



March 2018

Dear Parents

Despite the best efforts of the weather, we have enjoyed a very productive Easter term. Your boys have achieved a great deal and it is a real privilege to observe at close quarters their effort, enjoyment, determination, perseverance, progress and success in so many areas.

### **Academic Excellence**

All 47 P4 boys were successful in gaining places at Birkdale Senior School. As a result of their performance in the entrance test, Eight boys were called back for the scholarship exam. All eight boys received an academic award. Congratulations to the following boys: Seth Hillier, Max Insull, Duncan MacColl, Henry Baker, Ben Halsey, Alexander Muir, Toby Peberdy and Felix Hawker. Congratulations also to Joshua Gillgrass who has been offered a 13+ place at Harrow, Ibrahim Aftab who has been awarded an 11+ scholarship at QEGS, Wakefield and Alexander Muir who has been offered a place at Highgate School in London.

Boys throughout the school have performed very well in Maths, English and Science assessments. Behind each of these results are individual stories of great progress; I do hope you have found hearing your son's results at the recent parents' evening both informative and useful, as we work with you in providing yourself the opportunity to fulfil his academic potential.

The current Prep 4 year group are an excellent example of the very high standards being achieved across the school; the average scores as a year group being a long way ahead of the national average. I look forward to telling you more about the talents of our leaving Prep 4 boys in July at our Celebration and Prize Giving event.

### **Music and Drama**

A large group of boys enjoyed taking part in the Young Voices concert at the FlyDSA Arena earlier this term. If you were able to join us at our end of term Easter service, you will have seen and heard just how much Prep School boys enjoys singing. Hymn practices in both Pre-Prep and Prep are special times and I am very grateful for the work Mr Bish, Mrs Cooke, Mrs Fletcher and Mrs Burch put into preparing for them.

Congratulations to the following boys who were successful in gaining awards following the recent 11+ Music Scholarship Day at Senior School: Seth Hillier, Max Dunn, Duncan MacColl, Alex Portius, Ethan Dakin.

We are also very proud that Nayan Gupta (P3) has won a place to play violin in the National Children's Orchestra.

Our three cathedral choristers, Seth Hillier, Bertie Spence and Henry Bond are going to be singing live on BBC One at 10 am on Easter Sunday, when the Easter Service is being broadcast from Sheffield Cathedral. If anyone would like to attend the service, free tickets can be booked by

following the link on the cathedral website <http://www.sheffieldcathedral.org/>

On the drama front, we are very much looking forward to the Birkdale Shakespeare Festival early next term. At this festival, Pre-Prep contributions will be based around excerpts from King Lear, the Prep boys performing The Tempest and Senior School boys, Romeo and Juliet.

### **Art News**

Earlier this term, Prep 1 & Prep 2 Art work was exhibited in the Helix Gallery. We have also entered boys' work in the Sheffield Young Artist competition and the National Prep Schools' exhibition.

### **Sports News**

Our Winter Sports programme has now finished and once again, we have managed to field many teams across the age groups allowing a huge number of boys to represent the school. We have managed to win or draw approximately 75% of our matches. This is a fine achievement and reflects the talent, enthusiasm and determination of our boys, the skill and dedication of their coaches and the strength of our fixture list. I am delighted that so many boys have had the opportunity to represent the school and learned a great deal from competing, winning and losing graciously!

Sadly, the snow decimated our Football program but keenly contested House events were held in Football, Rugby, Swimming and Cross-Country. Cross-Country is a very welcome addition to our sporting provision and we have begun to compete in the Sheffield Cross-Country League on Saturday mornings. Many thanks to Mrs Thake for giving even more boys opportunity to represent the school. She informs me she is sure that we will win some Cross-Country silverware next year - watch this space! At the HMC Swimming Gala, the U11 team did brilliantly to finish 3rd overall in an excellent performance! Congratulations to Ben Halsey on winning the U11 Butterfly event, achieving a new school record!

During half-term, we enjoyed a very successful 4-day Rugby Tour to Cheltenham; we took an Under 10 and an Under 11 squad and they were a real credit to the school. Our first fixtures were against Stow Rugby Club and the boys enjoyed playing under floodlights, gaining victories at both age groups. Lydney Rugby Club hosted the boys two days later, where the U10s comfortably won their game. The U11s had a much tougher fixture, as the previous weekend the Lydney U11 team had been crowned county champions. A truly outstanding performance from the Birkdale U11 team saw them gain a fantastic draw with the final score being 35-35. I have to say that this was the finest performance I have seen from a Birkdale Prep team in my time at the school.

### **Charities**

This term, boys from P3 and P4 have taken part in a football marathon, Pre-Prep boys had a fun run to raise money and the whole Prep School enjoyed Charities Week, which raised a fantastic £1065.39. Thank you again to Mr Oakey for his tireless work in coordinating our fundraising and thank you to all those who have given so generously in support of the school Sheffield Children's Hospital.

### **Important Information about Summer Games Lessons and Matches**

A number of parents have enquired about our policy regarding various cricket clothing and equipment issues so I thought it best to clarify the situation.

### **Clothing for summer term games lessons for boys in Prep 1 - 4**

School PE kit

Trainers

School Tracksuit

White trousers may be worn but we do prefer these to be kept clean for school matches. I am sure that parents would prefer not to have to be constantly battling to wash grass stains out of white trousers.

### **Clothing for boys selected for school cricket matches in Prep 2 - 4**

White trousers

White school polo shirt/cricket shirt

Cricket sweater

White socks

Trainers

### **Equipment and protective clothing boys in Prep 3 - 4**

For boys in Prep 3 and 4 who use a hard cricket ball, they will continue to need their own box. However, the school has enough bats, pads, gloves and helmets for any batsmen and wicket-keepers to wear in games lessons, net practices and matches. Of course this does not stop you buying equipment for your son if you so wish.

If boys bring into school any personal equipment, *it must be clearly named and is their own responsibility*. Storage space is very limited at school so could I ask that boys only bring in their cricket equipment bags on days when they are actually playing.

We are very happy to offer advice on equipment; for example, too heavy a bat, or pads that are too large, just hinder rather than help, whatever the cost/quality. Can I recommend a visit to either Sheaf Sports (655 Staniforth Road, Sheffield S9 4RD), or All Rounder Cricket (2-5 Penistone Trading Estate, Penistone Road, Sheffield, S6 2FL), who are experts in providing the right sized equipment.

If there are any further issues relating to school cricket you wish to discuss, please do not hesitate to speak to Mr Dymock, Mr Cooper or myself.

### **And finally....**

Thank you for reading this rather lengthy letter. I do hope you all have a lovely Easter holiday and look forward to seeing the boys return refreshed and rejuvenated ready for a busy summer term.

Yours sincerely



Chris Burch  
Head of the Prep School