



Morna International College.

Newsletter, June 2008.

Dear parents,

As we are now approaching the end of this academic year I would like to offer you a summary of some of the key events and developments that have taken place since my last newsletter.

Visits by educational psychologists and consultants from the UK.

Throughout the second week of May the school hosted a visit by specialists from Educational Guidance Service based in the UK. The team of educational psychologists carried out pre-arranged testing of individual pupil to identify specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia. They also offered an in-service training course for our teaching staff focussing on the use of special measures and resources within the normal classroom to cater for particular learning difficulties.

This was the second visit to the school by hired consultants from the UK during the current academic year. Eclipse Education Ltd also visited us last February to provide an in-service training weekend for the teaching staff.

Reforms to assessment and reporting procedures.

At the end of April a letter was sent to all secondary parents explaining how we would be using structured continuous assessment throughout the secondary section. In practice this means greater emphasis on regular testing and assessed assignments or projects rather than major examinations. The main objective is to achieve a more constant pace of

learning throughout the year and move away from the "last minute cramming" effect of final examinations. Major examination sessions still take place in Year 10 and 11 to prepare pupils for the external GCSE examinations. The SATs examinations also continue to be taken at the end of Year 9.

Important reforms have been made in the design of the individual subject reports for the secondary section. For every subject, pupils are now graded on 8 or 9 objectives, some general and others specific to that subject. This should give a clearer profile of their strengths and weaknesses and help parents to monitor progress and identify areas for improvement.

Information via e-mail and the website.

Earlier this year we requested that all parents supply us with an e-mail address for school correspondence. Regular use is now being made of these in some classes for communication between teachers and parents. We hope to be able to send general letters and newsletter via e-mail soon but we still need many of you to give us your address.

We are starting to place more information on our website, including summaries of the teaching objectives. This is not yet complete but over the next few months the website should become an important reference source for existing parents, not just for new applicants.

Secondary section visit to London.

Here is a brief report from Shelley Taylor about this trip:

On Monday 19th May twenty six students from years 7,8 and 9 returned from London where they had spent a fabulous weekend in the company of Jorge, Connie and myself.

Our visit included seeing colourful performances of Romeo and Juliet and A Midsummer Night's Dream at the glorious Globe Theatre, a visit to the creepy London Dungeon, a rainy morning at The Tower of London, 3D cinema at the science museum, dinosaur spotting at the Natural History Museum not to mention photos with The Queen at Madame Tussauds. An open-topped double decker bus took us past Big Ben and Buckingham Palace and we tasted the delicacies of "British cooking" at The Hard Rock Café!

Lots of unforgettable moments were shared (particularly the moment when we realized our bus driver had driven us to the wrong airport!).

Special thanks to Jane Veale: we couldn't have done it without her.

House competitions.

Apart from accumulating points for their houses through outstanding work, our pupils have the opportunity to participate in a huge range of different competitions. This year the following have taken place:

Primary section: Dance, Singing and Rounders,

Secondary section: Logic puzzles, Tag Rugby, General knowledge quiz, Chess, Football and Rounders.

The overall house winners for the year will be announced at the prizegiving ceremony.

Special events to end the year.

With only a week to go, we still have all of the following to look forward to:

Yearbook 2007/2008. The yearbook for this academic year promises to be a full colour production and will be published before the end of this week. It represents a major feat of work and an excellent example of collaboration between parents, teachers and pupils.

Art show. Weather conditions have caused several changes to the date of this event but it will now be happening on Thursday of this week, regardless of the weather! There will be plenty of outstanding work to see and some fundraising activities for two different charities.

End of year trips. During the next week, pupils from Nursery to Year 9 will be participating in a range of different excursions to finish of the year.

Sports days. Primary sports day will be taking place on Monday of next week and Secondary will be holding their inter house sports contest on Tuesday.

Prizegiving ceremony. This will be held, as usual, on the last day of term (Wednesday 25th June) starting at 10:30. Apart from congratulating the many individual prize winners and the winning house, there will be musical performances from younger and older pupils, some short speeches and special refreshments at the end of the ceremony.

Changes in the school calendar.

The school calendar for next year, which was published in May, includes a significant increase in the overall number of teaching days, which from next year onwards will be approximately 180 per year as opposed to the approximately 170 that we have had in recent years. In order to achieve this, teaching starts slightly earlier and finishes later. Half term holidays have been conserved while the Easter break has been reduced.

Finally, remember that reports will be issued to all pupils on Wednesday 25th. External examination results will be available from 25th August and the new academic year starts on Thursday 4th September.

I hope to see you all at the prizegiving ceremony.