

13th February 2015

Dear Parents

As the first half of this term comes to a close we can reflect on a very hard-working few weeks, what with Year 11 receiving their Mock GCSE results and then the Sixth Form receiving their Mock AS and A level grades. These grades are, in some cases, a wake-up call and there is still time to achieve a lot of progress between now and the exams in the Summer, while for other pupils they are confirmation of good progress and a promise of pleasing results in August. I do hope that all parents of pupils in Year 11 and the Sixth Form find time over Half Term to have a further conversation with their son or daughter about what progress has been made since those Mock exams and what your child is doing to take advantage of the help that we are offering.

The new Junior School Playground is currently being landscaped, though the Tree House and all the other elements are now being used. Mrs Salman is planning an official opening at a date still to be chosen in the Summer Term.

The building of the Sixth Form Annexe to Cornwall House was severely delayed by problems at the start with the foundations, but I am glad to report that the building is being handed over to us today, Friday, for occupation on the Sunday when boarders return from Half Term. There will still be work to be done on landscaping the area round the Annexe, but it will be completed inside.

Of course this means that Gloucester House will have an Annexe for Sixth Form boarders open in September 2015, allowing us to accept up to 130 Sixth Form boarders. We receive a significant number of applications from external candidates, but our priority remains to offer boarding to our own Year 11 pupils.

I thought you would be interested to know that, as part of our ongoing provision for high ability and gifted and talented pupils, we have run a number of targeted events and activities so far this year and over the half term holiday:

Year 7, 8 & 9	Bloodhound SCC Engineering Adventure
Year 8	Gifted and Talented Challenge day
Year 8	Computer Programming
Year 10	Law taster day
Year 10	Experiencing Oxford University
Year 11	University taster day
Year 11	A*/A 2 day conference
Year 12	Oxbridge conference

Year 12 & 13 Gifted and Talented Teen-Tech Event

Ms Rolland, our Gifted and Talented coordinator has met with targeted pupils across all year groups and is organising a range of outside speakers to come and meet with pupils to promote debate and interest in topics not covered as part of the usual school curriculum.

I wish you all an excellent Half Term.

With my best wishes

Paul D Spencer Ellis
Headmaster