



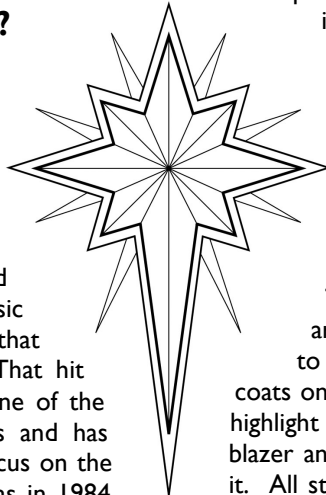
## Merry Christmas

Another year comes to an end and so does the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. This has again been a long term and we have moved the school forward further. We need to keep our efforts up and will hopefully then be removed from Special Measures by the summer. My thanks to the staff and students who have worked, and continue to work, hard to improve the school.

After Christmas we will focus on the remaining issues from the last Ofsted monitoring visit. You may have noticed that the report has so far failed to appear on the Ofsted website. I have asked why this is but have not managed to find an answer; hopefully it will not be much longer before it is made public.

## Do they know it's Christmas?

Recent news bulletins have told of the famine situation in Ethiopia. In assemblies this week the students have considered these current news reports and compared them with those from 1984 when a previous famine caused a million deaths. The shocking BBC report that year prompted Bob Geldof to gather as many music celebrities as he could and record a song that would prompt the world into action. That hit song, *Do they know it's Christmas?*, was one of the first celebrity/reality fund-raising projects and has been used in this week's assemblies to focus on the message that is as relevant today as it was in 1984. Much has happened in those 25 years since but as it was before any of our students were born we thought it a fitting focus for this final week of Advent.



## Carols Again

Congratulations again to our choir who performed in the Cathedral last night at The King's School's Carol Service. This was another successful evening for both the music department and the school; my thanks to the staff and students who were involved.

## Goodbye and Thank You

As we end this term we also say farewell to two of our staff: Ms Kauser from the English department and Mr Edwards from the Music department. I would like to thank them for their work here over the last year and wish them well in the future. Their replacements are Mr Peter Waples and Mr Stuart Dalton respectively.

## New Year's Resolutions

Last January I asked all the students to make New Year's Resolutions and many of these were included in the first newsletter of the year. In this last newsletter for 2009 I wonder how many students can remember what their personal resolutions were and if any of them have been kept for whole year. If any student has managed to do this please let me know and we will include the details in a January newsletter.

Two issues which surface occasionally throughout the year are again worthy of mention as we need to see a further improvement next term. The first is attendance: we still have too many students whose attendance is below 90% and will be working with the Local Authority to reduce the number. It is important to point out that it doesn't matter why the student

is absent – due to illness, holiday or unexplained reasons – as it is all called absence. There are many students who have 'unauthorised absences' (also known as truancy) against their name because written explanations have not been received for absences. We will be contacting some parents with a view to clearing some of these.

The second issue is uniform. Now that we are into the winter many students are coming to school without a coat. There is a note about coats on the school uniform list but one key point to highlight here is that it is expected to go over the blazer and not under it – and certainly not instead of it. All students should be wearing a blazer and tie at all times with a black jumper and/or coat to suit the weather. I would appreciate it if parents could check that suitable uniform is available for the new term.

## Start of Term

Please remember that Monday 4 January is a Staff Training Day. Students should return on **Tuesday 5 January** which will be timetable **Week 1**. We have noticed that in the winter months the students find the lunch break rather too long so next term we will temporarily extend morning break by five minutes and shorten lunchtime by five minutes, moving periods two and three back accordingly.

A Merry Christmas to you all.

*Sean Hayes*

Veselé vánoce  
Wesołych Świąt  
Linksmų Kalėdų  
Feliz Natal  
聖誕快樂

### Key Dates for 2010

*A reminder of the dates that were issued in September*

#### Spring Term

4 January 2010	Staff Training Day – school closed
5 January	Term Begins
28 January	Inclusion Drop-in for Parents
15-19 February	Half Term Holiday
22 February	Staff Training Day – school closed
24 February	Ash Wednesday
5 March	CAFOD Family Fast Day
9 March	Reconciliation Services
11 March	Inclusion Drop-in for Parents
26 March	Term Ends

#### Summer Term

12 April	Term begins
3 May	Bank Holiday – school closed
13 May	Inclusion Drop-in for Parents, and HPV Vaccinations
31 May – 4 June	Half Term Holiday
10 June	HPV Vaccinations
29 June	Feast of Saints Peter and Paul
8 July	Inclusion Drop-in for Parents
22 July	Celebration of Sport
23 July	St John Fisher Day/Term Ends

Autumn Term 2010 begins Thursday 2 September

### Dates for Specific Year Groups

These are the key assessment and reporting dates for each year group:

#### Year 7

5 February	Progress Updates sent home
19 April	Exams fortnight begins
22 June	Progress Updates sent home
30 June	Parents' Evening

#### Year 8

19 March	Progress Updates sent home
12 April	Exams fortnight begins
8 June	Progress Updates sent home
15 June	Parents Evening

#### Year 9

18 January	Exams fortnight begins
2 February	Key Stage 4 Options Evening
12 February	Progress Updates sent home
23 February	Parents' Evening
4 May	SATs week
14 May	Progress Updates sent home

#### Year 10

21 January	Maths GCSE Exam
1 February	Exams week begins
3 March	Core Science GCSE Exam
8 March	Maths GCSE Exam
15 March	Work Experience week
13 April	Progress Updates sent home
20 April	Parents' Evening
21 June	Maths GCSE Exam
28 June	Science GCSE Exam
2 July	Progress Updates sent home

#### Year 11

14 January	Additional Science Biology Exam
18 January	Progress Updates sent home
18 January	Additional Science Chemistry Exam
20 January	Additional Science Physics Exam
21 January	Maths GCSE Exam
26 January	Parents' Evening
8 March	Maths GCSE Exam
10 May	GCSE Summer Exams begin
23/24 June	Induction for new Year 12
25 June	Year 11 Prom
24 August	GCSE Results

#### Years 12 & 13

11 January	AS and A2 'January' exams begin
12 February	Progress Updates sent home
23 February	Parents' Evening
10 May	A Level summer exams begin
14 May	Sixth Form Prom
7 June	Study Leave begins for Year 13
14 June	Year 12 resume lessons
19 August	A level results

