



# Wimbledon College

## Head Master's Spring Half-Term Letter to Parents

Friday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2016

Dear Parents

As always I hope that you will find the content of this letter useful. It has been a very busy and rather eventful half term for everyone in school and it has finished with a flourish of additional activities. This week saw three of our Sixth form pupils represent Surrey Schools in the Semi-final of the National cup; our Under 13 Rugby Sevens teams made a fantastic start to the Sevens season winning the St John Beaumont's 7s Competition and the B team were runners up in the B competition. We also have our Grammar ski trip heading off to the slopes today and we wish them a safe and enjoyable journey.

### Report Card and Lower Line set changes

Your son[s] will have received their report cards in the normal way and I hope that they have given them to you. As you know the grades are colour coded so that you can see an overall impression of your son's achievement and progress in each subject. By this point in the year you should be seeing a shift from red through amber to green as you look across the report. If you, or your son, are concerned about his progress compared to his target grade please do not hesitate to speak to your son's Head of Line. We are in the process of making set changes in Lower Line and if your son is moving set you will be informed of this by email over half term.

### Lent

This Lent Pope Francis has particularly asked Christians around the world to reflect on God's mercy, to become more appreciative and grateful for it, so that in turn we might be filled with the desire to be merciful to others. During Lent we will be particularly focussing on the corporal work of mercy "Give drink to the thirsty" by supporting CAFOD's campaign to bring access to clean water to people living in poverty. We have an extra incentive for this fundraising campaign as CAFOD are receiving match funding from the government, which means that for every £1 we donate CAFOD will receive £2 (up to a total of £3.5million) to spend giving life changing access to clean water. We are encouraging students to come up with individual or collective challenges and activities to help raise money for this vital cause. We will keep you posted with updates and reflections about our Lenten activities via the school website.

You can find more about CAFOD's campaign here <http://cafod.org.uk/Give/Donate-to-CAFOD/Lent>

If you would like to make a donation to our Lent Fundraising you can do so here <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/team/CollegeLentFundraising2016>

### School Musical – West Side Story

This year's musical is *West Side Story*, the classic American musical, with book by Arthur Laurents, lyrics by Stephen Sondheim and music by Leonard Bernstein. The story is a modern version of

“Romeo and Juliet” in which young love tries to survive among tough street gangs fighting for their piece of turf in a New York ghetto.

The show is on March 16, 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> at 7.30 in the College hall. It has a cast of 35, with boys from Rudiments to Rhetoric, girls from the UHS and a full orchestra. The large backstage crew has pupils from every year group. Tickets are £7 for adults and £5 for under-18s, available via the school website. Ticket order forms can be picked up from your son’s Line Office.

### **Supporting GCSE, AS and A Level students**

Boys in Syntax have just completed their Pre public exams and they will receive all of their results together after half term. Our intention is to give the boys their results between 8:00 to 8:30 on the morning of Friday 26<sup>th</sup> February. We hope that the boys will reflect on this experience and identify how they can make further progress in preparation for their actual exams in the summer. Over the next half term we will be updating the Syntax page on the College’s website with guidance and materials to support the boys in this. We ask that you check the page regularly and talk to you sons about their studies. Boys should also be developing their revision timetables to make the best use of their time in the build up to their examinations.

It is important to note that their first public examination is on **Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2016**. I would also like to remind you that boys in Syntax will be expected to attend school as normal during the exam period. We will inform you of the exact arrangements at a later stage.

Rhetoric and Poetry pupils should have received their summer exam timetable from their tutors. If not would you please remind your son to pick it up after half term.

After half term as part of their preparation for their public exams Poetry pupils have PPEs in the week beginning Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> February and Rhetoric have their PPEs in the week beginning Monday 29<sup>th</sup> February. Further details will be posted on the College website. All Sixth form pupils have taken part in study skills and exam preparation sessions this year and should be referring to the techniques they have learnt during their half term preparation for their PPEs. All boys have been given access to support materials online.

After their PPEs the Sixth form team will be focusing on boys’ folders, files and notes to ensure that they are well organised for the build up to their summer exams. Please remind your son that they should have all of their folders available in school.

One final reminder for parents of Rhetoric pupils is that their parent evening takes place on 22<sup>nd</sup> March at the Ursuline High School.

### **E-Safety**

After half term we will be adding an e-safety resource to our website for all parents. It has been developed in cooperation with CEOP [Child Exploitation and Online Protection], which is part of the National Crime Agency, and provides up to date information about keeping your sons safe online. It is essential that they are aware of how to keep themselves safe when using the internet and we hope that this resource will enable you to support your sons in this.

### **Mobile phones**

We have recently had to deal with a number of behaviour incidents which have involved misuse of pupils’ mobile phones. I must remind you of the school’s policy which is that pupils in Years 7-

11 are not allowed mobile phones in school. Our policy is that they will be confiscated, if found, and returned only to parents. I would be grateful of your support in this matter and ask that you speak to your sons about it.

### **Refectory**

Once again may I remind parents that boys in Lower Line are not allowed to pay for food with cash. Please ensure that your son's School Gateway account is topped up. As well as for safety reasons, as the boys do not have to have cash on them travelling to and from school, when boys use cash or a combination of cash and 'thumb' it slows the process down. With more boys buying food from the Refectory it is important that we move them through the tills as quickly as possible.

### **Uniform**

Thank you for your ongoing support by ensuring that your son[s] are wearing their uniform correctly. I would just like to remind parents that if you are buying new school shoes for your son then please make sure that they fall within College uniform expectations. My previous letter outlining which shoes are acceptable is still available on the College website.

I would also like to remind parents that all boys, including Sixth form, are expected to be clean shaven and that there should be no extreme hair styles. This includes combinations of extremely short and long hair. [More detail can be found in the boy's Diaries]

### **Music**

Mr Thomas [Director of Music] has asked me to pass on his thanks to the many boys who have given up their time to take part in extra-curricular music this half term. It has been very pleasing to see a considerable increase in the number of boys who have joined the ensembles and clubs that are taking place. There is still space available in all of them and boys who have not joined are very welcome to do so. I would ask parents of boys who play an instrument and who are not currently involved to encourage your son[s] to take part.

Our House music competition is well under way and the finalists will be announced at the beginning of March. Boys still have time to take part in the preliminary rounds. If they wish to enter the competition, and represent their house, would boys please see either Mr Thomas or Miss Gilmartin as soon as possible.

### **Football**

Once again the football season has been affected by the weather with the majority of our Saturday block fixtures cancelled due to waterlogged pitches. Fortunately the boys' enthusiasm has not diminished and teams have achieved some excellent results in the fixtures that have gone ahead.

Our 1st XI and Grammar teams have progressed well in their respective Surrey cup competitions. The 1st XI have reached the Quarter finals and play Wilson's School at home [date to be confirmed] while the Grammar team have reached the Semi Final (a feat that they have achieved each season since year 7 and we hope that they progress further this year.) Their opposition in the next round will be either Whitgift or Stanley Park school. In addition to the Surrey Cup run the 1st XI are also in the Quarter final of the Catholic Cup where they play Finchley Catholic School, away, on Wednesday 23rd March. We wish them all good luck in their next games.

## **Representative Honours**

The three boys that I mentioned at the beginning of my letter who have represented the Surrey Schools Senior team are Jamie Collins [Captain], Ryan Powell and Thomas Kearley. Louie Annesley has also played in the earlier rounds but missed the Semi- final due to injury.

## **Rugby**

### **Sevens**

As already mentioned the sevens season started in spectacular style on Wednesday, as the U13's claimed the St. John's Beaumont 7's title, beating Cranmore School 28:7 in the final. Our B's lost 10:12 to Oratory Reading's A team in their competition. All other year groups begin their season after half term, with the Warwick Sevens, featuring all year groups up to year 11, an early highlight. The season culminates with the Rosslyn Park National Sevens featuring our U13's, U16's and U18's.

We also host two of our own tournaments. They are the Surrey U12 Sevens which takes place on Friday March 11th, and the prestigious John Pieroni U15 Sevens, featuring most of the best schools in the south of England, on Sunday March 13th. Both tournaments are held at Coombe Lane and as always parents are invited to attend. They are excellent showcases of Sevens rugby.

### **Representative honours**

Congratulations to three of our U15's who have achieved representative honours. Ali Dearsley, Jacob Whelan, and Charlie Julian all played for Surrey against Hampshire last weekend, and are likely to play against Sussex on Sunday February 21st.

### **Athletics**

Congratulations are also due to our Year 7 and Year 8 Indoor Athletics teams. They recently won their respective age groups in the Merton Borough competition. As a result they progress to the South London Final later this month. Both teams will be representing Merton against nine other Boroughs as part of the London Youth Games.

### **Basketball**

Well done to all of the boys who represented the school in basketball this year. All teams have been competitive and have demonstrated great team spirit throughout the season. Our Year 8 & 9 squad are to be congratulated on finishing as Runners Up in the Merton Cup. Our Rudiments team have also reached the Semi-Finals of the Surrey League, with the fixture taking place after half term. We wish them good luck.

### **Friends of Wimbledon College**

I include the following update from the FOWC Chair, Mr Darren Agnew:

*Dear Friends,*

*Already 2016 is gathering pace! Let me begin this message with thanks to all of you who have donated used items of uniform for our Friends Uniform sale. According to one of our Friends, there are "loads" of donations, which is fantastic news! Information regarding the scheduling of our next sale will be available in the coming weeks.*

*Our next meeting of the Friends of Wimbledon College will be Tuesday evening February 23rd at 7.30pm in the meeting room upstairs from the college reception. I'd like to encourage you all to please join us if you can. You are of course, very welcome.*

*The first event on our social calendar for 2016 will be the Friends Quiz, which is scheduled for the spring. Further details regarding the date and ticket sales will be available following our meeting on the 23rd February.*

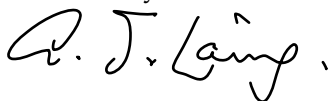
*Meanwhile, the Friends of Wimbledon College would like to wish our families a safe and restful mid-term break and we look forward to seeing you at our meetings and events in the months ahead.*

*Darren Agnew*

Finally may I remind parents that Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February is a staff inset day and so boys return to school on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> February.

I wish you all a restful and safe half term.

Yours sincerely



Adrian Laing  
Head Master