

30 January 2017

From The Headmaster
Robert Masters, BSc

Dear Parents,

Chess – The Musical – Thursday, Friday, Saturday

Tickets are selling fast for our spectacular school production of *Chess*. The School Room staging is transformed; the actors, singers and musicians are rehearsing furiously and it promises to be a most memorable event. Don't miss out!

Oxbridge Offers – Historic Year!

We have been overwhelmed with offers this year, with 21 students receiving offers from Cambridge and 16 from Oxford. The total of 37 is way in excess of anything we have seen before – in the last 7 years we have averaged 20 per year, with a high of 26. We congratulate all those who have been given an offer and will of course support them as much as we can to meet the conditions of those offers (some of which are very challenging). Even in this “annus mirabilis” some of our best students have not been successful (whilst some chose not to apply as the courses on offer do not suit them) and we commiserate with them. With applications going directly to colleges (rather than the university) it is inevitable that the competition for places is fiercer in some colleges than in others.

Year 11 – Oxbridge Explorations

In assemblies last week I encouraged Y11 students, who are interested, to visit Oxford and Cambridge prior to entering Y12 (outside school days of course). Having taken students to the February Half Term Open Days at Christ's College Cambridge in recent years I can strongly recommend these as a good place to start – see <https://www.christs.cam.ac.uk/admissions/open-days-prospective-applicants> – students will need to book, but accompaniment by parents is not required. The Oxford University Open Days are also highly recommended (28/29 June after GCSE exams): <http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/visiting-and-outreach/open-days>. The Y10/11 Oxbridge Evening at Judd is on Thursday 20 April.

“Bulge” Class in Year 7 – September 2017

At the request of KCC we are taking an additional 25 students this September into Year 7, so that there will be 6 classes of 30 children each. There is a very significant shortage of selective places for boys in West Kent this year as a result of a larger cohort and a higher proportion gaining a selective assessment on the PESE Test. Similar requests have been made to the other boys' grammar schools in the area. We do have sufficient staffing and rooms available for an extra class and we are pleased to help the Authority and provide for the local population. At the same time the additional revenue funding will be most welcome! It would not be a surprise should the same request be made in subsequent years; thus far we have committed to an extra class in this September only.

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National Funding Formula

Keen observers of education policy will know that the DfE has recently commenced phase two of its consultation on introducing a National Funding Formula and this time indicative future funding levels have been given for each school. To say that we are disappointed would be an understatement. Schools with low rates of “social deprivation” and “low prior attainment” have taken the brunt of the cuts in education (11-16), whilst missing out on the cushioning effect of the Pupil Premium. We have also endured significant cuts at Sixth Form level (20% reduction in funding). The NFF is a redistribution of funding at 11-16 which aims to make allocations fair – in particular that similar schools should be funded similarly wherever they are in the country. The historic bias towards the metropolitan boroughs is being addressed with a shift of money to the shires. However, the proposed basic per pupil rate (£3,700 per pupil) is going to be much lower than expected (£4,300 per pupil – the current average), with a proportionate increase in the additional needs money. As a result, we will stand still whilst the average increase in Kent will be 4%. This is manifestly not fair and you will have noted the outcry from grammar school Headteachers across the county and the country. KCC and GSHA (the Grammar School Heads Association) are arguing strongly for a re-think. If you wish to respond to the consultation, please read my further notes appended to this letter.

Year 9 and 10 Parents – Date for the Diary

The school immunisation team will be coming to Judd to administer MenACWY Td/IPV vaccinations to pupils in Years 9 and 10. Year 9 will be vaccinated on Wednesday 8 March and Year 10 on Thursday 9 March. Consent forms will be coming home shortly for you to sign and return. Please could you try to ensure that your son is not absent for an appointment on his vaccination day. Students will be informed of the schedule for the day nearer the time. If you have any further questions regarding the vaccines please contact the school nurses by email: kchft.cyp-immunisationteam@nhs.net.

Keeping the School Informed

As a school we recognise that there can be difficult situations that arise in the family (separation, divorce, ill health, etc.) and our main aim is not to put any additional stress on the student concerned. The student is our main priority and we hope that parent(s) will inform us of any unfortunate circumstances so that we can support their child as best as we can, during these difficult times, whilst at school.

The Day

The JPA have kindly paid for a 15-month subscription to *The Day*, a daily news service. For more information about this fantastic resource please click here: <http://theday.co.uk/info/welcome>. Via RMUnify, students and staff can automatically log in and have access to extra resources. We are also allowed to distribute our login details to parents. If you would like to use this resource with your children then our username is *TheJuddSchool* and the password is *TheJuddDay*. Please do not share these credentials with anyone outside the school community.

Active Kids (Mr Fraser)

We are, once again, collecting Active Kids vouchers – all donations gratefully received!

Data Collection Sheets

The school is registered under the Data Protection Act for holding personal data. The school has a duty to protect this information and keep it up to date. Therefore, in an effort to keep our home emergency contact and pupil medical information data up to date, all students have been given a data collection sheet on green paper to bring home for you to check. Thank you to those who have already checked, signed and returned the sheet to us. Please could I remind those who have not yet done so to please return the signed form as soon as possible.

Emergency Contacts

When checking the sheet please can you ensure that you are happy with the order of priority and that each emergency contact number is unique? In the event of an emergency or when your child is unwell we will make contact with parents/guardians in the order of priority listed on your sheet. Saving the school's main telephone number onto your mobile phone will ensure that when we call it won't come up as blocked/unknown number.

Filming

Recently, we have been very disappointed that a small number of students have used their mobile phones to film activities in class with the aim of live broadcasting these activities. (Apparently this is a craze.) May I ask you to remind your son/daughter that any filming at school is strictly forbidden without express permission.

School Trip Reminders (Finance Office)

May I ask you to ensure you comply with any requests for information, forms, passports and payments by the specified date. The information and forms are requested by certain times to enable us to comply with requirements imposed by travel companies, airlines and other organisations. Failure to meet these deadlines runs the risk of additional costs being incurred which we have to pass on to you.

When sending in a copy of your son/daughter's passport, please can you check that it will be valid for the dates of travel, including an extra six months if this is required. If you are uncertain whether the extra validity is needed, please don't hesitate to call us on 01732 373564 as soon as you have signed your son/daughter up for a trip. Similarly, it is best to call us at an early stage for any queries regarding visas. Thank you in advance for your support with this.

Absence Reporting – Reminder

A polite reminder that all absence must be reported on each day of absence by **9:30am** please, either by leaving a message on our 24-hour absence telephone line, or by email to absence@judd.kent.sch.uk (not via the 'enquiries' email address or a note in the planner). Also, we would appreciate as much advance notice as possible via the same methods for absence for appointments and any other planned absences. Please remind your son/daughter they must sign out should they be leaving the school site for any reason during the school day, and sign back in on their return.

DAVSS – Volunteers Wanted

I am pleased to support Mark Hutcheon (Judd parent and CEO of DAVSS) in his search for more volunteers for this outstanding local charity. Mark writes:

I have recently retired from Kent Police after 30 years and I have now embarked on a new career as the CEO of DAVSS (Domestic Abuse Volunteers Support Services). DAVSS is a community based charity which supports men and women who are in abusive relationships. DAVSS's highly trained volunteers provide vital face to face support, safety planning advice, support for clients attending both civil and criminal courts. We are currently looking for new volunteers to embark on a training course due to commence in March 2017. If you can spare some time each week and would like to assist individuals who are experiencing domestic abuse, we would love to hear from you. Please [click here to view the poster](#) and, for more information, visit our website at www.davss.org.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Robert Masters
Headmaster

The National Funding Formula Consultation – Stage Two

<https://consult.education.gov.uk/funding-policy-unit/schools-national-funding-formula2/>

The DfE welcomes responses from all with an interest in education. Stage One only elicited 6,000 responses nationally, so do please add your voice to those (and I hope support revisions which would be fairer to Judd). The key questions are numbers 1, 4 and 11 – I have copied these below with guidance on how I am responding should you wish to follow/adapt that:

1. In designing our national funding formula, we have taken careful steps to balance the principles of fairness and stability. Do you think we have struck the right balance?

RJM Answer: **No**

“It is fair to redistribute money from the Metropolitan authorities to the Shires. However, the schools which are really struggling at the moment rely on the “basic per pupil funding” (they receive very little from additional needs or pupil premium) – they are not stable at the moment (relying on reserves to keep going) and keeping them at this level (and bringing others down to it) will lead to outstanding, popular schools becoming financially unviable.”

4. Within the total pupil-led funding, do you support our proposal to increase the proportion allocated to the additional needs factors?

RJM Answer: **No – allocate a lower proportion to additional needs**

“Schools with a low proportion of children with additional needs must be given a basic per pupil amount which enables them to provide a good education. Historically the average AWPU at secondary level has been £4,300 and this needs to be at least maintained and preferably increased to £4,800. There is no evidence that secondary schools (with a low proportion of children with additional needs) can survive on £3,700 basic per pupil funding – this has not been needs-assessed.”

11. Do you support our proposal to set the funding floor at minus 3%?

RJM Answer: **No – the floor should be lower (i.e. allow losses of more than 3% per pupil)**

A high floor delays the movement of money to the schools which need it most and continues the historic unfairness.