



July 2016

# BROADLANDS HALL SCHOOL

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*Our core mission is to help students thrive, to achieve the very best they can and to be happy. We challenge students, via a personalised curriculum, to achieve their full potential socially, academically and vocationally. We value every student, celebrate their unique abilities, recognise every achievement and our aim is to help them graduate and go on to be as independent as possible and make a valuable contribution to the community in which they live.*

Dear Parents and Carers,

The achievements of the students have accelerated during the summer term and it gives me great pleasure to report on just a few of them.

## **Science for all**

Science lessons have really captured the imaginations of many students this year. Our approach is highly experiential and the boys have enjoyed building parachutes for eggs, making models of human cells from clay, creating their own Lava Lamps, making sherbet and testing velocity by creating their own trebuchets and firing marshmallows down corridors! Students working towards BTEC and GCSE Science have been able to enjoy the laboratory at Barnardiston Hall School, giving them access to Bunsen burners and similar advanced equipment. Next year, some students will take formal examinations in Science – another first for the school.

## **What's been going on?**

We invited students to collectively suggest and then select a theme, for a special themed day and they opted to have a Harry Potter day. This proved to be great fun (and educational). As well as all manner of wizardly learning, students made a 'Choosing Hat' and took turns to determine their own Hogwarts House. In April the students completed a Marathon; yes, a 26.6 mile Marathon! Using an APP, we recorded short walks during the month, before completing the challenge with an 8 kilometre walk around Grafham Water. The day was glorious, the boys were very resilient and rightly proud of the medals that they were awarded.

The whole school 'Big Day Out' this term was a trip to Woburn Safari Park. In addition to the thrill of watching naughty monkeys destroy a school car's aerial, and the excitement of having Lions cross their paths in close proximity, students attended a private workshop about animals, with a focus on their skins, and learnt why different creatures needed different coats and what they felt like. They were given access to live reptiles as well as a variety of animal skins to touch and evaluate.

## **Batty about Crafts**

Birds and Bats are benefiting from the efforts of students using the newly opened Wood Workshop and the first projects students have undertaken include making boxes for our flying friends. The facility is also used for a model making enrichment club and some students will soon start building a school Go-Kart!

## **New Boys**

Two new students joined the school this term, expanding our ranks with new skills and ideas. So far, both students are really enjoying the swimming lessons we are now able to provide, with instruction provided by a new member of staff who is also a Swimming Coach.

## Qualifications and Certificates

As previously mentioned, the school achieved Exam Centre status earlier this year and three students participated in formal qualifications in Maths and English last month. Obviously, we need to wait until August to get the formal results for the GCSEs but I am proud of the way the students conducted themselves during the examinations. As well as providing GCSE study, we are also, as an official centre, delivering BTECs, and Functional Skills. Furthermore, students can now be formally assessed by our own moderators for ASDAN units, OCN and the Arts Award. Qualifications and certifications are definitely not everything but they do provide ambition for students and opportunities to celebrate success. They also encourage another of our values; resilience. Thus, I am delighted to be able to inform you that, in addition to GCSEs and Functional skills, the students have collectively completed thirty-five ASDAN units and more than forty OCN certificates.

## Partnership with the Home staff.

Homework was introduced this term and we are already noting the positive effects this is having. The Home recently had an Ofsted inspection that noted in its final report: ***'Newly introduced expectations for the completion of homework help the children to practise a range of skills. These help build confidence, raise self-esteem and help to prepare for transitions'***. The ever more enhanced collaboration we are really enjoying with Home care staff is reaping rewards for the boys in very many ways. Ofsted noted in May that ***'The school staff work with increasing levels of partnership with the care staff, which helps to embed the routines and improves opportunities for consistency across the school'*** – and we of course agree! After school clubs are another exciting development, as care staff come together with school staff twice a week to help students enjoy a range of Nature Study, Arts and Sports projects after school.



## Making work Fun!

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory in the West End, The Suffolk Museum of Food and Farming History and Jimmy's Farm, for Sausage Making, are just three more of the enriching and inspiring events students participated in this term. We really believe that experiential learning is certainly worth all the effort and resources we give to it: it makes work fun and fun work!

## Progress for all

I hope that you can see the abundance of progress the students have made this year. For some that will be developing their speech, for some numeracy competency, for others, sociability or creativity and all our boys, have increased their love of learning, their tolerance of others and their confidence.

Finally, don't forget to put the **20<sup>th</sup> of July** in your diary, which is the date for the school **Awards and Sports Day**. Cakes and Tea will be served at 1pm and I look forward to seeing you there.

Kindest regards,

Hazel Simmons

Head Teacher