

Headlines...

War and remembrance

Assemblies were held this week to support the British Legion Poppy Appeal and to educate our students on the sacrifices our parents and grandparents made in the two World Wars and in the conflicts since then. It was easier for us growing



up in the 50s since the impact of war was so much more immediate in the bombsites and the recent memories of most adults. Our reading material and films were often set in the context of war. The Iraq and Afghan conflicts today mean that understanding these big issues and the human consequences is still a vital part of young people's education.



Preparing for Inspection

Ofsted came to Verulam about 2 years ago and we are expecting another inspection anytime after January. We are preparing by having a 'dry run' with some consultants from the County coming in for a couple of days, on December 4th and 5th to help us prepare effectively so that we will be able to show inspectors what a good school we are.

In Brief

- ◆ Buy Christmas Fayre raffle tickets
- ◆ Come to the annual parents evening
- ◆ Old boys welcome to the Old Verulamians annual dinner 16th November - places still available.
- ◆ 10J are doing a project with a partner school in India and need a Hindi speaker who would be able to write a translation of a brief document. If you are able to help please contact Ms Piavanini

Mr. D. Kellaway

2007-2008 Term Dates

Autumn Term
 4th September - 21 December
 Half Term: 22 October - 26 October
 Spring Term
 7 January - 20 March
 Half Term: 11 February—15 February
 Summer Term
 7 April - 23 July
 Half Term: 26 May - 30 May

Upcoming Events.

19th Nov.	Year 11 Blood Brothers Trip
22nd Nov.	Parents' Annual meeting
24th Nov.	Christmas Fayre
28th Nov.	Year 11 Orals
29th Nov.	Performance Review Day Years 7-9
29th Nov.	Year 11 GCSE Drama Practical assessment
29th Nov.	Year 11 study leave/ exams commence
30th Nov.	Inset Day
3rd Dec.	Year 11 Trial Exams Start
4th Dec.	Year 10 Geography Fieldtrip departs
4th Dec.	Y6 Consultation Eve 5-8pm
7th Dec.	Geography Fieldtrip returns

Update on school pastoral systems

I am writing to update you on the changes this year to our pastoral life in school this year. Firstly, congratulations to Mrs. Harrison on being appointed Year Learning Manager and taking over the care of Year 9 from Mrs. Marriott. Also congratulations to Mr. Jameson on being appointed Assistant Year learning Manager. He will be supporting the Year Learning Managers and will developing our charity work. The focus this year is ensuring firm discipline, varied support and plentiful rewards. With regard to discipline, the school detention system is working well. These are held for 40 minutes each day after school (an hour on Thursdays). You will receive the statutory 24 hours notice by either letter, a note in the planner or the School Detention red card.

To ensure a calm learning environment, we have introduced a lesson exclusion room for the very few students who need to be removed from lessons in order to preserve a calm, orderly atmosphere. If your son is taken to the exclusion room, he will be given an automatic school detention. Part of the exclusion room will be refurbished to provide a space for students on one day exclusions to be kept in school for supervised individual work isolated from all other students. Our attendance figures are excellent. In order to maintain these figures, could I please ask you to continue to let the school know the reasons for any absences and to inform us of any changes to telephone numbers – especially mobile phones.

The new reward cards are proving popular with lower school. Our new plasma information screens highlight lists of students and classes with the most awards. As a trial, the best class and individual students in Year 8 over the first half term are going on a trip to Quasar. We are also rewarding our best achieving students in Year 10 and 11 with a film. We will repeat this each half term if this proves popular. Should you have any questions or concerns of a pastoral nature, please look at the school website, or contact your Year Learning Manager, Mr. Ramsey (Key Stage 5), or myself.

Mike Harpham (Assistant Head i/c Key Stage 3/4)

Auditions for the Spring 2008 Musical:

Oliver!

Monday 12th November 2007

Main Hall at 3:40pm

Ensemble and musical auditions at 3:40pm, followed by named and major roles at 4:40pm.

Whizz Kids at Whizz Maths

James Biggs and Dylan Jindal from year 8 both attended the first of four Whizz Maths sessions at Wheathampstead Development Centre this week. Our Maths Community Links teacher, Ms McLintic, accompanied to the boys to the session which focused on a variety of stimulating maths problems and activities. Budding mathematicians from local secondary schools wrestled with a variety of mathematical challenges, learning problem-solving skills which they can share with their classes back at school. James and Dylan enjoyed the session and were proactive in sharing their ideas with other students there.



Year 7 'Wordstore'

A

All boys in Year 7 should have received a 'Wordstore'. This should prove beneficial in developing spelling accuracy and vocabulary. Please take time to have a look through the booklet.

There are several ways in which parents can help to implement the strategy:

- ◆ Encourage your son to use the subject specific words when doing homework.
- ◆ Encourage your son to use a dictionary for unfamiliar words and to copy the word correctly into the alphabetical glossary section of the 'Wordstore'.
- ◆ Test your son on the weekly spelling patterns. These will also be tested each week in English lessons.

If you have any concerns or queries please contact your son's English teacher or Mr. Skipper in the English faculty.

Z

Verulam and STAGS Family TAG tournament

I would like to thank everyone for coming along to the STAGS & Verulam Family TAG festival last week. Not only did the sun shine for us this time, but we also had a great competition with over 60 children involved. Teams were entered were from Garden Fields, Camp, Bernard's Heath Juniors, Fleetville Juniors (A & B), as well as a guest team - Heathlands from the St.Luke's family. All in all it was a fiercely contested affair with some great skills on show and lots of fun had by all. Plus the children were able to benefit from some expert coaching from Verulam 1st Team Captain Joe Brouder and England U19 & OA Saints player Sarah McKenna, when they didn't have a match.

Congratulations to Camp School who ran out as overall winners, but also to Bernard's Heath Juniors and Garden Fields who also qualified in 2nd and 3rd place to go forward to the Partnership Finals at Old Verulamians RFC on Thursday November 29th. Well done also to William Everton of Garden Fields and Xandria Edwards from Heathlands for being the Players of the Tournament for their good skills and sportsmanship.

A big thank you to all teams and the staff involved for helping to organise them to be able to come and play. Also to the Community Sports Leadership Award students from STAGS & Verulam who gave up their time to take charge of much of the refereeing and score keeping. Without them the festival would not have taken place.

In addition to Joe Brouder, James Sach and Rupert Pearse (both Y12) both did a very good job refereeing at the festival. They attended the Saracens TAG Leaders course last month and have since been involved in doing some TAG coaching at Fleetville Junior School. They have been very professional in the way they have carried out their roles. All the boys will hopefully be doing the Community Sports Leadership Award as a further qualification over the remainder of this year (James and Rupert are also the school's Sporting Young Ambassadors). All the students were a credit to Verulam and without their help the festival would not have been able to take place.

I'd also like to add I think next year we will have a further award for Most Improved Team as 2 schools in particular stood out for me in this possible category - Fleetville Juniors and Heathlands - both school teams learnt a lot and were playing much better rugby by the end of the festival. Well done!

Brad Cox, School Sports Co-ordinator

