

December 2009

To Parents in the Senior School

Dear Parent / Guardian,

Thank you for the positive feedback I have received from many of you regarding my pastoral update letter in October, particularly the sections on personal safety and socialising outside of school time. The dark evenings (and mornings!) mean that we have re-affirmed these messages at School, in addition to reminding pupils about road safety and the extra care and vigilance needed at this time of year.

I was also very pleased with the engagement of the pupils from Y7 – 10 in the School's recent Internet Safety Day. This was an appropriate way to bring together many of the themes that we had addressed during Anti-bullying week and the officials from the Child Exploitation and Online Protection centre (CEOP) were very complimentary about the thoughtful and responsive audiences of pupils that they talked to. The day concluded with an excellent presentation for parents of pupils in Year 7 & 8 containing many practical tips about how you can help keep your children safe when they are using new technology. My sincere thanks for this presentation go to Mr. Nigel Swycher (a fellow Highgate parent) and Mr. Fraser Robertson (Head of Curriculum ICT) ably supported by Mr. Stuart Evans and his pastoral team.

Such presentations for parents have been a valuable part of the School's programme of pastoral activities for several years and we are very grateful for the ongoing involvement of the Highgate School Parents' Association in helping us promote these events and making sure that they are relevant, useful and well supported. I would like to take this opportunity therefore to present you with a few dates for your diary next term so that you do not miss the presentations and workshops for Senior School parents that we are planning.

Gill Hines is the joint author of two highly regarded books designed for parents and young people. Gill visited the School two years ago and gave an entertaining and informative presentation based on her book "Whatever!: A Down To Earth Guide to Parenting Teenagers". Gill has recently published a new book aimed at parents with children who are just about to enter the teenage years, "It's Not Fair!: Parenting the Bright and Challenging Child". I am delighted to say that Gill has agreed to return to Highgate and deliver two evening presentations: one for parents with pupils in Years 9 – 13 and one for parents with pupils in Years 7 & 8. She will draw on material from both her books and from her years of experience in working with young people and families. Her style is refreshingly honest and direct and, if you saw her previous talk, I am sure that you will agree that she is not to be missed.

Julie Johnson has worked with pupils at Highgate for many years, assisting in PSHE sessions and, more recently, helping to develop the skills of our senior pupils as they take up their posts as Prefects. Julie is in much demand as a trainer and presenter at

many excellent schools across London and she works closely with pupils, teachers and parents on a wide range of pastoral and personal development topics. Her sessions are designed to be stimulating and thought-provoking for all participants and offer opportunities to reflect upon, and share, valuable personal experiences. In consultation with the School and the HSPA, Julie has proposed three evening workshops for Highgate's parents next term, each envisaged to be directly relevant to a particular stage of your child's development. For parents in Year 7 & 8 there will be a workshop on "Managing the Teenage Years". Parents in Year 9 & 10 can experience the interestingly titled, "Managing the Party Scene" and parents in Year 11 – 13 are warmly invited to "Managing Pupil Well-being in the Examination Years".

The dates and times of these presentations are detailed below and I hope that you will find that there is something on offer that interests you. I will be back in touch with a reminder a week or two prior to the event to confirm timings and venues, in addition to gauging how many of you are intending to come along. Suitable refreshments will be provided and I must emphasise that these inherently worthwhile occasions are also meant to be sociable and, if possible, fun. I am sure that they will be an excellent opportunity to catch up and chat with parents from your own year group and others.

Gill Hines

Year 7 & 8, 1 February 2010, 7.00pm, Big School
"It's Not Fair!: Parenting the Bright and Challenging Child"

Year 9 – 13, 8 March 2010, 7.00pm, Mills Centre
"Whatever!: A Down To Earth Guide to Parenting Teenagers"

Julie Johnson

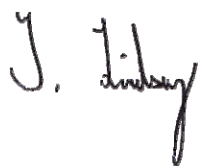
Year 7 & 8, 1 March 2010, 7.00pm, Big School.
"Managing the Teenage Years"

Year 9 & 10, 22 March, 7.00pm, Big School.
"Managing the Party Scene"

Year 11 – 13, 29 March, 7.00pm, Big School
"Managing Pupil Well-being in the Examination Years"

If you would like to register your interest in one, or more, of these evenings at this stage or have any queries about the information above then please email office@highgateschool.org.uk.

Yours sincerely,



T.J. Lindsay
Principal Deputy Head