“December’s wintery breath is already clouding the pond, frosting the pane, obscuring summer’s memory…”

John Geddes

Dear Parents,

The festive season began in the school this week with the Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony and the solidarity Concert at Exponor. My thanks to Elisabeth Martorell for supplying the mulled wine for the Tree ceremony; it was enjoyed by the parents who attended. My congratulations to Mr Mark Evans for such a smoothly run Solidarity concert and for hosting the enjoyable evening. Mr Evans was ably assisted by Ms Joana Saraiva who put in countless hours and we were very pleased with the running of the event. I also pay tribute to Mr. Rob Gore and Ms Madeleine Williamson who prepared our young choir so well and I congratulate all the choristers for representing us so well.

I am very proud of our school and of how our students represent us. One way we present ourselves well is in our dress code and uniform. We have a very elegant and smart uniform and I ask all our parents to support us in ensuring that there is strict adherence to the school uniform and dress code. One area of concern at present is that a number of secondary school girls who are wearing school skirts that are too short. The school policy is not very specific here so I wish to clarify the following:

The school uniform skirt must be to the knee.

I wish to give notice that from January 5th 2015 this regulation will be strictly enforced and this gives parents and students adequate time to prepare and, if necessary, to buy uniform skirts of the appropriate length. We will send girls home if they come if they fail to adhere to this regulation. I also ask our IB Diploma students to familiarize themselves with the school’s dress code to ensure that they adhere to this policy. Again failure to comply will lead to sending pupils home. Please click here to see the uniform code: [http://www.obs.edu.pt/page.cfm?p=336](http://www.obs.edu.pt/page.cfm?p=336)

I wish to invite all interested parents to a second coffee morning of this term where there will be an opportunity to meet the Headmaster and to address any issues of concern. I have the following issues to discuss with parents.

1. **A new school website:** I wish to present the new design for feedback.
2. **After-school care arrangements:** we are looking at moving this from 4.10pm to the canteen and we also wish to look at the hours that we operate.
3. **Music Instrument Tuition:** We wish to explore the option of running some of these tuitions during the school day- this would of course be with the agreement of the parents.
4. **Uniform Policy:** I wish to clarify any issues that parents may have.

This meeting will begin in Teage Hall at 9am on Thursday 11th December and should take about one hour.

Tom McGrath, Headmaster
PRIMARY NOTICES
PRIMARY COMMENDATION AWARDS THIS WEEK

Excellent attitude and attainment within the English Lessons
Outstanding effort in the class assembly
Impressive progress with the humanities assignment
Excellent improvement with spelling and reading throughout this term

DAVID ROCCHI
BEATRIZ MENDES
CATARINA REIS
STEFANO GAMBARO
MARIA GOMES SILVA

Mark Evans, Head of Primary

GRANDPARENT´S ASSEMBLY

The Early Years children put on a special assembly for Grandparents this morning. It was a huge success and the assembly hall was packed. A special thank you goes to the EYFS and F1 Teachers for organising such a well run event.
RECEPTION’S NATIVITY PLAY

We would like to invite you to the Reception Nativity Play at 10am on Friday, 12th December in the Teage Hall. We look forward to seeing you on Friday for this very special event in the Reception year. Please do email, or speak to, your child’s teacher if you have any specific questions.

Mrs Wall and Mrs Pires, Reception Teachers

EXTRA CURRICULAR CLUBS

The 12th of December is the last day for clubs this term. Please check your emails for details of clubs for Spring term.

Mark Evans, Head of Primary

SECONDARY NOTICES

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.

REPORTS AND PARENTS’ EVENING

- Fm 6 & 7 grade reports issued on 10th December
- Fm 7 & 11 parents evening on 11th December
- Fm 8 & 9 Full written reports issued on 17th December

On the below sheet there is a summary that aims to clarify how pupils are graded in Form 6-8. Please read this with care. More detailed information can be found in the Form 6-8 Assessment handbook that will be on the website shortly.

The other dates, related to Reporting and Recording, are also below. All pupils receive grades every half term. Pupils also receive either a full written report OR a parents evening every term. Please do make an appointment with individual teachers or the Form Tutor if you would like to discuss your child’s progress at any other time.
MOCK EXAMINATIONS

All Form 10 & 12 students have these timetables. They are also posted on the school website. Students should now be devising their revision timetables for these mock examinations which must be taken very seriously. Much support and advice has also been provided in tutor time.

CHRISTMAS ARRANGEMENTS

Thursday 18th December: Secondary Christmas Lunch followed by Carol Service

All pupils are expected to be dressed very smartly in their school uniform or IB formal dress.

Friday 19th December:

- Talent show/singing competition
- Break
- Mr McGrath’s Christmas Tutor Quiz
- Assembly
- Pupils leave by 12.30pm

This day is a non uniform day.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND ASSESSMENT AT FORMS 6-8

Assessment at Key Stage Three (Forms 6-8) is based on learning objectives. This means that the work and ability of pupils is judged against a set of criteria for each subject areas. Pupils are not judged against the work of other pupils. These objectives therefore allow for the learning of pupils to be clearly assessed and also allow teachers and students to set formative targets for individual learning.

For English, Mathematics and Science the objectives are directly taken from the Cambridge Secondary One framework. Teachers assess student learning based on this framework in Forms 6, 7 and 8 building upon the Cambridge Primary curriculum.

Assessment tasks are varied to allow all pupils to demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and skills. For example, students are assessed through projects, essays, end of unit tests, presentations and observation. An assessment task may cover different criteria.

The core subject have summative tests at the end of each year (Progression Tests) and from Form 8 2016 our students sit an externally-assessed examination on the core subjects (Cambridge Checkpoints).

In Portuguese A (First Language) the curriculum is based on the Portuguese National Curriculum Framework and related objectives. This curriculum covers the third cycle of basic education at continues into Form 9. At the end of Form 9 pupils are sit the Portuguese National Exam. These exam papers and results are internally marked and ensure OBS pupils cover the curriculum and objectives of the Portuguese system.

Other subject areas across the curriculum have clear learning objectives which are outlined in this handbook. In these subjects assessment is again linked to these objectives and criterion based. In Forms 6 to 8 there are no external examinations of non-core subjects.

Assessment at OBS is carried out by teachers and relies on their professional judgement. Students complete a summative assessment at the end of each unit of work in all curriculum subjects. These assessments vary in type but are based on assessment criterion outlined in the handbook.

SUBJECT GRADES

Subject grades inform how far the student has achieved the assessment criteria. The learning objectives and related assessment criteria tend to become more challenging from one Form to the next. A grade 5 in Form 6 is therefore not equal to a grade 5 in Form 7 or 8.
For instance in terms of Cambridge Secondary One, the diagram below shows how a student makes progress through more challenging learning objectives despite having a similar grade from one year to another.

What is important is that students are gaining a similar or a higher grade in each criteria band related to the particular level/Form. Overall students should be aiming to meet as fully as possible the criteria for that level/year group. If they are not or if they are not showing progress then intervention and support is required.

CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS (CIE)
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CIE PROGRESSION TESTS AND OBS GRADES
Below shows the relationship between the CIE progression tests and the OBS grades provided on a pupils report.
CIE CHECKPOINT GRADES AND OBS GRADES

The end of Form 8 Cambridge Secondary grades in English, Maths and Science 8 are 1-6. This is equivalent to the OBS grades. An OBS grade 7 at the end of Form 8 is for exceptional pupils who exceed expectations and may be expected to gain A* at IGCSE level.

SECONDARY REPORTING DATES FOR 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term 2a</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mock exam grades report for 10 and 12</td>
<td>Mon 19th January</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parents evening for 10 and 12</td>
<td>Wed 21st January</td>
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<tr>
<td>Current attainment grade, effort grade report for 8, 9, 10, 12 (10&amp;12 include IA progress)</td>
<td>Tues 10th February</td>
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<tr>
<td>Full written report for 6, 7, 11</td>
<td>Wed 11th February</td>
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<tr>
<th>Term 2b</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents evening for 8 (with options) and 9</td>
<td>Wed 4th March</td>
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<tr>
<td>Full written reports for 10 and 12 (include IA progress)</td>
<td>Wed 11th March</td>
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<tr>
<td>Current attainment grade, effort grade report for 6, 7, 9, 11 (current target grade for exam years only)</td>
<td>Tues 24th March</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parents evening for 6 and 7</td>
<td>Wed 25th March</td>
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<th>Term 3a</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current attainment grade, effort grade report for 6, 7, 8, 9, 11</td>
<td>Tues 5th May</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parents evening for 11</td>
<td>Wed 6th May</td>
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<th>Term 3b</th>
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<tr>
<td>Full written report for 6, 7, 8, 9, 11</td>
<td>1st July</td>
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HOUSE LOGO COMPETITION

The first OBS ‘House Logo Competition’ will be taking place over the next few weeks. Students will have the opportunity to design logos for their respective houses and compete to have their logo chosen to be put on the new OBS house sports t-shirts, using skills learnt in their ICT and Art lessons. These t-shirts will be available in blue, red and green according to students’ houses. There will be a panel of judges who will nominate the best logo from each house, that will used on the t-shirts that will then be available for all students to buy. Prices to be confirmed.

The rules are as follows:

- Students can work in groups of up to three people.
- Only two colours can be used in your logo:
  - Windsor: white and blue
  - Lancaster: white and red
  - Bragança: white and green
- The maximum size for the logo is 15cm x 10cm.
The resolution has to be of at least 300dpi.
The logo has to include the house name or initial (W, L or B).
The logos can be hand drawn but preferably computer generated.

The deadline is the 18th December.

The winners from each house will receive house points and a free t-shirt with their logo on it.

Peter Jones, Head of Secondary

WHOLE SCHOOL NOTICES

CHRISTMAS BAZAAR AT BRITISH CLUB
Thank you to all parents for donating toys to the Bazaar. The toys stall made 200.00€ and the total raised was over 7,000.00€, all of which will be divided between Acreditar, APPACDM and Charities supported by St James’ Anglican Church. Many thanks.

Janet Burnett

CHRISTMAS CONCERT
A Christmas Concert for charity will be held at the CASA DA MÚSICA on Tuesday, 27th of December at 6:00pm. This is in aid of Mama Help. Please note this is not an event run by the school.

MEDICAL
This week students have continued with the following symptoms: Acute abdominal pain, headaches with nausea / possible vomiting and a new symptom, a sore throat, but without a fever.

Lidia Ferreira, Pediatric First Aider
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11th December</td>
<td>Coffee Morning with Headmaster 9:00am Teage Hall</td>
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<tr>
<td>11-13th December</td>
<td>Varsity Boys Basketball Tournament Lisbon</td>
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<tr>
<td>12th December</td>
<td>Autumn EC Clubs end, Spring EC clubs start on 12th January 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>18th December</td>
<td>Carol Service</td>
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<td>19th December</td>
<td>End of Autumn term - school ends at 12:35pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>05th January</td>
<td>Spring Term Starts</td>
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<tr>
<td>12th January</td>
<td>Extra Curricular Clubs start back</td>
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