



# Boarding Newsletter, Autumn end of term

**Tim Allen, Director of Boarding**

Dear Parents and Boarders,

As the Christmas spirit spreads over our school and the boarding community, I am thrilled to bring you tidings of joy and warmth in this special Christmas newsletter.

We ended the term with numerous festive magical moments, with Feast Night this week being a great way to celebrate the year! Thanks to everyone who danced the evening away but yet still made it into school the following morning, a great effort by all the boarding team.

The boarding community continued to immerse themselves in the Christmas atmosphere with a trip to see the Christmas lights at Stourhead, the Lisbury Christmas bedroom decoration competition, various secret Santa prize giving and Christmas Jumper Day in School.



We celebrate our boarder's academic success and their continued hard work and dedication, and we wish our mock exam takers the best of luck with their Christmas holiday revision in preparation for the mocks at the start of the new year.

Academically we will be changing our prep arrangements and offer more extended learning opportunities in the evenings and extra study sessions at the weekend in the spring term.

It has been great to see so many boarders showcase their talents, be that singing in the school choir or playing an instrument at the school concert this week. A personal highlight is always hearing one of our Year 13 boarders Fred sing! he always seems to come alive on stage.

We take enormous pride that so many boarders represent the school sports teams with Year 10 and 11 boarders making up most of the rugby team. From watching a few games, it's a joy to see such engagement from them all, from Manny's tackling to Kanna's and Jahmi's bursting speed through to the try line.

Our community links continue to show real growth with boarders regularly attending Bruton Hockey Club, Bruton Football Club, Milborne Port Football Club, Castle Cary Rugby Club, Bruton Gymnastics, Castle Cary Martial Arts and Sparkford Cricket. We look forward to creating a go-karting community link in 2024 and building on our padel link in Bristol.



On a staffing front we say goodbye to Miss Blackburn in Macmillan who is returning to her roots as a nanny and we wish her every success. Mrs Roberts who has been supporting this term will now take on a more regular role. Miss Cull goes on maternity leave in preparation of the welcoming of her 2nd child and we say goodbye to Thomas, Ella and Emilie our gap students. We welcome Mr Rousall to the team to work alongside Mr Waring as a senior houseparent. Mr Rousall joins us from a residential background and will lead on mental health across the whole school community and as an avid sportsman he will also compliment the PE background of Mr Waring. It's been great to have Miss Turnbull back leading in Lisbury and finally, we will welcome our new gap students from Australia joining us in early January.

A number of Year 11 parents have asked that their son or daughter hands their phone in overnight to support them having a peaceful night sleep. We are happy to support this and welcome this suggestion from parents as we know how important sleep is to a successful learning experience and how a mobile phone being used at night can interrupt and disturb sleep and indeed lead to students taking longer to settle and get a high-quality sleep. If you would like staff to keep your son or daughters' phone overnight, please let me know and I will be happy to arrange this. Mobiles would be collected after house meeting and students can collect them at 8am or 3:40pm.

A glimpse to 2024 and the new exciting trips and initiatives we have planned, trips continue to grow at the weekend and Mr Waring will share a calendar of events in the first few days of the new year. We will bring in some new learning opportunities across both academic/sport and the creative arts. I will lead on a Sports Leaders Award, Mr Rousall will lead on some mental health training, but I will share further news and signup opportunities in the new year.

As the year ends, we extend our warmest wishes for a joyful and peaceful Christmas season. May the spirit of togetherness and family mixed with fun, laughter and good food bring you a well-deserved break.

**Mr Allen and the boarding team**

