



# School House Newsletter

## Term 1a & 1b 2025

**And we're off!**

### **The start of another exciting and busy school year!**

As staff we began the year with First Aid Refresher Training during inset, practicing our CPR and bandaging skills, as well as using a practice jacket to mimic what we'd do if someone was choking. There was plenty of humour during the day and the whole boarding team are up to date, should anyone in the house require emergency first aid... although we are obviously hoping that they won't!



For the start of the new school year, we had four new boarders join us from other schools. Year 9 - Ollie S and Year 10s - George K, Peter S and Ezra W. All have fitted in amazingly well and already Ollie has the highest number of Chads in the House. Pete has represented the School in rugby, Ezra has used his cooking skills to make chocolate honeycomb for us all and George was one of our fancy dress prize winners. It isn't always easy joining an established group of boys, however credit to them all, they have all made friends and got stuck in to boarding life.

With it being the start of a new school year the intention of staff is to encourage the boys to make the most of the opportunities that Brymore provides and to emphasise the 3 R's of Responsibility, Resourcefulness and Resilience. Within the House, each of the boys (with the exception of those on feeding or who have a sick note) have run Chads a minimum of once a week during term 1a. This is an amazing achievement and we hope that the boys will start as they mean to go on!! They are great role models to boys in the other Houses and the fact that everyone who is able has taken part is a great start to the year.

Also, with the start of Autumn term, as is our tradition, we felt it important to take photos of our current year 11's looking smart in their new white shirts. This is such a significant year for them and we wanted to mark the occasion. As House Parents we will be offering all the support and encouragement we can, to get them to reach their potential. We want them to do their best in the exams at the end of the year! For some of them (with a little encouragement) extra revision has already begun in the meeting room of an evening. They are choosing to use the opportunity to get in a quiet space away from much of the House and do some extra work or revision (often aided with a hot drink and something to sustain them from the biscuit tin!!)



Each of the boys are also expected to take their turn carrying out House responsibilities, collecting our bread and milk from the dining hall, emptying the bins in their rooms, or loading and unloading the dishwasher. This encourages the boys to carry out valuable life skills, alongside the expectation to keep their areas tidy and their beds made. It is an integral part of boarding life (although for some this comes more naturally than others!) and the rota for these jobs is overseen by our Head of House Freddie W, who at the start of each term will allocate a year group a task. He will rota each boy a job and when they carry this out without reminder, Ms H gives them achievement points.



As a reward for the boys' commitment to these things we have also enjoyed regular pasta nights, waffles and ice cream, and bacon and cheese toasties, homemade honeycomb (helped by Ezra), chilli and homemade chowder. Both Ms Hoogenboom and Mrs Webb are 'foodies' and everyone enjoys the opportunity to come together as a house and enjoy something nice to eat, as well as to encourage boys to socialise together in the common room. We also have regular tea and biscuits for the boys to indulge in, often after taking part in fitness or activities, extra revision after prep or perhaps after some time chilling in their rooms.

The end of Term 1a finished on a high with our Charity Chads run. Every one of the boys took part and made the effort to dress up (including Ms Hoogenboom and Mrs Webb!) There were prizes for costumes... Jacob C with his Tractor creation, James B as Vector from Minions Movie, George K as Lady in Pink, Will B as Thelma from Scooby Doo and Henry H as a Sumo Wrestler. Our highest fundraiser was Octavius P and following closely behind him was both Beau J and Pete S. We really appreciated the support we received, recognising that you, as parents, were also playing a significant part in contributions, and overall, £1,228.20 was raised for the Farming Community Network.







The second half of the Term 1b, began with a 'Raising Achievement' Session for the parents and boys in Year 11. It was a fabulous opportunity for us to catch up with parents during the drop off process and many of you stayed and had a cup of tea and a biscuit with us. It is something we actively encourage as it is a chance for us to connect generally, and we recognise that working together with yourselves and your boys is a benefit to us all. We love to hear what everybody has been doing over the holidays!

Reid House's charity event for this half term was tickets to the Fiji v England game at Twickenham and many keen rugby fans brought raffle tickets in the hope that they may get a chance to see a live England match. Luckily for School House boarder Harry B whose name was drawn and he was able to attend the successful England match with the final score being 38 - 18.



Our own Christmas tuck raffle raising funds for FCN was also a success and there were four winners (including for the second year in a row, Jacob C from our house!) This added an another £247 to our fund raising for the Farming Community Network. The tuck hampers are made up of donated items from the boys and their families; everyone was, as always, very generous with their donations and time for selling raffle tickets. We are always impressed with how the School House boys and Families embrace the ethos of supporting charity.



This term we have welcomed our new Deputy Head of Boarding, Mr Graham Bloxham, to the Boarding Team. Of course, he has been getting to grips with the new role, as well as getting to know the boys across all boarding houses. He has become a regular Monday evening visitor to School House and is currently teaching interested boys how to play poker, (although this obviously isn't the main emphasis of his role!) Mr Bloxham is also supporting boys in our Year 11 Out-duction programme which is designed to encourage our Year 11's with valuable life skills, which hopefully will benefit them beyond their time at Brymore. There are four different areas that boys are taking part in, including financial goals led by Mr Bloxham, cooking skills which is led by Head Chef Dave Cooke, health and wellbeing which is led by matrons, as well as debt, investments and managing money, with Mr Watts taking the lead.

Midway into our term we were struck by the dreaded Norovirus and on one evening 17 of our boys in School House came down with symptoms, within just a couple of hours. The decision was made to close the house and then the following day the whole school. We recognise that this was a big ask with so many of you having to travel long distances so late into the evening and we appreciated your understanding, in what was unprecedented circumstances. The two-day break followed by a weekend seemed to make a significant impact on the spread of the virus, but we know many of you either had boys that had it, or got it yourself, including us staff!

The end of this half term culminated in our traditional Christmas festivities. Boarding House Parties, Christmas jumper day (with lunchtime Christmas Dinner) followed by Boarders Christmas tea, which involves getting dressed up, decorating the dining hall (to include a photo booth and dressing up paraphernalia) as well as enjoying a special menu for the evening.



The Senior Leadership Team are all invited, together with boarding staff and those other members of day team that have supported us throughout the year. A good time was had by all, and memories were made no doubt (together with photo evidence!

Finally, at the end of the term Mrs Webb made the announcement that she was leaving to move onto a new role at a primary school in Bridgwater. Whilst she won't be finishing until midway through

January, she will of course be sadly missed when the time comes. Mrs Webb has promised to keep in touch and pop in from time to time. It is likely a replacement will be recruited in the early part of next term, with hopefully a start date near the February half term. Boys of course will be part of the interview process. Feel free as parents to pop in and say goodbye to her prior to her going. She has been at Brymore for nine years and we will be sad to say goodbye her.

So, to finish 2025, we as a team would like to wish you and your families the merriest of Christmases and a Happy New Year! Thank you for your on-going goodwill and support to all in School House.

Mrs Webb and Ms Hoogenboom