

News@St-Chris 2.01 - 2013/2014

EDlines 2.01

By newsadmin on September 19th, 2013

18 September 2013



Welcome to the first Newsletter of the new school year and welcome too to all pupils and parents who are new to St Chris. Last week I wrote to all parents to usher in the new term and today, as I started to put this piece together, I wondered if there would be anything else to mention just seven days later.

I shouldn't have worried – there's always something new and fresh happening in our school!

The Newsletter itself ranges from Infant Welcome Afternoons to a report from two Senior School students on their experiences in Germany this summer as Goethe Institute scholarship winners. In the mix also are: Junior Swim Team trials, special assemblies, the Year 12 Curriculum Information evening; tea parties and a welcome to two new SPARTA coaches, from their previous employment with one of the David Lloyd Tennis Centre's in England. Varied and interesting as always and a precursor of the year to come.

Some of you will be wondering about examinations and SATS results. These will feature more prominently in a later edition, but I can say that they are excellent and well up with the standards we have achieved in former years. In some areas we have achieved record results. The headline statistics are to be found on the home page of our website – in a format that is much easier to use than last year's version. The GCSE and A-level results may change very slightly, since the results of a few appeals and re-marks are awaited from the examination boards.

A further matter that is pending is the outcome of the parent questionnaire; this too will be the subject of an article in a later Newsletter, probably at the start of October. The overall conclusion from the independently administered and assessed process is, however, quite clear and was worded identically in the separate feedback given for Infant, Junior and Senior parent questionnaires, quote: *"The overall performance of St Christopher's School was given as outstanding"*.

In addition, I was particularly pleased to see that the number of parents in all three sections of the School who felt that the School had continued to improve over the previous year, greatly exceeded those who believed it had become less good. Further, in the case of new parents, there was a heavy

majority of those who said that the School had exceeded their expectations over those who disagreed.

The staff and pupil questionnaires also revealed positive impressions and we will be revealing more details to staff and pupils soon.

Notwithstanding this pleasingly positive feedback from pupils, parents and staff, there are, in each section, areas that we are pinpointing for improvement. Watch this space for further feedback and areas that we will be working on as a result of responses to the questionnaire.

In terms of the development of teaching and learning techniques, parents might be interested in our work on developing ways and systems for pupils – from Infant to Sixth Form – to give feedback directly to each teacher on how well they feel a particular lesson, activity or sequence of lessons is going. In the modern classroom, although a teacher will assess, fairly continuously through formal and informal means, whether learning is progressing effectively (i.e. "Assessment for Learning"), it is still fairly uncommon for pupils to be asked about the ways in which a teacher actually delivers a lesson. Is the teacher going too quickly / too slowly? Is the aim of the lesson clear? Does something need to be explained further? Might a different activity be a better way of achieving the same aim? Is the environment conducive to learning? etc. etc. To those who are not teachers, the differences between assessing how learning has proceeded and looking at learning through the eyes of the pupil, might be difficult to appreciate. In fact, the changes implied are significant, involving a teacher to show readiness, to objectively and non-judgementally, accept feedback from pupils on how he or she is teaching and implying the development of high levels of self-confidence in our pupils.

Professor John Hattie's work "Visible Learning", based on 800 meta-analyses of thousands of research studies, involving millions of pupils, suggests that the impact of this particular addition to teaching techniques is very high indeed in terms of raising pupils' achievement. It ranks much, much higher than class-size, effective homework setting, ability grouping, problem-based learning, other aspects of learning, coming tenth in impact from 138 possible influences on learning.

We will explain more about this topic ... and another concept, termed Spaced vs Mass Practice – later in the year.

SPARTA News

By newsadmin on September 19th, 2013

ATHLETICS > BASKETBALL > CRICKET > DANCE > DRAMA > FITNESS > FOOTBALL > LEARNING > SWIMMING > TENNIS

SPARTA
SPORTS & ARTS ACADEMY
OF ST CHRISTOPHER'S

We are open to everyone - not just the St Christopher's community.
Visit www.sparta-bh.com for more information on our courses and how to enrol.

SPARTA is very pleased to welcome two new sports coaches who have joined the team this year. Adam Bussons and Simon Bourner have been working at a David Lloyd Tennis Centre in the UK coaching both children and adults and this is their first time working overseas.



Adam told us about his favourite sport and his coaching experience: "Tennis is my main sport and my biggest passion when it comes to coaching and playing and I have coached children as young as 3 years old, and adults aged over 70! Tennis isn't my only sport, I also have my coaching badges in a large number of sports, including football, badminton, volleyball, basketball, netball. I am extremely excited and honoured to be able to start my new experience here in Bahrain with SPARTA."

Simon is also really enjoying his new adventure in Bahrain: "I have felt very welcome from the day I landed in Bahrain and look forward to my new career as a SPARTA coach. I have been a tennis coach for over 7 years and have come from running the junior programme at David Lloyd in Devon. I am a very keen sports person and have played most sports to a good level."

We started the term with a Back to School Sports Camp attended by over 70 children. All activities are now in full swing with sign ups already exceeding last term. New activities for this year include Tots Tennis and Basketball. Swimming lessons continue to be our most popular activity and we hope to extend the programme later this term in order to meet the high demand.

Year 12 Curriculum Evening

By newsadmin on September 19th, 2013

Everything You Needed to Know

On Wednesday 11 September, a Year 12 Curriculum Information Evening was attended by over 150 students and parents. Following a welcome by Nick Wilson, Head of Senior School, there followed a presentation by Steve Keeble, Deputy Head of Senior School and Head of Post-16 Education, who provided a broad overview of the Sixth Form experience and the academic context. IB Diploma Programme students and families attended a presentation by Paul Walters, IB Diploma Programme Co-ordinator and A level Programme students and families attended a presentation by Andrew Beck, Head of Year 12. Also in attendance to offer their invaluable expertise were Danielle Shepard, Head of Year 13; Adrian Walker, Assistant Head of Senior School; Head Boy, John Konrad Sanderson; Deputy Head Boy, Sayed Basel Al Sharaf; Head Girl, Tamara Kawash and Deputy Head Girl, Eleanor Wilson. The evening provided an opportunity for students and parents to ask a range of questions about all aspects of Sixth Form life.

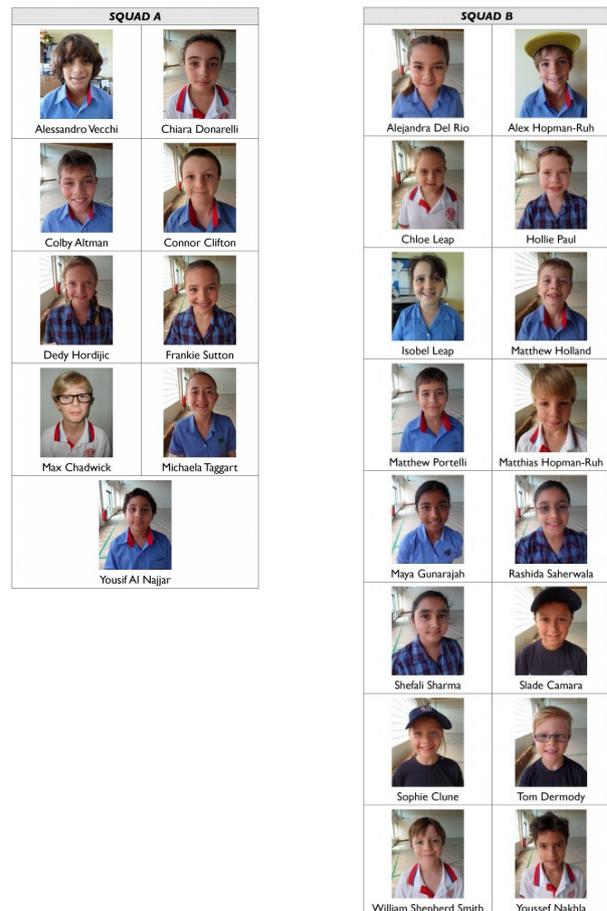
Junior School Swim Trials

By newsadmin on September 19th, 2013

Swimming in the Fast Lane

On Monday 9 September, 30 students from Year 5 and Year 6 attended swim trials after school until 15:30. The expectations were high and the students were asked to complete a 200m warm up. They then competed against the clock in freestyle, backstroke and breaststroke races over a 50m distance. The coaches were looking for good technique and an element of speed. On Wednesday 11 September, 40 students from Year 3 and Year 4 also battled it out in the deep to try and gain a place in St Christopher's School Swim Squad.

The following students were successful and have now been invited to join the Swim Squad.



PSHE Junior Assembly

By newsadmin on September 19th, 2013

New Beginnings

Tuesday 10 September saw the first of the Junior School's PSHE assemblies; this term based around the topic: New Beginnings. Each half term our circle time topics were kicked off with a rousing assembly, planned to encourage the children to think about: caring for others, friendships, conflict, setting goals and managing change.



Last Tuesday’s assembly started with a catchy song, which certainly livened us up! This was followed by Wendy Bataineh, Head of Junior School and Alison Woods, Assistant Head of Junior School giving us information about all the new things that are happening at St Christopher’s. Tim Mannings (Assistant Head of Junior School) then concluded with his annual school uniform talk where we were told to ‘Look smart, think smart’.

We were lucky enough to have last year’s school councillors give us all an update of the new things that have been included over the summer and changes that they have made to the school. Hopefully, this will encourage lots of pupils to put themselves forward for this year’s Student Council. The highlight of the assembly came when Mark Holness introduced the new House Captains. It was EXTREMELY hard to choose this year’s House Captains as there were so many good candidates! Well done to the following students:

FALCON	KESTREL	MERLIN	OSPREY
Will Shepherd Smith	Finley Matthews	Digby Rushton	Aiden Jones
Mishal Al-Mutari	Victoria Harper	Michaela Taggart	Beatrice Tinsley
Iona Reekie	Ben van der Eyken	Charlotte Axtell	Charlotte Pilgrim
Colby Altman	Leo Biffen	Connor Clifton	Patricia Hajszan
Amy Brereton Stuart	Callum Dawson	Louis Mulleague	Hamad Al Khalifa
Ryan Stephen	Maya Ghunaraja	Aaliah Al Shahry	Faiz Azfar
		Maddie Harrison-Mirfield	Luke Bennett
		Dani Doherty	
		James ‘Great Wall’ Meakin	
		Jesse-Leigh	
		Josie Dodson	
		Faris Al Khalo	

We always have a huge turnout for these events, but this year was exceptional. The parents met their child’s new Class Teacher and Teaching Assistant, were given a lively overview of the curriculum in each of the year groups, and undertook a tour of the learning environment’s unique to each of the year groups. Questions were then welcomed on a wide variety of topics.

We look forward to seeing you all again at our ‘Curriculum Workshops’ in the coming weeks. Thank you to all our parents for supporting your children as they settle in to their new year groups.

Goethe Institute Scholarship Award

By newsadmin on September 19th, 2013

Loving Learning German



Infant Welcome Afternoons

By newsadmin on September 19th, 2013

Hello, Good Afternoon and Welcome!

Over the past week, the Infant School has played host to over 500 parents at our ‘Welcome Afternoons’ in Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2.

Two students, Rania Mattar and Raif Keeble, who are currently studying German at AS and A Level, were awarded Goethe Institute Scholarships to attend a three week intensive German language course in Varenholz, Germany, from 4 – 24 August 2013, as part of the initiative “Schools: Partners for the Future” (PASCH). The Goethe Institute has organised international youth PASCH courses for high school students from PASCH schools from around the world since their inception in July 2008. During the three week course, the students were afforded the unique experience of learning German in an international learning community which culminated in Goethe Institute

examinations. The examinations are well known throughout the world and the associated certificates are accepted as a qualification by employers and further education institutions in many countries. The Goethe Institute's German language examinations correspond to the levels of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and range from A1 for beginners to C2 for language skills at the highest level. Raif and Rania achieved excellent results in the B1 examinations and we wish them well in their ongoing study of the language.

It was a flurry of activity in all classrooms; drawing writing and colouring. This was also an early opportunity for Year 1 parents to meet new Class Teachers and Teaching Assistants and to acquaint themselves with the children's new surroundings. Everyone had a fun time and the resulting work is proudly displayed in each classroom. May we extend our thanks to the many family members who joined us to make the event such a memorable one. Why not pop back and take a look at the work produced?

Year 1 Family Tea Parties

By newsadmin on September 19th, 2013

Anyone for Tea?



On Thursday 5 September, Year 1 parents were invited to join their children and teachers in the first of many opportunities to get into the classrooms - The Year 1 Tea Party. Children, teachers, mums, dads and some grandparents came together for refreshments and to complete an activity based on their family tree as well as just enjoying each others' company.

