“Don’t judge each day by the harvest you reap but by the seeds that you plant”  

Robert Louis Stevenson

Dear Parents,

Following educational developments in the British and international media is always important to look at trends, issues and developments.

One writer that I have always admired is Sir. Anthony Seldon, Master of Wellington College in England. His work on building character, the development of the various strands of intelligence and his approach to pastoral work is very interesting and he has made a profound impact at Wellington College since being appointed Master in 2006. I am also looking forward to his new book, The Joy of Education.

In a recent opinion piece in The Times, Seldon laments the poor quality of marking of A-levels and GCSE examinations. Figures released by Ofqual, the exam regulator, show that after papers were submitted to be re-marked, 16,000 A-level grades went up as did 29,500 GCSE grades. This results in a loss of confidence in the system and on the validity of these British state examinations. Please note that the Cambridge International GCSE examinations and the IB Diploma Programme are taken at OBS and these are not part of the British state examination programme.

Seldon contrasts this lamentable state with the International Baccalaureate. He argues that the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme is a far better system than A-level or GCSE, with more accurate marking and zero grade inflation over many years. The philosophy is grounded on trusting teachers and examiners.

Many universities now see the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme as a much more rigorous university preparation course than many state alternatives. It offers the breadth of 6 subjects while allowing pupils to go into depth in a number. The programme also ensures that pupils develop the attributes and characteristics of successful university students through independent study, research skills, detailed analysis and academic writing skills. It also teaches the holistic nature of knowledge, the inter-connectedness of different fields of study and the development of the learner profile.

At this week’s Harvest festival we had the honour of recognizing a former pupil who exemplifies all the above attributes. Miguel Macedo who has begun his studies in medicine at the University of Porto, graduated in July 2014 and achieved 44 points in his IB Diploma that puts him in the top 2% worldwide. His remarkable achievement is testimony to his dedication, his teachers and his supportive parents.

Tom McGrath, Headmaster

WHOLE SCHOOL NOTICES

WINTER UNIFORM

Please be reminded that after half-term the school winter uniform must be worn. This can be purchased in the uniform shop. Please be reminded that All clothing must be named.

For details on what the winter uniform includes please follow this link: http://www.obs.edu.pt/page.cfm?p=336
Dear Parents & Friends,

Thank you all for your contributions in making this year’s Harvest Festival such a successful event.

I wish to thank Fr. Bob Bates for leading us in our reflection and for his thoughtful words. OBS and St. James Anglican Church have a common bond stretching back to the foundation of the school and it is a connection we cherish.

I thank our wonderful primary choir under the leadership of Mr. Robert Gore, with piano accompaniment provided by Mrs. Madeleine Williamson. I also thank our ensemble for their accompaniment.

I add my thanks to Ms Fatima Magalhaes for preparing the decorative basket, Mrs. Joana Saraiva and Mrs. Lucy Packett for preparing the programme, and to Stella Maris church, the Star of the Sea, for hosting our ceremony.

It was our first time as a school together since the academic year began and we need these occasions to come together to remind us of a few important truths:

- We are greater than the sum of our parts;
- We are a community with a long and distinguished history;
- We achieve great things when we work together and aim for the stars;
- We have a very special, special school.

At our ceremony we recognized the achievements of 2014 top IB graduate, Miguel Macedo, and we wish him continued success and happiness in his medical studies.

We raised €310 in our collection and we received very generous donations for our appeal for non-perishable food items. All these go to the Red Cross in Porto. We thank you all for your generosity.

Tom McGrath, Headmaster

ESCOLA DAS ARTES AT OBS

We are well under way with the instrumental lessons, and we have had a huge increase in students wanting to learn especially piano and guitar. Almost all our teachers are pretty much full in both these instruments. We would love to think about creating a top class school orchestra in the future, and we have a lot of great string players in the school. However we would love to hear from anyone who might be interested in taking up a woodwind instrument (flute, oboe, clarinet and bassoon) or brass (trumpet, trombone or French horn). Trial lessons free!!

Please contact us at escoladasartesobs@hotmail.com or talk to Mr. Gore in music lessons.

Escola das Artes teachers

SOLIDARITY CONCERT ON 03RD DECEMBER

We would like to thank those parents that have shown an interest in advertising in the Solidarity programme. We wish to continue this offer of advertisement space until 14th November. This programme will be given free to almost 1000 members of the audience and we do believe this will be a very cost effective method of advertisement and promotion.

The programme will be A5 size and we wish to offer a quarter page advertisement for 50 euros. Larger advertisements can be negotiated with Joana Saraiva. Please do call or email Joana if you have any further questions regarding this opportunity.
PRIMARY NOTICES

BALLET SCHOOL PRESENTATION

This week the primary pupils watched a presentation and small performance from a local ballet school. This was a wonderful exhibition of ballet skills from pupils ranging from Reception to age 18. We will be promoting the ballet school in our January clubs letter though if you wish to enquire sooner then please ask your child to collect a flyer from Lucy.

CANCER AWARENESS

On Friday of this week the whole school wore pink/red to show our support, and to raise money, for Cancer charities. Thank you to all parents that helped make this possible.

Mark Evans, Head of Primary

PICKING UP CHILDREN AT 3:30PM

Could I please ask that when pupils are picked up at 3:30pm you take them directly away from the Primary area. You are very welcome to stop and talk to other parents closer to the main gate should you wish to.

Our concern is that staff on duty are unable to distinguish between pupils that need to be directed someplace, including After Care and pupils that have an adult in the vicinity. Also, as classes are still in session we wish to try to control the number of pupils in this area.

Should you also be waiting for a child in Form 4 and 5 then please do stay though we ask that you are aware of these concerns.

We would greatly appreciate your support with this matter.

SECONDARY NOTICES

SECONDARY NEWS

This will be emailed out this half term and contain all of the main stories from the Secondary Section from this half term. You can find all editions of The Secondary OBServer at http://www.obs.edu.pt/page.cfm?p=415.

HOMEWORK

Please check and sign your child’s diary on a weekly basis. Feel free to add a note or message in the diary for tutors or teachers.
TESTS
Five tests are set per week as a maximum. Forms 6-8 should only receive a maximum of two tests per day and Forms 9-10 should receive a maximum of three per day.

PUNCTUALITY
All pupils should aim to arrive at school for 8.40am for a prompt 8.50am start. Punctuality is essential for effective learning. Two lates/week = tutor detention; Three lates/week = SLT lunch time detention.

NOTICES
All key secondary notices are found at http://www.obs.edu.pt/page.cfm?p=428. Please do check this on a regular basis.

DATES FOR DIARIES
03rd November School starts back
06th November Cross Country Event, Parque da Cidade
10th-14th November Early Years Admissions Week
11th November Remembrance Day
13th - 15th November F4 to F9 Lisbon Sports Tournament
13th November F2 to F5 Magusto Trip
20th November Early Years Pyjama Day Event
21st November F3 Zoo Trip
20th-24th November F8 to F10 VALMUN Trip