



Dear Parents,

I hope that you had a wonderful Christmas. I would like to take this opportunity to wish you a very Happy New Year. Apologies for the late arrival of this first newsletter.

In Head's Line on Friday, I reminded the pupils taking public exams this summer that time is short (there are only 119 days to the main GCSE period) and that they should take every possible advantage of the additional clinics and revision sessions that our staff offer this term. We will circulate the schedule once it is finalised. St Edmund's teachers are uniquely generous in this respect and I hope the pupils make the most all that is on offer (we will certainly be encouraging them to do so). Support is also available for those who feel the pressure as the examinations approach both through the normal House and pastoral systems and through the Peer Listening Scheme.

This term is always an intense and demanding one but it is good to be back and there is a real sense of purpose about the school.

## Royal Albert Hall Carols

Congratulations to Stephen Brown (U5) who performed in 'Carols at the Royal Albert Hall' in the lead up to Christmas. He was part of a group of 13 handbell ringers representing the Royal College of Music. Over four days (21<sup>st</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> December) Stephen gave nine performances to an audience totalling 45,000 people, playing alongside the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and the Royal Choral Society, under conductor Richard Cooke. This was an amazing and demanding performance opportunity for Stephen, especially following straight on from his extremely busy conclusion to the Michaelmas Term.





## INSET

We had a successful staff INSET Day on Monday on the theme of "Creativity in Education". The highlight was a brilliant lecture by Professor Jonathan Barnes Visiting Senior Research Fellow at Canterbury Christ Church University (and father of our own Mr Barnes). His talk was engaging, funny, original and packed with great ideas and interesting academic content. I am very grateful to Professor Barnes for his time and hope we can benefit from his wisdom again in future.



## Sport

My thanks to the Sports Department for running pre-season training sessions for Hockey and Netball. Good luck to all our teams and individuals for the forthcoming season. The new season started with the Inter-House Netball and Hockey Competitions.

The games took place last week and were highly competitive.

The final results were:

Boys hockey: (1) Watson (2) Baker (3) Warneford (4) Wagner

Girls netball: (1) Wagner (2) Baker (3) Watson (4) Warneford

The picture shows the victorious Wagner Netball team.





## Peer Listening

Pupils from M5 upwards have been invited to apply to join the Peer Listening Scheme. We are also starting a new initiative, in conjunction with the Mental Health Foundation. The Peer Education Programme is open to Y12 pupils and will involve teaching well-being lessons to Y7 pupils. More information on this will follow. Expressions of interest for both of these projects should be sent to Mrs Shearer by 17th January.

## Debating

This is a busy month for debating with round two of heats for the English Speaking Union Schools' Mace Competition taking place next Wednesday. St. Edmund's will be hosting this round with Benenden School and The King's School competing with us for a place in the regional finals. Our swing team of Frankie Shepley, James Press and Lily Pickles will be arguing against the motion: *'This house regrets the commercialisation of Pride'* against Benenden School whilst our Senior team of Lawrence Wake, Isobel Wanstall and Nathaniel Florence-Wratten will be arguing for the motion: *'This House would make vaccinations compulsory'*.

## Staffing

I would finally like to welcome two new staff to the school. **Janelle O'Keefe** joins the Biology Department and **John Eyre** (Physics) takes over as Mrs Lea's maternity cover.

With Mrs Bensberg moving to the Junior School for two terms, parents with academic questions that would normally be addressed to her as Deputy Head (Academic) should refer them to myself and Mrs Shearer and we will see that they are promptly dealt with.

Kind regards,

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## The Week Ahead

The week ahead: **w/c 14<sup>th</sup> January 2019**

<b>Monday 14<sup>th</sup> January</b>	
<b>Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> January</b>	<b>Experience Day for Year 9 Entry</b> <b>14:45 Boys – U14A Junior Inter-House Hockey</b> <b>14:45 Boys – U15A Junior Inter-House Hockey</b> <b>16:45 Boys Hockey – U14A v Kent College (Away)</b> <b>14:45 Girls – U14A Junior Inter-House Netball</b>
<b>Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> January</b>	<b>Post-Mock Meetings for U5 pupils</b> <b>iGSCE Maths re-sit Paper 2 (Foundation and Higher)</b> <b>13:50 Curiosity Shop – Kran Talk, Library</b> <b>19:00 A-Level Options Evening for U5 Parents, Theatre</b>
<b>Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> January</b>	<b>13:50 Peer Listening, Drawing Room</b> <b>14:00 Boys 1<sup>st</sup> XI v Sutton Valence School (Away)</b> <b>14:25 U5 Speed Dating Subject Options Event, Library</b>
<b>Friday 18<sup>th</sup> January</b>	<b>Post-Mock Meetings for U5 pupils</b> <b>09:15 U18 Mixed Squash Kent Schools' Cup (away)</b>
<b>Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> January</b>	<b>10:45 Kent Schools Cross Country Championships – DOYRMS</b>

## Notices

The **Organists' Lunchtime Concert** due to take place on Thursday 16th January will be postponed to a later date. The organ is not operational at present but there will be a Lunchtime Concert on Thursday 23rd January at 1.50pm, now to be held in the Chapel instead of the Music School. All are welcome.