



The Bulletin: No 19 May 2011

I read recently in the BBC News magazine that Armenia is making chess compulsory in schools. This may seem a rash thing to do but the country has plenty of reason to believe in chess. It treats grandmasters like sports stars, championships are displayed on giant boards in cities and victories celebrated with the kind of frenzy countries reserve for football. It is a National obsession.

Now it has decided to invest nearly a million pounds to teach all of its children to play chess, but for other countries constantly strategising about how to boost child development and education, is making a study of the French Defence and the Fried Liver Attack a good idea? Could the mandatory study of a board game really help children's academic performance and behaviour?

There is some evidence to support the worth of this idea. A two year study in the US found that learning chess improved reading test scores and performance in elementary schools, and another concluded that playing chess could raise IQ scores, strengthen problem solving skills, enhance memory and foster creative thinking!

Malcolm Pein, chief executive of Chess in Schools and Communities, a programme that puts chess into UK schools, says there are lots of reasons why chess has a positive impact on primary school children. 'Not only does it give children good thinking skills and improve concentration, memory and calculation, but it teaches children to take responsibility for their actions. Children shake hands at the start and the game is played in a quiet and disciplined manner'.

He is fully supportive of chess being made compulsory in schools and recommended that one class of chess is mandatory every week for children in Year 2 or 3.

Chris Woodhead, the former chief inspector of schools in England, says providing chess in schools – either through clubs or classes – could be helpful, but does not believe compulsory classes are the way forward. Neither does Russell Hobby, the general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, who, while thinking that fostering strategic thinking is an essential employability skill, still can't support the idea of mandatory chess.

In a curriculum already subject to numerous priorities chess would struggle to find a place here at Hallfield but even as an optional after school club it has proved to be one of the most popular and successful activities we run. It has raised Hallfield onto the international stage with three of our pupils, Matthew Fergusson, Ashwin Kalyana, and Aloysius Lip playing in the England Junior Squad (and Vishal Aurora, Aaron Vitarana and Rayan De not far behind). We are the National Independent Prep Schools' Champions at both U11 and U13, and last weekend our U11 team won the semi finals of the National Primary Schools Championship. They go to Brean Sands, Weston-Super-Mare on the 4th – 6th July to play in the finals where, according to our coach, Mr Malcolm Hunt, we stand a very good chance of winning and becoming National Champions. Watch the Website for news!!

Needless to say, Mr Hunt whole heartedly supports Armenia !

Staff Changes

Whole School

Headmaster's PA

You will be very sad to hear that Mrs. Celia Hooper has decided to retire at the end of this term. Mrs. Hooper started at Hallfield 25 years ago in September 1986 as Bursar's Secretary, a post she held for 13 years before becoming Mr. John Cringle's PA 12 years ago in April 1999. Hallfield owes Mrs. Hooper a huge debt of gratitude for her dedication and commitment to the school over a quarter of a century. I will talk further at the end of term. In the meantime I hope to appoint a new PA this summer.

Maintenance Caretaker

We are pleased to welcome Mr. Simon Garrett as part of the Maintenance Team and Caretaker. He has previously worked as a site manager at an international school in Greece and more recently as a facilities team member for Bruntwood, a commercial property letting organisation. Mr. Garrett will be living in The Cottage near the Sports Pavilion.

Pre-Prep

Reception

Mrs. Jane McCormack will cover for Mrs. Lizzie Clifton from Monday 20th June until the end of the term. We wish Mrs. Clifton every happiness and success in her new life in Australia.

Year 1

Miss Kiranjit Kaur is covering for Mrs. Stefanowksi whilst she recuperates from a foot operation.

Whole School

The Bulletin

A reminder that this edition of the Bulletin will be sent to you both in paper form and electronically this Summer Term. We will only issue a paper copy of the Bulletin from September 2011 onwards if you confirm you haven't got an email facility.

Summer Uniform

There is always some confusion in the Summer Term when your son/daughter is expected to wear summer uniform – after the half term holiday only summer uniform should be worn. The details are:

For the boys:

Pre-Prep Dept (Transition, Foundation, Reception, Years 1 & 2):

Red blazer, school cap, grey short trousers.

Upper School (Years 3 to 6)

Grey suit (grey short trousers optional), white shirt (short-sleeved optional), grey school pullover or sleeveless pullover (both optional), tie, grey socks and school cap.

For the girls:

Pre-Prep Dept (Transition, Foundation, Reception, Years 1 & 2):

Summer dress, red blazer, straw hat, white short socks.

Upper School (Years 3 to 6)

Kilt, white short-sleeved open neck blouse (no jabot), green v neck pullover, white socks, red blazer and straw hat.

Boys' hair should be kept short and neat and must be well away from their eyes. Girls with long hair should wear it tied back and hair accessories should be either red or green.

As the weather becomes warmer children will need to think about protecting themselves from the sun at break-times and during sports lessons. Sun hats are advisable and should be kept at school. Please apply sun cream to your child before school. The children can bring in sun cream (name the bottle) and it will be their responsibility to apply and look after it. It is also a good idea for them to bring a bottle of water (no other drinks please) in a clear plastic bottle, again named. Children will be encouraged to drink during break-times but will not be allowed to take water bottles into lessons.

Girls

May I please remind parents that earrings are not allowed in school for health and safety reasons. If your daughter has pierced ears can you please make sure that earrings are not worn on school days. If your child has recently had their ears pierced and the earrings cannot be removed for six weeks, it is your responsibility to ensure that your daughter's ears are covered by plasters on PE/Games and Swimming days.

Reports

i) Upper School

As it is a short first half term and all children will receive a full report at the end of the term, there are no half term reports with this Bulletin.

ii) Pre-Prep

End of term reports for all children in Pre-Prep (with exception of Form RC) will go home with them on Friday 24th June. If your son/daughter is absent that day the report will be posted. There will be an opportunity to make an appointment on Monday 30th June between 4.00 and 6.00 pm with your child's form teacher, to discuss any points in the report that may need clarifying. Mrs. Clifton (RC Form Teacher) is leaving Hallfield on 17th June to move to Australia and the reports for her children will go home on Friday 10th June and she will see parents by appointment between 4.00 and 6.00 pm on Thursday 16th June.

Form Photographs

Form photographs have been taken and proofs are in the process of being distributed to every pupil in the school. If you wish to order any photographs this is done directly with the photographer, Gillman & Soame. Orders can be completed by post or online. Each proof will have both the postal and online details and a unique password that ensures you receive the correct photograph. There is also a date when orders need to be received.

Contact details

In the Summer vacation a contact sheet showing home and email addresses and telephone numbers will be sent with the school fee account for all parents. Please take a few minutes to check that the details we have for you are correct – you may need to be contacted in an emergency – and return it to school prior to the Autumn Term commencing on Wednesday 7th September.

Parents' Association

Thank you for supporting the Summer Family Fun Day on 14th May. Although a fair breeze was blowing during the Fun Day, the sun shone and everybody had a lot of fun racing around on the Go Karts; bouncing and sliding on the inflatables; whirling around in giant teacups; wrestling in giant sumo costumes; fishing for ducks and dipping for presents in the children's corner; naming a delicious brown bear; braving the bucking bronco and pitting their skills against the Aston Villa players in the penalty shoot out! A long queue for the delicious Indian Buffet snaked around the Sports Pavilion and a further treat was the wonderful display of Bollywood dancing. Misguidedly, I was persuaded to be the target for wet sponge throwing, along with fellow Upper School staff

members, Mr. Batchelor and Mr. Wilkinson. Needless to say we all got very wet! It was a lovely, if exhausting day, and thanks must go to everyone on the Parents' Association who had a hand in organising it.

Preparations are well in hand for this year's Summer Party in the marquee on **Saturday 9th July!** Following the success of last year's ABBA night, tickets are selling well and a large number of the 200 tickets have been reserved and paid for. There are some still left so don't delay – check your diaries and come and secure your seat!! There is a menu to tempt all tastes and a much improved Bar - you can sup delicious ice cold champagne for a very reasonable price as well as a range of wines, beers, lagers and soft drinks! Put on your dancing shoes because the band 'Mission Blue' is guaranteed to get you and your friends up on the floor and, as a souvenir of the evening, you can have your photo taken in a pink Cadillac by Pellier Events! Tickets are £40 per person which includes a free drink on arrival. If you would like to book a table for ten or join a table, please call the Main Reception on 454 1496 – or drop in and talk to the office staff. It's too good to miss so book now!!

Tesco and Sainsbury Vouchers

Thank you for the huge amount of vouchers you have collected and kindly donated. Upper School After Care staff and children manfully counted the Tesco vouchers into bundles of 100, ready to be sent off and exchanged for toys and equipment.

Time capsule

Birmingham University will be burying a time capsule outside their new music building as part of their Community Open Day celebrations on 19th June this year and have asked children at Hallfield to enter a competition relating to this. The Vice Chancellor wants to include a drawing of what a child thinks a musical instrument might look like in 2061 (the year the capsule will be opened) in the capsule. The form from which the winning entry is chosen will be taken on a tour of the new music building when it opens next year and the winning entrant, if they attend the Community Open Day, will have their photograph taken with the Vice Chancellor and see their design put into the time capsule. Pupils in Pre-Prep and Upper School will be given the chance to enter.

Upper School

Changes to the Calendar

Upper School Sports Days will swap days as Edgbaston High School and King Edward VI Five Ways School are both holding their induction days on Wednesday 6th July and many Year 6 children will have missed their last Sports Day.

Revised dates are:

Wednesday 6th July 1330-1600 Years 3 & 4 Sports Day

Thursday 7th July 1330-1600 Years 5 & 6 Sports Day

Please change the dates in your diaries.

Speech Day

My guest this year is the Chief Master of King Edward's School, Birmingham, Mr. John Claughton, who could quite easily have enjoyed a successful career at the crease rather than in the classroom.

Educated at Bradford Grammar School and King Edward's Birmingham he was awarded a scholarship to read Classics at Merton College, Oxford, gaining a First in 1979 and interspersing his studies with a promising career on the cricket field gaining four Blues in four consecutive years and captaining Oxford University in 1978.

On his first class debut in 1976 he scored a century against Gloucestershire, toured Australia with Oxford & Cambridge Universities in 1979/80 and played for Warwickshire County Cricket Club between 1974 to 1980, the year they won the John Player League.

After leaving Warwickshire County Club in 1980 John joined N M Rothschild & Sons in London for a brief spell as a merchant banker but after two years of huge salaries and eye-watering bonuses he recovered his senses and moved into his true vocation and calling – the career of teaching. He taught Classics at Bradfield College for two years also taking charge of Cricket, before moving to Eton College where he taught for seventeen years, giving up the role of Master i/c Cricket to become a Housemaster in 1997. His first Headship at Solihull School in 2001 saw him back in the Midlands (where he had attended King Edward's from 1969 to 1975) and in 2006 he returned to his alma mater as Chief Master.

I am delighted that John is prepared to present the prizes and talk to us at Speech Day this year that once again will be held in the marquee on the playing fields – he is an entertaining and witty person and will be well worth listening to. I do hope you are able to come.

An invitation to parents in Years 3, 4, 5 & 6 is enclosed with this Bulletin.

Chess

Our Under 11 A Chess team were in optimum form at the semi-finals of the National Primary Schools Championship at Pontins in Prestatyn last weekend – a massive event with around 450 children taking part at U9 and U11 level seeking prizes and a place in the National Finals at Pontins in Brean Sands in July. The Under 11 team have gained a place at the National Finals to be held at Brean Sands in July and are to be congratulated. Our other teams all performed well and we must wait and see how the remaining semi-final goes to see if our Under 9 team has also qualified for the final.

Thanks go to Mr. Malcolm Hunt and Jeremy Fallowfield for giving up their time to accompany the teams – as well as the parents ... who I am assured had a very good time.

Prayer facility

I am intending to make a prayer facility available for Year 6 pupils in September. I would see pupils in the final year as being responsible enough to be able to use this facility properly and in a mature way. Broadly it will be unsupervised and pupils need to write to Mr. Thackway now (and certainly before the end of the term on 13th July) confirming they wish to attend daily in a quiet and reflective manner. I will issue specific guidelines to those who intend to attend at the beginning of next term.

Pre-Prep Department

Holiday Fun Clubs

A reminder that the Fun Club will run from Tuesday 31st May until Friday 3rd June inclusive and is for all children in Transition, Foundation, Reception, Year 1 or Year 2. To book a place contact Mrs. Kingston via email at dkingston@hallfieldschool.co.uk

Bookings are also being taken for Summer Fun which will run from Thursday 14th July until Friday 19th August. See Pre-Prep Secretary for booking forms. Access to Summer Fun Club will be re-routed this year as major works will be taking place in the Pre-Prep adventure playground. The route will be well signed and more specific details will be given nearer the time.

Aston Villa FC will be running a soccer school from Tuesday 31st May until Friday 3rd June. Mini Kickers (Age 4 – 6) is from 1000 to 1200 and Soccer School (Age 7 – 11) if from 1000 to 1500. Call 0800 612 0970 to book a place.

Hallfieldfirst

Parents are asked not to park outside Hallfieldfirst unless there is a parking space available. Staff are concerned there are a number of Hallfield parents who block in the cars parked outside Hallfieldfirst and also their emergency exit - even though it is clearly marked.

Hallfieldfirst staff are looking forward to seeing everyone at their Parents' Evening on **Monday 18th July 2011** – further details will be given to individual parents.

Have a lovely half term break!



Friday 27th May 2011

Enclosures

The following information will be enclosed with this Bulletin:

Upper School parents should have:

Years 3, 4, 5 & 6 Invitation to Speech Day

Year 6 only – invitation to Leavers' drinks after Speech Day

Years 5 & 6 Attain Magazine

Whole School

Invitation to Parents' Association Summer Party – Saturday 9th July

Web site: www.hallfieldschool.co.uk

The website is a mine of information and is regularly updated with articles and photographs including those on the following recent activities:

Pre-Prep

Year 1 visit to Warwick Castle – Trebuchet and picnics

Year 1 French breakfast and craft workshops – Felt Beads and French Bread

Year 2 visit Harvington Hall – Find out about Tudor Life

Upper School

Every Boy's Dream – Year 6 Fire awareness

Vive la France – Year 5 and 6 French Play

U11 Chess team Has Eyes on the Final – success at Pontins

SATIPS Annual Prep Schools Art Exhibition at Hordle Walhampton

Homer returns to Ancient Rome – Classics Club play

The Ski Trip

The Odyssey – Puppet play for Year3

A Day at Stowe School for the Chamber Choir

Viva la Musica – An evening of Art and Music

Junk and all that Jazz – Year 5 Junk music workshop

Year 4 trip to Brecon Beacons

Whole School

BRMB Walkathon

A Right Royal Event – street party to celebrate Royal Wedding

Parents' Association – A Day of Fun for the Family

Old Hallfieldian Society – Bowling for recent leavers

HALLFIELD SCHOOL
Parents' Association

Saturday 9th July 2011

MOTOWN

Band: **Mission Blue**

Dress Code: **70s** Vibe
Or come as you like!

In the Marquee
by the Pavilion

BBO Soul Food
TICKETS: £40

Come at 7pm for a free **MOJITO!** licensed Bar