Dear Parents,

Born and brought up in an anglophone country like Ireland, I have often been told that I enjoy some advantage as a native speaker of the English language. This “advantage” rests on two myths:

- The belief that English has become the dominant language of global interaction and therefore a key to career advancement;
- A perception that it is very hard for a non-native speaker to acquire a high level of functional competence;

These supposed “advantages” have been, to many extents, exposed as myths and show a number of weaknesses on examination. Certainly the rise of English as the international language continues though Spanish remains the most widely spoken mother tongue. However, while English is seen as a plus, more and more employers are looking for competencies in more than one language. Thus the anglophone tendency to be reluctant second language learners is beginning to turn out to be a significant disadvantage. English may be coming ubiquitous but nations are not abandoning their native tongue but learning English as an additional language.

The second myth that the complexities of the English language cannot be mastered by a non-native speaker has been exploded also. I went to Poland in the mid 1990’s to work in an international school and English was not widespread and to survive one needed to learn some Polish. 20 years later English is spoken widely and to a very high level and graduates of my former school excel at British universities. The major change has been quality teaching and exposure to the language in a variety of contexts.

It is the bilingual and multilingual pupil and adult who now enjoys the greatest advantage. A French teacher at my former school had an excellent poster on her door: “Don’t worry monolingualism can be eradicated”.

We are a British School, we are an international school, we are a bilingual school. Our IBDP learners should switch seamlessly between spoken or written English and Portuguese, two major world languages. Bilingual models of education are preparing pupils to thrive in two or more languages. The advantage of bilingualism in terms of intellectual development, the development of abstract thought at an earlier age, and the potential for cross-cultural awareness has been widely documented and bilingualism is a key goal of our school.

Fred Genesse, Professor Emeritus at McGill University, Montreal has done some extensive research in bilingualism. He has documented that while English is the global language, “statistics show that there are more second language speakers of English than there are native speakers”.

Prof. Genesse has also shown that the most successful bilingual programmes are those that integrate language and content. We use such an immersion system at OBS where “by integrating language teaching with content that`s authentic and meaningful, you`re making the acquisition of that language deeper”.

My appeal to students is to embrace the opportunity to become truly bilingual by using both English and Portuguese in the playground, by reading widely in both languages and by celebrating the wonder of both languages. Let us work to eliminate monolingualism.

Tom McGrath, Headmaster
WHOLE SCHOOL NOTICES

WITHDRAWAL NOTICE

May I remind you that, should you wish to withdraw your child(ren) at the end of the school year, the deadline for giving written notice of withdrawal is 5.00pm on Friday 27th March (excluding Form 12).

Failure to deliver the aforementioned written notice will incur in the payment of the appropriate fee of the following term/loss of the Refundable Deposit.

EASTER ACTIVE8 PROGRAMME

During this Easter break, Active8 will be partnering with the school to offer a 4 day programme of fun and educational practical activities based at the school. This ´Easter Camp´ will take place from 09.00 to 15.00 from Monday 30th March to Thursday 2nd April and will cost €200. For more information and to book a place, please see the guide attached and/or contact Luis Mota via active8@outlook.pt. Places are limited and are based on a first come first served basis so please get in touch quickly to reserve your place. Please click here for more information:


PRIMARY NOTICES

I am sure you are all aware that next Friday is the end of the Spring term at OBS. However, it is also “Bring Sunshine to School” day. As in previous years, we will allow pupils to not wear school uniform on this day if they wear something yellow instead; this is not a charity fundraising event. The school day and lesson schedule will run as normal, though with a distinctly “sunshine feel”.

The final week of the term is always hectic, and this coming week is no exception. You should be receiving your child’s Effort and Attainment grades, via email, on Tuesday and then we have Parent Meetings on Wednesday and Thursday after school. Please be aware that we do not run clubs on the last week of term unless specific information is given by the club instructor.

The Form 5 play is one of the major pupil led events for the summer term and I do hope that you are able to come to one of the performances. We will be sending ticket information to all parents after the Easter break.

Mark Evans, Head of Primary

HEAD OF PRIMARY COMMENDATION AWARDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commendation awarded to Gonçalo for his superb active participation in class, resulting in excellent maths and humanities work over the past two weeks 2H</th>
<th>Commendation awarded to Jack for the great effort he has exhibited to improve his reading level, especially as part of the Accelerated Reader programme 3J</th>
<th>Commendation awarded to Teresa for making great improvements with her handwriting. Teresa has shown a great deal of effort and determination to improve the quality of her work 1T</th>
<th>Commendation awarded to Matilde for making great improvements with the presentation of her work. She has shown a great deal of effort &amp; determination to improve the quality of her assignments throughout this term. 1T</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GONÇALO FERREIRA</td>
<td>JACK GRAHAM</td>
<td>TERESA AGRELLOS</td>
<td>MATILDE SILVA</td>
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POETRY EISTEDDFOD

The 21st of March 2015 is the United Nations World Poetry day. In celebration of this, OBS held a Poetry Eisteddfod with the whole school in The Sports Hall on Tuesday 17th March. Children from Prep to Form 8 and several staff members stood up and recited poetry. Some of the poems were written by those children who read them. In addition to the Eisteddfod we held a special poetry assembly for the Primary School on Monday 16th where poems were shared and types of poetry explored.

Jonathan Bridges, Primary English Coordinator

FORM 5 INTER-CLASS DEBATE

On the 12th of March 2015 Form 5 held an inter-class debate as part of their discursive writing topic. The children from both classes were divided into six teams of three debaters. They had to research and prepare a debate, either affirmative or negative, on one of three topics: Should primary children be allowed to bring mobile phones to school?, Should Form 5 finish at 3:30pm? or Should capital punishment be reinstated in Portugal? The quality of the spoken English displayed during the debates was excellent and the arguments presented very persuasive. At three wins each the debate ended in a draw between 5L and 5B.

Jonathan Bridges, Primary English Coordinator

PRIMARY PORTUGUESE LANGUAGE COMMENDATIONS

Form 4F - Português

Miguel Castro - pelo seu comportamento exemplar no decorrer das aulas de Português e pelo esforço dedicado à atividade de Biblioteca de Turma.

Bruno Wollmann - pelo seu comportamento exemplar no decorrer das aulas de Português e pelo esforço dedicado à atividade de Biblioteca de Turma. Agradecimento especial pela oferta de alguns livros de leitura, para a turma!

Carlota Oliveira - pelo seu esforço e progresso na disciplina de Português.

Gabriel Klein - pelo seu esforço na disciplina de português. Agradecimento especial também pela oferta de diversos livros de leitura, à turma!

Profª Mónica Oliveira
F5B e F5L  
Francisco Alves,  
Francisco Miranda,  
Barbara Mendes  
Inês Teixeira  
Beatriz Matos e  
Ishaa Laximidas  

Excelente trabalho e sua apresentação na disciplina de História de Portugal  

Luísa Barbosa, Head of Modern Languages in Primary

SECONDARY NOTICES

ATHLETICS CHAMPIONSHIPS 27TH MARCH
On Friday March 27th the school will be holding its annual secondary athletics championships at the Leca da Palmeira track. All pupils will be transported to the centre from school for a 09.45 competition start and will need to bring a packed lunch or money for food from the centre. Parents are asked to collect their children from the centre, rather than the school, at 3.30 although it would be great to see as many of you there to support the athletes during the day. A full schedule of events will be sent to you via email.

CAS UPDATE

As part of the CAS Morocco trip (April 12th-19th) we will be volunteering in a local school. If you have any old textbooks or workbooks that are in decent condition and you are happy to donate then please put them in my pigeon hole and I will distribute amongst the group to take to Morocco. Thanks!

Mr Simson, CAS Coordinator

OBS ANNUAL PRIZE DRAW

We don’t have any prizes for the prize draw yet! If you have any contacts with companies which may be willing to donate a prize please let me know. This does not need to be anything significant and, in fact, small prizes between the values of €5 to €15 would be most welcome.

WATER
Pupils are advised to bring a bottle of water with them to school as temperatures increase.
RED NOSE DAY  www.narizvermelho.pt
On Thursday 26th March the secondary school will be holding some events to support Red Nose Day, including a non-uniform day. Pupils should wear something red and pay €1 to their Form tutor. This will go towards the charity. In addition, there will also be activities at lunchtime to raise funds for this charity including red noses for sale (€2) http://www.narizvermelho.pt/.

VALUABLES
It is the responsibility of the pupil to look after anything of any value. Generally, as a school we do not recommend that pupils bring in anything of great value. All pupils are also provided a locker for anything of value. In addition, if necessary they may leave something of value for with the Head of Secondary in a safe.

FORM 6&7 PARENTS EVENING
Please make bookings using our on-line system. This has been set up to ensure the smooth running of the evening and to try and ensure all parents are able to speak with subject teachers. It is therefore very important that parents keep to these appointments.

ATTENDANCE
Attendance is essential for learning. Any attendance below 95% is a concern and anything below 85% is a major concern. It is therefore critical that all holidays and other activities take place during the school holidays. These dates are published on the school website. If it is critical that a pupil is away from school such as for a funeral then the parents must contact the Head of Secondary. In general, if a pupil does have an extended holiday then this will be recorded as ‘unauthorised’.

LISBON GAMES AND CLIP GAMES (19th-21st March)
Please see the website for the latest news from St Julian’s. The full stories will be in the forthcoming OBServer: http://www.obs.edu.pt/

SPRING FESTIVAL (16th -18th APRIL)
Please see Mr Homewood’s letter related to the Spring Festival and ensure you reply to the invitation by Thursday, 26th March. All pupils not attending the festival are expected to attend school and lessons will continue as normal.

MUN DINNER (26th MARCH)
We will be having our first annual dinner on Thursday, 26th of this month at 7.30pm at CEPA TORTA in Gondarem (The original restaurant, not the new one). The cost is 15 euros and the dress is smart casual. If your child has indicated a wish to attend could he or she make contact with Mr. Quinn or Mrs. Ferreira before Wednesday: Robin.Quinn@obs.edu.pt or Leta.Ferreira@obs.edu.pt
## DATES FOR THE DIARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>24th March</td>
<td>Effort and Attainment report cards</td>
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<td>25th-26th March</td>
<td>Primary Parent Evenings</td>
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<td>27th March</td>
<td>Secondary Athletics Championships - Leça</td>
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<td>27th March</td>
<td>End of Spring Term</td>
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<td>12th-19th April</td>
<td>CAS Morocco Trip</td>
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<td>13th April</td>
<td>Summer term begins</td>
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<td>16th-19th April</td>
<td>F5-F9 Sports Tournament Lisbon</td>
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<tr>
<td>20th April</td>
<td>Extra-Curricular Summer Term Clubs start back</td>
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