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ROYAL ALEXANDRA & ALBERT SCHOOL



13th December 2019

Dear Parents

As the Autumn Term comes to an end, I wanted to take this opportunity to share my thoughts and wish you all very Happy Christmas.

We have had an extremely busy and productive term. The children have demonstrated tremendous enthusiasm and energy with regards to all that they have done. We have enjoyed a range of excellent assemblies from each of the Junior classes, I would like to thank the parents, guardians and families who were able to come along and support. We held two special assemblies this term on Anti-Bullying and the UK election. These were planned, and brilliantly led, by our Senior School students. I was impressed at the mature and thoughtful questions and responses from your children during these.

I would like to share my gratitude to Mr John Stafford, Mrs Mac and the wonderful team of staff in Rank Weston. The house continues to provide a sense of nurturing and warmth towards all of our children. The staff often go 'above and beyond' in finding ways to make sure that the children feel safe and happy. I feel particularly proud of the way that our school and the boarding house have worked closely together, ensuring the children have the very best holistic education.

Academically, I have been delighted with high levels of effort and focus. This term, I introduced a 'Head of Juniors Award'. This new system allowed me to visit lessons on a regular basis. I have thoroughly enjoyed awarding pupils additional credits, as a result of high quality presentation in their books, or excellent examples of literacy or numeracy. Awarding my golden stickers has become the highlight of my week. As always, our teachers have been truly inspirational.

We have seen a number of new initiatives introduced; these include the option of having a fruit snack at morning break time. Food Ambassadors and Eco Warriors for all Year 3, 4, 5 & 6 have all been elected. These children are passionate about making positive changes in our school. They join our School Council representatives and Class Trustees to form a group of pupils who are proactive in discussing ways that we can improve our school. We are blessed with having such a wonderful group of Junior School leaders.

The Junior School had an exciting and magical day on the 14th November, as Harry Potter and his wonderful world dropped by for a day like no other! The excitement started before half term when letters were distributed inviting all the children to enter the world of Harry Potter in a cross-curricular day. The children and staff were incredible. This was described by several pupils as 'the best day ever!'

On the sporting front, it has been another busy term with a number of different events taking place. The Year 3 & 4 boys and girls took part in a local football tournament, making the quarter finals. The Year 5 & 6 children enjoyed some great results in their netball and football fixtures and are sitting near the top of the league in both sports. A number of our Year 5 & 6 boys and girls took part in the District Sports Hall Athletics event and were voted 'The Most Improved School,' finishing second overall. We await to see if we have made it into the county finals which take place next term.

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Our swimming continues to develop and progress under the leadership of Mrs Sam Hinton, Head of Swimming. This year, we have seen the introduction of Development and Performance squads and it is inspiring to see the level of commitment and competitiveness developing in all our swimmers. The children should be proud of the improvements they are making in such a short time. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all the staff who organised and coached the different sports teams with such commitment and expertise.

The children enjoyed a productive term on the musical front. The Junior Choristers continue to wow us with their wonderful performances at our school events. I would like to thank our Director of Music, Mr Edney, and the support of the Foundation for their fantastic vision and commitment. We are delighted that our children are given the opportunity to learn a range of different instruments as part of their curriculum lessons.

Remembrance Day services were held on Monday 11th November. The Junior children came together with Year 7, 8 and 9 pupils in a special Service held in the Chapel, followed by the laying of wreaths at the flag pole. It was a truly moving moment for all staff and children to pay their respects silently, remembering the 64 Gattonians, and many other men and women, who gave their lives in service for the country.

The Christmas Production was highly entertaining and a testament to the talent and commitment of all performers. To perform and sing with such clarity and passion was truly spectacular. I would like to thank Mr Cooper (Director) and Mr Leoffeler (Choir Master) for their unwavering commitment to this year's production. Next term sees us entering the Caterham Drama Festival for the first time. I look forward to sharing more about this with you in the new year.

I would like to once again thank the PTA and Friends for their invaluable work at RAAS. Their kind donation last year helped us to furnish our new Junior Library, which opened in September 2019. The Junior Library has certainly proved a hit with the children, with classes now using it regularly in lessons and at lunch time. We are delighted to announce the sponsored read raised £2283.68. All money has been reinvested into purchasing a range of new fiction and non-fiction books.

I am proud to serve such a diverse and wonderfully inclusive school community.

I would like to thank our teachers, boarding staff and all members of the school community for all their hard work and I look forward to welcoming the pupils back on Monday 6th January after a well-earned rest.

With my best wishes for a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.



Head of Junior School