

8 May 2009

Dear Parents

First of all well done to the Year 6 students who were excellent ambassadors for Dumpton on their recent trip to Normandy. Along with visits to a nuclear submarine, a goats' cheese farm, the Bayeaux Tapestry, a French market and the WW2 landing site at Pointe du Hoc, they also impressed everyone they met. Thank you, also, to the accompanying staff, Mr Price, Mrs Gray, Miss Kent and Matron.

Similarly, I was impressed by the manner in which the Year 7 pupils embraced the eco-weekend in North Wales. We managed to keep the wood fire alight, the water tank full and the battery humming in our solar/hydro/wind powered log cabin, as the pupils cooked, cleaned and generally catered for themselves. This was much more fun than it sounds!

Thank you to all those who attended the Senior Schools Scholarship Evening on Tuesday. With eighteen awards made to Dumptonians so far this year, there was much interest in possible ways forward, and I would be happy to discuss options with any parents over the coming weeks.

There were some notable performances on Wednesday, with the 2nd XI and U10A sides winning well at Chafyn Grove and Dominic Cl scoring his maiden fifty for Dumpton in the Colts' draw at home. The U9 side were similarly impressive in their win against Sandroyd at home, while the U8's lost by a single run, with cricket being the winner on the day, I am told. On the rounders field the girls had a very successful day against Ballard, winning at 1st IX, 2nd IX, U11, U11/10 and U9 level, with Lucy S, Maisy G and Rose H mentioned in dispatches. In addition the U8 girls had a tense 8½-8½ draw with Port Regis. In addition there were some first places for the athletes at the Clayesmore Track Competition, with Emma R, Katie T, Abbie L and Libby G leading the way.

We also had a delightful day on Southampton Water on Thursday, with Year 7 pupils and pupils from Linwood School. Aboard a dredger, we measured the temperature and salinity of the sea, trawled for sealife in the channel and dug up the seabed, analysing the biological activity, or lack of it in areas polluted by man. It was an enlightening day, with a visit to the Southampton University Oceanography Laboratories giving an interesting insight into university life. Start them young I say!

News from the Pre-Prep: Following on from the highly successful Nursery visit to the Reptile and Raptor Centre this week, Reception are looking forward to their visit to the vets and Year 1 to their visit to the Oceanarium and Hengistbury Head next week. There are many other trips planned for after half-term when the weather is more reliable.

Now that most parents have responded to the ClarionCall information-gathering request, the first test will take place on Tuesday 12 May. This will involve parents receiving a text message, an email and a voice message. The text message will show that it is from Dumpton on your mobile phone – there is no need to respond. The voice message will first come through as a text message asking you to call 0131 5146111, you should store this number to your mobile phone as it does not change. When you call in, the exchange will then recognise your mobile number and will relay any messages you have received. The message can also be retrieved from a standard telephone but you will be asked to enter your mobile number before retrieving your message. Can I ask that when you receive the voice message text that you do call in to hear the message as this will allow us to check that we have the correct contact details by highlighting those messages unanswered. The email will appear as a normal email. However, some computers may think the message is spam or junk mail, so you may have to review your computer settings. If you have any comments or fail to receive all three messages, please contact the Bursar, Richard Martin. (richard.martin@dumpton.com)

We have a busy week ahead with 'Batty Activities' on Monday evening, courtesy of Mrs Sharp, aimed at any pupils interested in these occasionally misunderstood nocturnal creatures (although interest has already outstripped capacity). This is followed by Evensong at Sherborne Abbey on Tuesday for Year 6 and Year 7 choristers under the guidance of Mrs Bowerman. On Thursday (14 May) Mrs Sharp's crack Year 8 Chemistry team will be heading for the Salters' Festival of Chemistry, hoping to repeat our success of previous years. Meanwhile there is a SATIPS Orchestral Course for Junior Musicians at Bryanston on the same afternoon.

I can also inform you of the school's response to the pandemic flu situation. As of 1 May 2009, the advice from the Government and Health Protection Agency is quite clear - we should continue our daily lives as normal provided we feel well. Advice being given to medical personnel regarding swine influenza is that *both symptoms and contact details must be present*. Firstly, that there is a temperature of 38°C or more, with at least two of the following symptoms; cough, sore throat, runny nose, (limb) joint pain and headache and secondly that the person has been in contact with someone returning from Mexico or the USA with symptoms suggestive of the disease. Without both criteria being present doctors are being advised that swine influenza is highly unlikely. If in doubt please discuss with your own GP and do not send children into school until you have. We have also posted general advice on our website in the Parents' Area or can direct you to www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk or www.nhs.uk for further updates.

Finally, good luck to the Year 5 campers tonight – if it's any comfort, the last weather forecast I read was much better ...

Andrew Browning
Headmaster