

# Brymore

experience to last a lifetime

## Newsletter

February 2024

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*Diligentia et Labore*



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# Message from the Headteacher

Dear parents

Over the years there have been many changes at Brymore and during my time as Headteacher, most notably was the decision to take Year 7 and move from a six-day week to a five-day week. Inevitably, there have also been changes to staff during this time.

As you are aware, I am retiring as Headteacher at the end of this academic year and Mr Kingston, the Farm Manager, left just before half-term, following almost 20 years of service. Sadly, I also have to inform you that Mrs Davis, who has been Deputy Headteacher for nearly 13 years will also be leaving at Easter, in order to fulfil a lifelong dream to move and work in Germany, where she grew up.

Mrs Davis has been instrumental and has played a hugely significant role in the success of Brymore over the past 13 years. When she joined Brymore she was met with comments from both staff and parents that “you cannot expect Brymore boys to do well academically.” At the time, Brymore was ranked in the bottom 1% of schools in the country for its examination results, and I challenged Mrs Davis to significantly improve the examination results of the boys and therefore improve their life chances and opportunities for employment. Mrs Davis will be leaving Brymore when last year, the boys received a set of examination results that placed them in the top 5% of schools in the country. We are the 8<sup>th</sup> highest achieving school across the entire south-west of England and two of the last three Head Boys at Brymore have attended Gordonstoun School and Oxford University. I am sure you are aware that Brymore has never chased examination results in the same way as many other schools do and that we firmly believe in developing the boys as a whole, ensuring they have a range of activities, trips, visits and opportunities available to them. It has therefore been more remarkable that the boys last year were able to achieve the results that they did.

As the Headteacher of Brymore I have always felt blessed that I have had staff like Mrs Davis and Mr Kingston who have devoted so many hours to the boys at Brymore and will have continually put the needs of the boys ahead of spending time with their own family. I wish them both every success and happiness as they start their new lives away from Brymore.

I am delighted to inform you that the Trust Board have ratified the appointment of Mrs Taylor-Lane as the new Deputy Headteacher of Brymore. She has been at Brymore for nearly 14 years and is a firm believer in its history and traditions, which I think is so important for someone within the Senior Leadership Team. Mrs Taylor-Lane will lead the Curriculum, Teaching and Learning and I know she will do an exceptional job in leading this area. In my opinion, she is one of the most successful English teachers in the country, when looking at the examination results her class achieved last year. Miss Doble will become the Senior Assistant Headteacher. I am pleased to report that the Trust Board has agreed to increase the Senior Leadership Team and we are currently advertising for two Assistant Headteachers that will report to Miss Doble. This decision has been made to ensure that we are able to continue to offer the best pastoral care at Brymore.

I hope you all managed to have some family time together during the half-term break.



## Boarding

The boys returned after the holidays in good spirits as the Year 7s have now settled to a large degree and all boys are in busy fulfilling the expectations of being a Brymore boy. The changeable weather with its incessant rain and cold snaps did not deter the boys in their efforts regarding whatever pursuit they were getting stuck into.

Boarding sees the departure of our Activities Tutor Mr Webber, although he will be working with the boys on occasion. Mrs Long returns to Brymore to take over from Mr Webber. We have also said goodbye to Mr Chandler (Assistant Houseparent in School House) and have been covering his role with staff from the school.

This half term the boys have had many exciting trips that they have enjoyed, including scrambling in Cheddar, the cinema, laser tag and a farmers' market are just some of the highlights! The boys have really enjoyed themselves and being a full-time boarder at Brymore is a very special experience where the boys form a band of brother like connection which is very evident.

The boys have loved the new equipment in the gym and how it has been decorated with much wall art to motivate and inspire, one more rep! It looks fantastic and has been a great project to complete for the boys.

It has been a positive term which traditionally is a difficult one given the shorter nights. Boys have been doing their fitness, circuits and revising hard for their exams. (Mr Watts)



## Careers

### ASK:

The Apprenticeship Support and Knowledge for schools and colleges programme (ASK programme) is funded by the Department for Education and they aim to raise awareness about the ever increasing number of career pathways supported by apprenticeships. They offer independent and impartial guidance and we were lucky enough to have them visit this half term to give an informative and insightful assembly to our Year 10 and 11 students. Boys then had the opportunity to book 1:1 appointments to explore their specific interests. In addition, all students in Year 11 who are considering pursuing the apprenticeship route attended a workshop which supported them registering with the national apprenticeship data base and teaching them how to explore opportunities relevant to them. Please visit their website:

<https://amazingapprenticeships.com/> to access a wealth of information, resources and videos which may support discussions you have at home about the future.

### National Apprenticeship Show:

To celebrate National Apprenticeship Week, over 50 students from Year 10 and 11 visited Sandy Park in Exeter on 6th February. This event hosted some of the most prestigious apprenticeship providers from across the South West and beyond. Boys had the opportunity to speak to all of the exhibitors and participate in many educational, inspiring and fun practical activities.

### Future Smart:

Every student in Year 11 is entitled to a 1:1 independent and impartial Careers Information Advice and Guidance meeting to ensure they are making appropriate plans for their future. Future Smart Careers were with us during the last week of term meeting with the Year 11s, helping them make progress with these plans. All notes and action points will be available for students (and parents) to see on their Career Pilot page, please feel free to discuss these with your son and contact Rev Briggs, Mrs Lewis or Mrs Taylor-Lane should you have any follow up questions.

### Goals and Opportunities:

Parents carers and guardians of students in Year 9, 10 and 11, Wednesday 6th March 2024 is a date for your diary! As part of National Careers Week we will be hosting our annual careers fair, 'Goals and Opportunities.' This year it is set to be bigger and better than ever, with over 20 exhibitors from colleges, universities, local businesses and apprenticeship providers. As well as the army, emergency services and more besides. Please look out for more information next half term. (Mrs Taylor-Lane)



## Sport

I have to start by congratulating the Year 9 rugby team on winning the area cup, under floodlights, this half term. The Year 10 and 11 teams have also made the final, however, the opposition have yet to raise enough for their teams and confirm a date, so they could also be area champions by default. We are hoping to get the Year 11 team a final floodlit match before the end of the season, so please encourage them to keep doing Chads and fitness for this. On the last day of this half term our Year 9 team were invited to play at Millfield, and we have had a great time playing some tough opposition. House rugby starts thick and fast after the half term break so please encourage the boys to step up for their house and take part, as it is a great way to still play rugby even if you do not want to do it all the time.

In athletics we have had some County success with a big congratulations going to Rufus A, for earning his county vest in cross country, our first Year 7 to do so! Whilst this was a great success and we are very proud there are plenty of boys that can run well and could earn their own vests if they push themselves to get to the cross country events like Rufus.

After half term we have lots of cross country events coming up including the Kings Cup and Mammoth Trophy.

We have a cricket coach coming in soon from the Somerset Cricket Foundation for both lessons and afternoon activities. We are very grateful for their support in enabling our thriving cricket section. We are also looking forward to hosting some primary cricket festivals in the future too, which also gives our Year 10 sports studies students an opportunity to help run and show off their leadership skills.

On top of all that, we have some badminton and table cricket tournaments upcoming and we end the term with the House 7s matches, which are always enjoyable to watch, so please support your house and pop along.

We are missing a number of athletics/cross country vests. With the upcoming season upon us it is vital these are returned please.

A final reminder that Chads is a huge part of the school and many a Brymore boy of old will contest that whilst they might not enjoy running it, it really helped shape them as an individual and made them a lot fitter when leaving, so I ask that you continue to encourage your son to keep up to date and just do one a week. (Mr Williams)



## History Trip



The Year 10 and 11 historians headed to Bristol this half term to watch two shows that will definitely help them with their GCSE curriculum. The two shows were based on the medicine through time and Weimar Germany topics and boys were engaged with both shows. (Ms Warren)



## 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](mailto:lisa.nash@brymoreacademy.co.uk)

The winners for this half term are:

- 1st £40 Mr & Mrs Perrett
- 2nd £25 Mr I Hamilton
- 3rd £15 Mr G Smith

## Message from the Head Boy

This half term the SSLT have focussed on two main things alongside our roles on normal schools days, and this has been to raise money for rugby post protectors and also to organise and help partially fund the sports presentation dinner. We held a non-uniform day and also had a cake sale and some lunchtime rugby activities for boys to take part in (even Mr Lines had a go!) We also took part in the local village pub quiz. Once a year the village quiz donates the money raised to the school and this was our chance to donate the prizes, sell raffle tickets and also take part. This year we raised £370 so I'd like to say a personal thank you to the staff and other SSLT members who donated prizes.



We are still looking for a sponsor to help fund the remainder of our rugby goalposts so if you know a business who would like their logo emblazoned on the posts, then please send them our way or to Mr Williams. The presentation dinner, which is taking place on Tuesday 26th March, is the first one run and we are excited to get this going, with the hope that senior students next year will keep it going. All players who have played one competitive rugby match for the school (or hockey, if a senior player in Year 9, 10 or 11) and that are fully up to date with Chads by 18th March, will have the option to attend and we are halving the cost of the ticket through our fundraising. More details about tickets will come out next half term and we are looking forward to celebrating the season with the staff that have helped us with some trophies to give out.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all my fellow Year 11s 'good luck' in the upcoming mock exams and to also thank all the staff who have been running extra sessions to help us with revision and practice, in their own time. Have a good break everyone. (Oscar Warren)

## Farm

We have now said farewell to Mr Kingston, who had been at Brymore for nearly 20 years - he started on 4th July 2005! He has supported the farm through dramatic changes throughout his time here. From the lambing shed having a major upgrade to having a brand new milking parlour fitted, bringing Brymore farm into the 21st Century. He has been a fantastic role model to our students here and a real asset to all. Mr Kingston has purchased a smallholding near Taunton where he intends to continue to work in the land based sector, without the stress of managing a school farm. We wish Mr Kingston, Emma and Issy a fantastic future in their new home. The farm has seen other changes recently with the departure of Ms Nicholls and the arrival of Miss Wakeman and we are excited that the new Farm Manager will be starting soon. Sadly, Lambing Day will not be taking place this year but we hope that it will be back and running next year. The Year 10s have been coming in for their Head of Department interviews, and if successful, they will be put on as a trial HOD period to see how well they work in this role. It is great to see the boys want to take on these responsibilities and we will be awarding the HoD badges very soon.



During our Wednesday fortnightly YFC meetings, the boys have been practising their haltering skills on the older calves, ready for the showing season. We have also had a visit from Mr Franks who gave the boys a talk about how he has diversified in jobs over time, starting out in the dairy industry then moving on to be an undertaker. We have various other speakers planned and intend to attend the County Rally again this year, as the boys had so much fun there last year.



The Year 7s have been out to visit the market at Junction 24, with thanks to Greenslade Taylor Hunt, learning about the different careers within the agricultural industry. They learnt that there is a lot more to it than just being a farmer. They saw the different areas at market from the selling rings, holding pens, weighing scales and milking area. The Years 8s have all visited a neighbouring dairy farm with a rotary parlour. Thanks to Mr Hilton for taking time to give the boys a tour of the farm and answer some really interesting questions from the boys. They saw a different side and scale to farming than what a lot of them would normally have seen. We saw different job paths, learned about the costs of running something on that scale, how their feed and bedding is made for their cows and even saw an ex-student of Brymore who is working there.

The next few weeks are busy with lambing and the impending coursework for the Land Based studies course for the Year 11 students. The new CCTV is up and running on the farm with specific cameras for the lambing sheds so that staff can view on phones, day or night, to see how the ewes are doing. (Miss Marks)

## Ski Trip

The novice skiers who will be heading to Italy in the Easter break on the ski trip, have had an opportunity to strap their boots up and try the slopes at Mendip Adventure Centre this half term. It was a great introduction to getting on the skis and trying some basic manoeuvres and we are all very excited to be hitting the snow at the end of March. We have had an overwhelming response to the December trip, which is now full, but do look out for details of other ones in the future. (Mr Ashton)



## 2024 Upcoming Important Dates - Spring Term 2b & Summer Term 3a

### Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February (INSET DAY)

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

### Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> February

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

### Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> March

3.45pm Students depart for Easter holidays

## Summer Term 3a

### Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April (INSET DAY)

3.00pm - 8.00pm Year 9 Parent Consultation via SchoolCloud  
6.00pm - 9.00pm All boarders return

### Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> April

8.30am All out-boarders return  
3.00pm - 8.00pm Year 9 Parent Consultation via SchoolCloud

### Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> April

3.00pm - 8.00 pm Year 7 Parent Consultation via SchoolCloud

### Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April

3.00pm - 8.00pm Year 7 Parent Consultation via SchoolCloud

### Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> May

3.45pm Students depart for May Day Bank Holiday weekend

### Monday 6<sup>th</sup> May

6.00pm - 9.00pm All boarders return

### Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May

8.30am All out-boarders return

### Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> May

8.30am All out-boarders arrive as normal  
11.00am Year 11 Leavers Service  
1.30pm Sports Day  
3.45pm Students depart for summer half-term

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