



'To inspire and be inspired'

## **St Brigid's School Summer Term Newsletter**

Welcome to the summer term newsletter which is a little late in the term coming out to you. In case you haven't noticed, we've been otherwise engaged with a visit from Estyn (more on that later!). This newsletter heralds the beginning (or part way through), the examination period, with all its anxieties and hay fever!! We hope for great things from our Year 13 and Year 11 pupils and their 'Record of Achievement' Celebrations showed us what bright, enthusiastic and lovely people they are – they are a credit to all of you and we know the world of work will be a better place in the future with them in it; indeed leading it, as I'm sure so many will. Please don't forget our website for dates of events this term and a lovely picture of the school assembly on the lawn a few weeks ago, in morning sunshine.

### Estyn Inspection Outcomes:

Until the final report is published, the gradings and comments cannot be revealed largely because the final report is still being written. Suffice to say that the school's own Self Evaluation grades were confirmed – our strengths outweigh our shortcomings. We all know that we have to improve in certain areas. The school governors, however, are making a representation to Estyn about the conduct of the inspection and we will communicate findings fully when we know the final outcomes.

### Great Thanks

Many thanks indeed to those parents, pupils and school association for all their huge efforts in sprucing the school up prior to inspection. Their hard work was much appreciated by the pupils in particular.

### The New Facilities

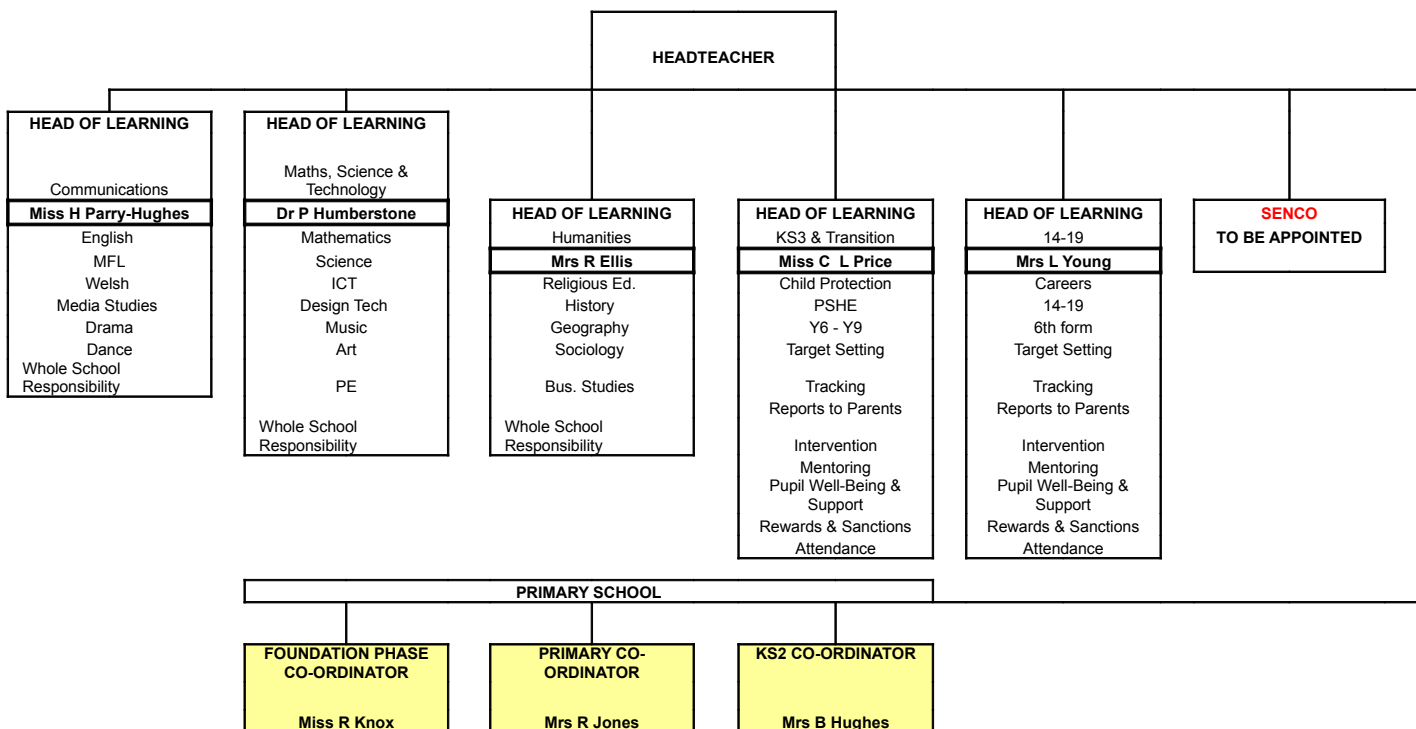
The governors are delighted to announce that at long last, our new changing/shower facilities for boys and girls (separate!) have arrived. They are lovely and provide our secondary boys with the long awaited facilities which truly show them now, to be a permanent part of the fixtures and fittings of the school (excuse the pun!!)

### 14-19 Collaboration

As you will be aware from my last newsletter, St Brigid's is working with Denbigh High, Brynhyfryd, Glan Clwyd and Denbigh College from September to offer our Year 12 pupils some 47 courses from which to choose, 7 of which will be vocational options. This is a new venture for all the partners in the collaboration and I ask for your patience in August when GCSE results arrive, in finalising courses and centres for pupils – it's new so inevitably we may make mistakes – be assured, the pupils won't suffer.

## Staffing Re-structure:

It is an expectation that, on an annual basis the governing body review the staffing structure of the school. On the whole, structures often remain unchanged, but this year the governors requested that I conduct a full review of the primary and secondary staffing structure. In the secondary school, we had a number of one person departments and this meant that sharing of best practice was difficult. In order to improve the quality of teaching and learning, the following structure was agreed:-



The Heads of Learning (Communication/Humanities/Science/Tech) will be responsible for Teaching and Learning in their faculties, Performance Management, Tracking pupil progress, lesson monitoring and Self evaluation amongst other areas. The Head of Learning (KS3 and 14-19) will undertake the pastoral roles but also monitor attendance, behaviour, pupil progress and the house system. The Primary Coordinator's role is to lead and manage the primary phase and manage the Foundation Phase Coordinator and KS2 Coordinator.

Two posts have been made redundant – the deputy Head teacher Secondary and Primary. We wish Mr Dean and Mr Roberts every success in their future careers.

## Staff Leavers:

Our great thanks and very best wishes go to the following staff leavers:

- Miss Thompson - to pursue her career back in Ireland.
- Mrs Evans - to move South with her husband to be nearer to their children.
- Mrs Sahin-Jones - who has been covering for Miss Siencyn
- Mrs Rowlands - who has been supporting in D&T this year

## New Staff

Miss Edwards -	P.E.
TBA	Maths
TBA	TAs
TBA	Boarding Assistant
TBA	Yr 3 Teacher

## Changes to the school day for September 2010

	<b>Yr 7-11</b>		<b>Yr 12/13</b>
8.40am	<b><u>Pupils Expected to be in School</u></b>		
8.50am	Morning registration		<b>TRAVEL</b>
9.15	Lesson 1	9.15	Lesson 1
9.45	Lesson 2		
10.15	Lesson 3	10.15	Lesson 2
10.45	Lesson 4		
11.15	<b>Break</b>	11.15	<b>Travel/Break</b>
11.30	Lesson 5		
12.00	Lesson 6	11.45	Lesson 3
12.30pm	<b>Lunch</b>	12.45pm	<b>Lunch</b>
1.30	Afternoon Registration		
1.35	Lesson 7	1.35	Lesson 4
2.05	Lesson 8		
2.35	Lesson 9	2.35	<b>Travel</b>
3.05	Lesson 10		Return to base/ Base Activity
3.35	<b>End of School Day</b>		

## Dates for your Diary

Primary School Sports Day	Wednesday 30th June 2010	1 – 3pm
Staff Training Day	Monday 28 <sup>th</sup> June 2010	
Monkhouse Outfitters in school	Friday 2 <sup>nd</sup> July 2010	12 noon – 3.30pm
Induction Day	Thursday 8 <sup>th</sup> July 2010	
Year 6 Leaver's Celebrations	Friday 9 <sup>th</sup> July 2010	@ 2pm
School Association Funday	Saturday 10 <sup>th</sup> July 2010	@ 2pm
A Level results	Thursday 19 <sup>th</sup> August	9 - 12
GCSE Results	Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup> August 2010	9 - 12
Autumn Term	Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> September 2010	

# SCHOOL CALENDAR 2010/2011

## Autumn Term

Wed 1 <sup>st</sup>	September	Staff Training Day
Thur 2 <sup>nd</sup>	September	Staff Training Day/ Boarders Return 5.00 p.m.
Fri 3 <sup>rd</sup>	September	Day Pupils Return
Fri 24 <sup>th</sup> /Sun 26 <sup>th</sup>	Sept	Boarders Exeat Weekend 3.35 p.m. / Return 5.00 p.m.
Thurs 21 <sup>st</sup>	October	Half Term 3.35 p.m
Fri 22 <sup>nd</sup>	October	Staff Training Day
Sun 31 <sup>st</sup>	October	Boarders Return 5.00 p.m.
Mon 1 <sup>st</sup>	November	Day Pupils Return
Fri 12 <sup>th</sup>	November	Tombola Extravaganza 7.00 p.m.
Fri 19 <sup>th</sup> /Sun 21 <sup>st</sup>	Nov	Boarders Exeat Weekend 3.35 p.m.
Sun 28 <sup>th</sup>	November	Advent Service 6.30 p.m.
Fri 17 <sup>th</sup>	December	Christmas Holidays 12.30 p.m.

## Spring Term

Tue 4 <sup>th</sup>	January	Staff Training Day/ Boarders Return
Wed 5 <sup>th</sup>	January	Day Pupils Return
Fri 28 <sup>th</sup> /Sun 30 <sup>th</sup>	Jan	Boarders Exeat Weekend 3.35 p.m./Return 5.00 p.m.
Thur 17 <sup>th</sup>	February	Half Term 3.35 p.m.
Fri 18 <sup>th</sup>	February	Staff Training Day
Sun 27 <sup>th</sup>	February	Boarders Return 5.00 p.m.
Mon 28 <sup>th</sup>	February	Day Pupils Return
Fri 25 <sup>th</sup> /Sun 27 <sup>th</sup>	Mar	Boarders Exeat Weeeeknd 3.35 p.m./Return 5.00 p.m.
Thur 14 <sup>th</sup>	April	Easter Holidays 3.35 p.m.
Fri 15 <sup>th</sup>	April	Staff Training Day

## Summer Term

Mon 2 <sup>nd</sup>	May	Boarders Return
Tues 3 <sup>rd</sup>	May	Day Pupils Return
Thur 26 <sup>th</sup>	May	Half Term 3.35 p.m.
Fri 27 <sup>th</sup>	May	Staff Training Day
Sun 5 <sup>th</sup>	June	Boarders Return 5.00 p.m.
Mon 6 <sup>th</sup>	June	Day Pupils Return
Fri 1 <sup>st</sup> /Sun 3 <sup>rd</sup>	July	Boarders Exeat 3.35 p.m. / Return 5.00 p.m.
Tue 19 <sup>th</sup>	July	Summer Holidays 3.35 p.m.
Wed 20 <sup>th</sup>	July	Staff Training Day

### School Trip

As we have been so busy this year, school trips have suffered. It is my intention to resume them next year and possibly add language exchanges too. There will not be the traditional trip out of school this term to Alton Towers. The cost last year was in excess of £25 per pupil and I think this is excessive. We will review it next year and look for more cost effective but still fun activities.

Pupils and staff will break up on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2010 and this is because staff have engaged in twilight sessions to make up for 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> July, otherwise pupils and staff would have been expected in school. Consequently, pupils do have some extra time off to make up for the lack of a school trip. I hope you will support my decision.

### Boarding News:

State School boarding is considered to be 'The best kept Secret'. A boarding place here really represents great value and is less than a third of the price of the Independent Sector.

St Brigid's caters for girl boarders between the ages of 7 to 18 in a small caring family environment. There are 28 Boarding places.

We are delighted to welcome back into Yr 9 two Spanish students Carmen who is on her second & Marta who is on her third flexi boarding visit to St Brigid's. The girls have clearly enjoyed their previous experience of life in the boarding house. We have appreciated their contribution to the pastoral part of our school.

We welcome students from many different cultures and locations, but in order to take a place here they must hold an EEC Passport.

Parents who may consider boarding for the future are invited to contact the Bursar (01745) 816139 to arrange for an interview & tour of the Boarding House.

Anne Spiller, Bursar

### Taith Caerdydd

For the fifth year running on May 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> 2010, Pupils from Yr 9 went on a visit to Cardiff with the Welsh Department and the Urdd. The first day of the visit included a tour of the millenium Stadium in Cardiff, opportunity to visit Cardiff city centre and a little retail therapy, a behind the scenes tour of the Millennium Centre theatre, an evening of bowling and an overnight stay at the Urdd residential centre in Cardiff Bay.

Day two started with a walk around Cardiff Bay taking in the Norwegian Church where Roald Dahl was baptised and seeing where many of the scenes from Dr Who and Torchwood were filmed. This was followed by a visit to the Welsh Assembly to learn about how the Senedd operates, as well as a chance to take part in a debate. In the afternoon they stopped at the Big Pit, a coal mine in the valleys, the pupils were taken on a tour of the mine and a former miner talked about some of the working conditions that were in place in years gone by. All pupils learned a lot from the trip and enjoyed the experience. The cost of the visit included Urdd membership for the academic year 2010-11 and potential further opportunities to enjoy Welsh cultural experiences with the Urdd.

### Combined Cadet Force

Mobile (during training only): 07585 274774  
[ccf@st-brigids.denbighshire.sch.uk](mailto:ccf@st-brigids.denbighshire.sch.uk)

**Staff Changes:** We have welcomed on board three new adult volunteers. Firstly Major Brad Percival, recently retired from the Regular Army, as the School Staff Instructor (SSI). Brad is responsible for all training and administrative support for the contingent (albeit with only one day per week to fit it all in). Secondly, Mr Maurice Linaker, formerly of the Sea Cadet Corps, has joined as a Civilian Instructor and is adding another dimension to our activities. Finally, our new RAF Section officer, Pilot Office Nia Chouhan, is an ex-St Brigid's pupil who is now working in Denbigh. She has already taken some of the cadets gliding and will be at camp on Anglesey.

We had a very successful **Biennial Inspection** in May, just after the School's Estyn Inspection. As important to us, the Inspection is confirmation that we are fulfilling our charter and worthy of receipt of the annual grant that is essential to keep going as a Contingent. We spent the day at the ranges near Queensferry and hosted the Inspecting Officer from Innsworth in Gloucestershire, as well as senior officers from the Army and RAF. Mrs Simpson and the Chairman of Governors, Mr Philip Eyton-Jones visited and were suitably impressed as well. Many thanks to Bryn and the catering staff for feeding everyone who was there.

As ever, there are a few **promotions** this term: congratulations to Sergeants Rachael Gorman (Year 12), Lowri Underhill (Year 12) and Beth Tansley (Year 10), Corporal Elysha Leonard (Year 10) and Lance Corporal Jessica Greenfield (Year 10). After the two summer camps, another group will be getting their first taste of promotion: watch this space.

Eleven cadets (and two adults) passed the adult **St John's Basic Emergency First Aid** certificate. A total of 27 cadets (out of 34 regularly attending cadets) are registered with the Denbighshire County Council **Duke of Edinburgh Scheme** and 13 took part in our first **overnight expedition** along the Clwydian Range in May. The weather was great although a few feet were sore. All the Lower Sixth cadets have passed the vocational **BTEC in Public Services** (equivalent to 4 GCSEs) at 'Distinction Star' and all the Year 10 cadets are working towards the same qualification.

On the same weekend in June, 4 (lucky) RAF cadets took their **Gliding Induction Course** at RAF Woodvale in Formby, Merseyside and the shooting team went to South Wales over a weekend in June, to compete in the **all-Wales Cadet Skill-at-Arms Competition (shooting)**. **Annual Camp** is the highlight of the cadet training year and this year, seven RAF cadets are off to RAF Valley on Anglesey and 23 Army cadets will do the same in South Wales. Exciting programmes are planned, no doubt involving heights, getting wet and having fun.

The new recruits from **Year 8** are very enthusiastic with a total of 43 having had a taste of CCF activities over the term. About 30 are expected to decide to stay on and they will be issued with shiny new uniforms at the start of the September term.

**Adult Helpers.** We train regularly on Wednesdays, between 3.45pm and 5.45pm, although on some occasions, if we are going outside of school particularly when it gets warmer, we may stay out later. Very occasionally we have training planned for weekends such as our series of Duke of Edinburgh Scheme overnight expeditions (walking and camping in the local mountains). For the RAF Section, driving up to Southport for flying training would be eased if parents were able to assist. Anyone who is able to offer their time, even if it is only occasionally, should contact the Contingent Commander, Lieutenant Colonel Jim Wood ([ccf@st-brigids.denbighshire.sch.uk](mailto:ccf@st-brigids.denbighshire.sch.uk)) or the School Office.

## Sixth Form

Year 12 students are now embarking upon the exciting prospect of researching universities, courses and careers, having finally finished their AS courses and examinations.

To this end they visited Bangor University for a Higher Education Conference on Wednesday 16th June. The day enabled many students to experience a university, in some cases for the first time. There were presentations on the UCAS application process as well as on university life. In the afternoon, students were able to select two lectures from a list of several options, from studying Psychology to careers in the Police Force.

## Nut Allergy

As we have a pupil with a severe nut allergy coming into year 7 for induction day on July 8th (and full time in September) please can we make the school a nut free zone to avoid any complications.

## Performing Arts

The primary and secondary choir have been invited to sing at the Denbighshire Schools Festival of Performing Arts. They have been working very hard in preparation for this and will be singing in the Rhyd Pavilion on Tuesday 22nd June at 7pm. Tickets are available from the box office. Thank you to Miss Lloyd for adding actions and dance moves and thank you to Mrs Eyton-Jones for her help during the rehearsal on the open evening. I would like to thank all the parents who are helping out at the rehearsal in the Pavilion, your support is very much appreciated.

## French Breakfast

As part of their module, "learning about Food", Year 9 have enjoyed a French breakfast lesson with Madame Thomas.

Pupils prepared a conversation and used it to serve breakfast to their friends in class. They ate French cheeses, croissants, pains au chocolat, brioche etc.

The next step for them is to prepare a recipe in French for French crepes and fillings, this is to be cooked during the last week of term!

## Happy Hols! – A final note from Mrs Simpson

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all of you, the staff, pupils and the governors for supporting me through our exhausting but exciting 1<sup>st</sup> year here at St Brigid's. I have loved every moment (nearly!). Sister Liz said to me when I first came here that the school is special and someone else said it 'will get to you' – both have proved to be true. I am excited about September with my new Senior Leadership Team and I believe our prospects for improvement are hugely good. This will be the best school in Wales – I have no doubt.

Thank you and have a happy and safe summer break.

Mrs Catherine Simpson