough weight required.

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

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)

Open Mornings

It was fantastic to be able to welcome prospective families 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 170 families to look around, they were greeted by our Senior Student Leadership Team and then our new Year 7 boys, along with Year 10s 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)



Duke of Edinburgh

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

Athletics and Race-Walking success

Earlier in the term Ben Sawyer from our current Year 10 and Year 11 Will Bennett went to the National Schools Athletics Championships in Bedford.

Ben took part in the boys Race-Walking and came home with a silver medal to his name.

Will was part of the combined events squad for the county and they secured a bronze medal for their efforts, including a number of personal bests for Will himself.

We seem to have built up a great Brymore tradition of racewalkers and we look forward to seeing what the future holds for both Ben in this discipline and Will across athletics as a whole. (Ms Warren)



Horticulture

It was a glorious horticultural welcome back to Brymore in September with the beds and borders in full bloom. The sunflower strip, planted by Year 9 in May, surpassed expectations with the multi stemmed varieties growing to the roof of the greenhouse. Swaths of yellow, gold and red flowerheads were produced and have made many people smile with the bunches of flowers being sold.

Similarly, the gourds in the walled garden had swollen over the summer, producing an amazing range of shapes and sizes. Varieties such as 'sweet dumpling' and 'delicata' were happily growing amongst the 'Atlantic giants', 'goosebumps' and 'trombochinos'. These have now been harvested and some were on display by reception. Others were used in a display for the Harvest Festival service. They make fantastic additions to winter stews and soups and are available to buy on the Horticulture stall.

The apple harvest is also in full swing with Year 7 enjoying their first experience of the process from collecting and grading, to pulping and juicing, to bottling and labelling. The juice has already started to fly off the proverbial shelves.

As well as celebrating the harvest, we have also been celebrating our success within the Britain in Bloom competition, where Cannington were awarded Gold and won the Cox Cup for best

large village. Many of our boys had helped to bring on the plants used in the design, grown from plugs and planted up the troughs and tubs. Brymore itself received the Youth award for Outstanding work by groups of young people. The judges for Britain in Bloom visited Brymore and were given a tour of the Horticulture site. The boys impressed the judges with their 'enthusiasm, knowledge, and achievements'. Last, but not least, our excellent lead technician and Brymore living legend, Mrs Stanley, was awarded the Community Champion Award. And quite rightly so! (Mr Naum)



Message from the Head Boy

It is hard to believe that this half term has been ticked off already, six weeks really has gone by quickly. We have had so much going on, not least trying to ensure the new Year 7 boys are enjoying their start on their Brymore journey. For the team and I, we have been involved in quite a lot, everything from Headteacher interviews to the Open Mornings. We have also enjoyed helping the SLT with the new 'Build a Brymore Boy' initiative, which has worked really well.

As a rugby fan it is great to see so many of the boys out at training and taking part in games, both in our Year 11 team and further down the school. One of my biggest pieces of advice to all boys is try and take part in rugby if you can - it may be scary at first if you don't know the game but Mr Williams will help you through. It is one of the most rewarding parts of the school and the team bond you have is like nothing else, plus your fitness levels will be outstanding.

As we head into the fun of the Christmas half term, us Year 11s have mock exams, so I would like to wish my fellow boys 'good luck' and encourage them to simply do their best. I really enjoy this half term coming up as we have so much on, including a couple of Saturday rugby fixtures, Christmas jumper day and the SSLT dinner at Blackmore Farm. (Oscar Warren)

Sports News

Rugby has started in a great spirit with lots of games, including the first Saturday fixture at Kings College for the Upper School players. The new Year 7 boys have proven very enthusiastic and it is great seeing them out at training especially those who may be nervous or who have simply never tried rugby because we will all learn together. All year group rugby squads are going well with good numbers across the board and those who come to training regularly are really improving. Boys need to remember that they have to run sufficient Chads and be up to date with fitness in order to play for their team, so please keep reminding them. Thanks to Mr Underwood, Mr Lines and Mr J Watts who have been a necessary cog to help keep rugby going whilst so many fixtures are happening too. Well done to those boys doing Bristol Bears Inspire and Excel programmes across the county. Just a reminder to parents that after half term we have two more Saturday fixtures at Queens and Taunton School.

Our Year 8 cricket team successfully made the final of the softball County Cup for the Somerset Cricket Foundation event and they all went home with a silver medal having come second! We have some indoor cricket coming up this half term and will be entering an indoor competition for the U15 and U13 teams too.

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 Mrs Nash:

lisa.nash@brymoreacademy.co.uk

The winners for this half term are:

- 1st £40 Mrs Wilson
- 2nd £25 Mr Roughton
- 3rd £15 Mrs Shirley Living

In athletics we have lots upcoming, including the Area and County Cross Country Championships.

Those boys that are running Chads should be very proud of themselves, as there is a lot doing it at least once a week. Whilst there is lots of participation it is disappointing to see that some boys have only done one and a number have yet to run Chads at all! Chads numbers will be posted on SatchelOne in the half term for parents to see, so please have a discussion with your son about their personal best times and keep encouraging them to run. (Mr Williams)



Postponed Swimming Gala

During the first week of term we held our previously postponed swimming gala and end of year awards. Boys took to the pool for many races, including our new Year 7 cohort, and ultimately Walker won the cup. We then moved onto the awards for last year with certificates and trophies for academic achievements, to farm, garden and sporting awards. Congratulations to all of our winners and to all who took part in swimming and to those who won awards. Weather pending we will revert back to July next year! (Ms Warren)



Careers

Careers at Brymore definitely got off to a great start this year, with a trip to the University of Bath for Year 10. Bath University specialises in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths, alongside sporting endeavours such as Sports Science. This makes it an excellent future ambition for our boys with engineering and sport being two of the Brymore cornerstones.

On the day, the weather did not co-operate, raining hard and strong winds blowing. This did not deter us as we were shown around by Bath University Student Ambassadors. The boys were able to see the beautiful University Campus, learn about the facilities on offer, and see the comprehensive support available for students. They were amazed at the range of catering facilities and looked somewhat longingly at the Olympic standard swimming pool. After the tour there was a presentation showing the many and varied courses available at Bath. This also included information on what University life is like. The boys asked lots of questions about finance, accommodation and the kinds of grades they would need to be able to progress to University. It was a great introduction to University and we hope it will have inspired some of our boys to consider University as a future option.



Year 11 have begun to look at College and are being encouraged to attend Open Evenings at a variety of colleges, in order to make an informed decision about their choices for next year. Open Day dates are included in our School Bulletin where we are able to do so. Please get in touch if you would like any help or advice about visiting colleges as we are sometimes able to arrange tours of specific subject areas at local colleges for small groups of students. (Rev Briggs)

2023/24 Upcoming Important Dates

Important Dates & Events - Autumn & Spring Term 2023/24

Monday 30th October

INSET DAY

- 3.30pm Year 7 Parent Consultation with Houseparents & Registration Group Tutors via SchoolCloud
- 6.00pm - 9.00pm All boarders return

Tuesday 31st October

- 8.30am All out-boarders return

Friday 8th December

- 4.00pm Lower School² Christmas Service, St Mary's Church, Cannington, TA5 2HP
- 5.15pm (approx.) Lower School² depart for Christmas holidays
- 5.15pm School transport departs (NOT 4pm)

Saturday 9th December

- 10.30am Upper School¹ Christmas Service, St Mary's Church, Cannington, TA5 2HP
- 12.15pm (approx.) Upper School¹ depart for Christmas holidays
- 12.15pm School transport departs

¹ Upper School (Years 9, 10 & 11)

² Lower School (Years 7 & 8)

Tuesday 2nd January 2024 (INSET DAY)

- 3.00 pm - 8.00 pm Year 11 Parent Consultation via SchoolCloud
- 6.00 pm - 9.00 pm All boarders return

Wednesday 3rd January

- 8.30 am All out-boarders return
- 3.00 pm - 8.00 pm Year 11 Parent Consultation via SchoolCloud

Wednesday 7th February

- 3.00 pm - 8.00 pm Year 8 Parent Consultation via SchoolCloud

Thursday 8th February

- 1.15pm All students depart for Spring half-term
- 1.15pm School transport departs (NOT 4pm)
- 3.00 pm - 8.00 pm Year 8 Parent Consultation via SchoolCloud (*times may change*)

Monday 19th February (INSET DAY)

- 3.00 pm - 8.00 pm Year 10 Parent Consultation via SchoolCloud
- 6.00 pm - 9.00 pm All boarders return

Tuesday 20th February

- 8.30 am All out-boarders return
- 3.00 pm - 8.00 pm Year 10 Parent Consultation via SchoolCloud

Thursday 28th March

- 3.45 pm Students depart for Easter holidays

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