



Weekly Boarding Newsletter for Sexey's School

12 February 2020

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Dear Parents/Guardians.

As we approach the Half Term holidays you would think that everyone would be tired and winding down for the break. That wasn't the case when I went around the Boarding Houses this weekend, with a full range of activities for students to choose from. From the theatre in Bath, to shopping in Yeovil, and just fun and games in the boarding houses.

Half term starts on Thursday evening for boarders as Friday is an INSET day for staff. As a gentle reminder of our safeguarding rules, as boarders do not need to take everything home over the holidays, parents are not allowed into dorm rooms when they collect boarders after school on Thursday. The Houses re-open at 6pm on Sunday 23rd February. Staff are not on shift before this time and so please factor this into your travel plans.

I hope that all boarders have a safe and restful break. It is an opportunity to take stock of the learning from recent weeks, remember the fun times and reflect on areas that need focus moving forwards. Year 11 and 13 should be well into their exam revision by now and so should be balancing time to mentally recuperate with the effort needed to reach their high ambitions in their summer exams.

Half term and Easter international travel - Coronavirus

As we learn more about the spread of Coronavirus, the advice from the Foreign Office and NHS is becoming more cautionary. As you will appreciate, we have to be very careful about the spread of illness in Boarding. If you are planning to travel over half term to any country that is affected, or becomes affected during the time you are there, please be mindful that there could be restrictions before returning to the School. In line with BSA and NHS guidance this would involve 14 days in the UK at home or with guardians to check for the onset of any flu-like symptoms. We understand that this could be inconvenient to families and the education of students, however we have to protect the community as a whole. Please do not hesitate to get in touch with me if you have any questions or concerns on hkershaw@sexeys.somerset.sch.uk

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Communication with Boarding Houses

I know that over time parents will build a rapport with an individual with the boarding House team and so will communicate directly with them, but sometimes this can lead to issues when key information does not get through, for example if the information is time critical but that particular staff member is not on duty or on a trip and so not accessing their email. Please can parents use the generic email address for each boarding house for normal communication, such as absence, permission for trips, emergency messages etc. These will then be accessible by the staff team on duty for that day. The email addresses are:

coombehouse@sexeys.somerset.sch.uk

macmillanhouse@sexeys.somerset.sch.uk

Activity consent forms – Paintballing and Mountain Biking

We have two amazing adventure activities happening after half term – paintballing and mountain biking. Boarders have already signed up for spaces but we need parents/guardians to complete the attached forms for them. There are two for each activity, one for the School and one for the activity provider.



Focus on: Army Cadet Force - Castle Cary, Monday evenings

After being dropped off by the bus, the Cadets went inside to the parade hall for notices for upcoming weekends to be discussed. After that followed half an hour of Drill in which to familiarise the younger Cadets with more advanced movements such as open and closed order. Here the Junior NCOs also practice their drill commands using acronyms such as CLAP (Clear, Loud, As an order, with Pauses). From then on there was a lesson on the acronyms associated with first aid. All cadets have been taught how to use them, now they are revising it, such a DRSABC (Danger, Response, Send for help, Airways, Breathing, CPR). There was a short NAAFI break before the second lesson started, which was a revision session on the phonetic alphabet. This must be mastered before doing radio call signs on exercise. Finally there was a parade to end the night, where any questions from the evening were answered, and finally everyone fell out.

Albert Steele, Regimental Sergeant Major, Year 12

Focus on: Army Cadet Force - Castle Cary, Monday evenings (continued)

Army Cadets is a fantastic experience for boarders to develop and apply discipline, resilience and leadership as well as have access to a wide range of experiences such as shooting on the range and going on exercise. It is run on a Monday night and we transport Cadets to Castle Cary by minibus. If any boarders are interested in knowing more before potentially giving it a go, see Albert or the House Parents who will give you more information.



Blythe Spirit

On Friday night, a select band of theatre lovers went to see Blythe Spirit at The Theatre Royal Bath. Blythe Spirit is a comic play by Noël Coward. The play concerns the socialite and novelist Charles Condomine, who invites the eccentric medium and clairvoyant, Madame Arcati, to his house to conduct a séance, hoping to gather material for his next book. The scheme backfires when he becomes haunted by the ghost of his annoying and temperamental first wife, Elvira. Elvira makes continual attempts to disrupt Charles's marriage to his second wife, Ruth, who cannot see or hear the ghost. We really made a night of it by having a meal out first and then enjoying a fantastic performance with Jennifer Saunders as Madam Arcati.



Mrs Scannell – Assistant House Parent Macmillan

Chinese New Year – Lion Dance workshop

To celebrate the Chinese New Year a dance troop joined us on Saturday morning. All year 7-9 students took part in a Lion Dance and Kung Fu workshop. The Lion Dance is used to drive off the monster, Nian, which was believed to visit each New Year. The students watched an amazing Lion Dance and then had a go themselves. They then participated enthusiastically in a variety of Kung Fu practise routines.

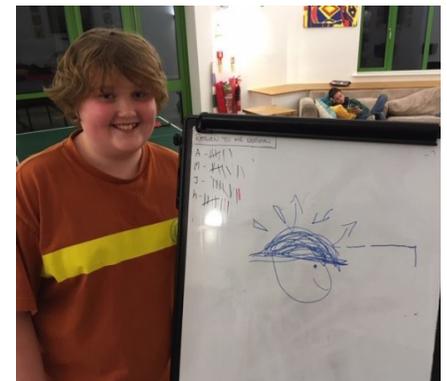


Fun around the Houses

Sometimes the small things can bring huge joy. I found this to be true this weekend when I spent some time in both Macmillan and Coombe playing games. Friday kicked it off with an Air Hockey knockout tournament, which turned out to be a lot more competitive than I expected. You could feel the tension in the air at times when the 3 minute timer ticked away and both competitors were a single score away from a win. The puck was flying around the table, sometimes literally going airborne. Thankfully for my self-esteem I made it to the final, after a well fought semi-final against Mr Deaney, but was destroyed by the clinical finishing of Rodrigo. Congratulations to him for his victory (and thanks from me as he clearly back off when he was humiliating me 6-1 after the first minute.)



Later that evening I played Pictionary in the common room - which was supposed to be just for fun but again turning out to be quite competitive (perhaps it was the chocolates for getting the correct answer that spurred them on this time). Some of the drawings were amazing – simple but perfectly linked to the answer, others much more dubious – leading to some amazingly humorous moments. I cannot explain here but I won't be asking Janey to draw a motorcycle again any time soon. After an early lead by Adelina it ended up a very even event. See if you can guess what the answers are in the examples below:



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Fun around the Houses (continued)

Mr Dodge opened up the sports hall for badminton on Saturday. It was really popular and boarders were fighting for courts. When choosing photos I couldn't resist using Monty and Hugo who seemingly were having issues getting the shuttlecock over the net and so have adapted the height.



On Sunday I visited Coombe for a 'Big Break' style pool shoot out tournament- pot as many balls as you can in 2 minutes. It was a close competition, with some tense moments where victory came down to potting a ball in the last seconds. It ended up being a draw between Ivy and Christina, but we were all winners really because we got to see Christina's emergency "croquet style" cue style when she was under pressure. A particular shout out should also go to Ivy and Amelia as they were able to bake the most delicious choc chip cookies at the same time as competing – they are both impressively multi-skilled young women.



Thank you for reading and I wish you all a happy and healthy Half Term break!