

10<sup>th</sup> December 2023

Dear Parents,

As we approach the end of term I wanted to wish you all a merry Christmas and to let you know about the events that we are planning to put on in the final week and of course how the boarders have fared across the term. It has been a great few months with boarders taking part in numerous school clubs and school activities, from Politics Society to Warhammer. We have boarders representing the school at our newest sport Handball (coached by Boarding Head chef Baz) and of course the normal offering of basketball, cross country, fencing, rugby, tennis and swimming. Next term we will add in competitive hockey before moving to the summer sports. A large number of boarders took part in the ever impressive music extravaganza in November and we have several students rehearsing for the RGS Musical of 'Shrek' and Wycombe High's version of Legally Blond.



**'Its beginning to look a lot like Christmas' choosing a tree, Christmas lights inside and out.**

This doesn't include all of the boarding activities that take place on a daily basis. Our Prefects have set up the inaugural Boarders Prefect League and much of the house have battled all term before Leeton Town finished as champions. The swimming pool refurbishment was completed last term with boarders using the pool for some fun and exercise twice a week and it would be remiss not to thank Toyosi for acting as very own boarding lifeguard. In terms of reward, lots of boarders have been recognised over the term as 'Boarders of the week' and the sheer variety of these awards reflects the excellent young people that we have in our midst; awards for Science, leadership, improvement in grades, national sports finals and musical grades.



**Boarders enjoying life - in South Africa, in the pool, at a national final and on the Thames.**

We had our no notice inspection by Ofsted in late November and whilst it great to have an external judgement, it is the boarders themselves, you as parents and our boarding staff team that are the true judges of whether the experience is positive. One thing I do want to pass on is the verbal quote from the inspection team that 'we as a boarding community are a bench mark for other boarding environments'.

*Ofsted Boarding Inspections 2013,2017,2019,2023 'Outstanding'*

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Our new boarders, especially those in Year 7, have settled brilliantly, with many living away for the first time, they have been an absolute credit. Boarding cannot be just an extension of school and I hope everyone has actually enjoyed living within the Fraser Youens community. I want to say a big thank you to the sixth formers who help run so many aspects of boarding life, academic mentoring, our activities, setting house routines and generally just the right ethos for the community.

Earlier in the year the boarders spent plenty of time outside but more recently with it getting dark, the boys have tended to move inside for their free time and the winter ladders in table tennis, Mario kart, pool and table football have seen some fierce rivalry, all in good spirit. We have seen our fair share of laughter and lots of smiles helped by activities and trips such as 'Longridge' on the Thames or the ice skating trip to Oxford this weekend. This time of year, we want the boarders to enjoy some festive moments together and will be running a host of competitions and an amazing opportunity to watch The Lion King at the West End. The ability to build lasting memories is so important.



### **Ten pin bowling for Year 7, Halloween in boarding and our Christmas Ice skating trip**

On the academic front all of the house had recent grades and this should have led to discussions at home with parents and in Fraser Youens with boarding tutors to discuss academic progress. For me, achieving potential comes down to effort, organisation and application. We wish the Year 11, 12 and 13 boarders the very best in their upcoming mock exams early in the New Year. These exams are an important step in helping the boys prepare for the GCSE and A level exams and can really help in identifying areas of strength and areas to work on. Any revision now will only be beneficial in embedding knowledge into longer term memory for the summer. All of our boarders also need a proper break to recharge their batteries, so there needs to be some sort of balance for the exam year groups. We'd also like to wish all Year 13s good luck in any university interviews and the whole UCAS application process. We presently have boarders sitting with competitive offers from some top universities such as Durham and Warwick and those with interviews at Oxford and Cambridge amongst many other prestigious universities. Year 13 Boarders have applications in for a wide range of subjects with Law, Earth Sciences, Veterinary Medicine and Economics amongst others. It is great to see students being offered places at the very top universities in the country and now the challenge is to achieve those predicted grades.

For those in Year 13 it will be their last Christmas here and for some their seventh. I hope that one and all enjoy our last week and have a brilliant Christmas. Please can I reiterate that we would hope that boarders are not out in the evenings of the final week of term.

#### **Final week events.**

**Monday 11<sup>th</sup>** – Christmas Competitions followed by early supper and Carol Concert.

**Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup>** – After Eight and Malteser Challenges & Boarding Christmas competitions.

**Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup>** – West End trip to see the Lion King.

**Thursday 14<sup>th</sup>** – Christmas Dinner and Finals of all competitions.

**Friday 15<sup>th</sup>** – School finishes at 1.00pm. Mince Pies and Mulled wine at pick up. FYH closes at 6.00pm.

#### **New Year return**

**Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> Jan** Fraser Youens will reopen from 7.00pm. **Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> Jan** school starts at 0840.

Yr 11&12 Mock exams and study leave.

**I wish you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.**

Jon Scourfield (Assistant Head/Director of Boarding)