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Dear Parents and Guardians,

It seems a long time since School got underway on 1<sup>st</sup> September and almost seven weeks later we can look back on a very enjoyable, rewarding start to the academic year. New pupils have settled extremely well, so too new colleagues and one new House Parent – Mrs Rogers in Hazeldene. The Common Room and School have found it a real joy to work with our new Headmaster.

The School has generally worked very hard and well. Once again these often lengthy Newsletters have recorded a fine, varied array of academic and extra-curricular achievements. That is down to your children and the opportunities here that they embrace so fully. The dry weather helped with abundant, warm sunshine in September, especially on match days on Saturdays. Autumn set in as soon as October began but despite the onset of mild, wet westerlies there has still been much sunshine to enjoy – apart from this week which witnessed the first winter thrushes from Fennoscandia overflying the School. They will arrive in enormous numbers by month's end.

Mild weather late yesterday afternoon provided perfect conditions for House Hockey and Rugby, Junior and Senior. It was a great celebration of two sports and of House life with many spectators lining the various pitches. Rugby even spilled over to our Prep School grounds. Thomas Cookes won the junior hockey B and Hazeldene the A competition. There was some excellent hockey played in the senior hockey tournament with Oakley emerging as the winning team. A total of 8 pitches were needed for the boys' rugby matches. Walters were winners in the junior B and Elmshurst beat School House to win the junior A. Senior matches were fiercely competed with Elmshurst victors in the B tournament and Lyttleton beating Elmshurst 15-0 to win the A competition on Bigside. A perfect way to almost round off the half-term. Trophies will be awarded when we return.

This Newsletter is particularly devoted to the ever-popular House Song Competition, L4th reflections on their Malvern Walk and a plucky Chicken.

On Wednesday we thoroughly enjoyed the 'feel good' event of the year – the Inter-House Song Competition, held in the Arena. Professional Singer Olivia Safe (OB TC) adjudicated an enthralling hour or so of songs all associated with the theme 'Colour'. Overall, it was the best I have ever seen.

As Houses entered the Arena, the Big Band – conducted by Mr Martin – performed the Pink Panther theme. They then accompanied Olivia in a memorable performance of '*Somewhere over the rainbow*'.

Thomas Cookes got us underway with Pink's '*Raise your glass*'; medleys were popular this year and Hazeldene entertained us with David Guetta's '*Titanium*' and Kanye West's '*Gold Digger*'; Housman Hall with White Stripes' '*Seven Nation Army*', Cee Lo Green '*Bright Lights Bigger City*' and Black Eyed Peas' '*Let's get it started*'; Oakley K.T. Tunstall's '*Black Horse and Cherry Tree*' and '*Seven Nation Army*' by White Stripes and Mary Windsor with Victoria Justice's '*Maroon 5 Medley*'; School sang '*Ruby*' by the Kaizer Chiefs; Wendron-Gordon Green Day's '*Boulevard of Broken Dreams*'; and there were some great classic songs with Walters singing Elton John's '*I guess that's why they call it the blues*'; Elmshurst Jeff Beck's '*Hi-Ho Silver Lining*' (Olivia has sung with him in the Royal Albert Hall), Lyttleton sang ELO's '*Mr Blue Sky*' and Lupton '*Everybody needs somebody to love*' by the Blues Brothers.

Well done to the brave and talented Conductors – Jack Alsop, Joe Philips, Oli Tanner, Olivia Wormald, Kate Duffy, Marija Vasurkina, Lucy Sapwell, Julia Bereshenskaya, Felix Chan, Jack Ireland and Ben Hesketh.

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Congratulations to Jack Alsop (Best Conductor); Lupton (Best Creative Performance) Mary Windsor in 2nd place; and Lyttelton in much coveted 1<sup>st</sup> place. (House Song and the senior Rugby Final in 24 hours).

An entire School sang on stage with such gusto – new L4th to those soon to leave us; adolescents; Chapel Choir members and non-singers. What a tribute to our Houses and their pupil leaders. There was no weak song at all and much to enjoy in each performance – conductors with a wide array of styles, various accompanists on a range of instruments, ambitious harmonies and of course the actions (often unexpected). Lupton U6th threw their top hats into the audience. There many moments of great humour. It remains the most memorable of House events and unique because all take part. Just a sing-song? It speaks of great self-discipline, unity and community spirit. It reminded us again that Houses are the heartbeat of the School.

New staff wrote:

‘I was astounded by the impeccable behaviour of the students and their musical talent. It was a unique experience that I’ll remember for a very long time.’

‘It was fabulous! I loved the way it was totally driven by the students and the quality was amazing.’

‘The sense of pride that the students have for both their houses and the school was clearly evident and it was a joy to be a part of that. The level of talent and ingenuity displayed was impressive, as was the sheer amount of effort required to rehearse and organise that many students. Once again it was a lovely reminder that there is more to the school experience here than just academic achievement.’

‘It was astounding to see the amount of effort that students had put in to their performances! It was clearly enjoyed by all.’

‘Fantastic’.

‘I can’t wait for next year’.

A special thank you to Mr Steve Kingston who managed all the sound so well.

It is indeed remarkable – 11 ‘class acts’ in a row and all their own work. Songs can be seen on You Tube (see Notices).

L4th comments on the Malvern Field Day warmed the heart and reminded us of its value:

‘It brought us closer together’.

‘One of the best experiences yet! I loved it so much’.

‘I had the worst blisters’

‘Thank you to all the teachers for making it a wonderful day and my lovely year group!’

‘I was proud of what I had achieved’.

‘My clearest memory is of when my group were at the top of the North Hill and we were admiring the rainbow that had appeared’.

‘Don’t give up’.

‘At the end of it all the view is truly spectacular’.

‘Always stay positive’.

‘Help each other out’.

‘Listen to every one’s ideas’

‘I enjoyed the teamwork’.

The first ever Greenpower International Final took place at Goodwood Motor Circuit last Sunday. More than 100 teams of aspiring young engineers – ranging from secondary school level to graduates from all over the globe – competed in three race categories in the season’s finale. Patrons David Richards CBE, Chairman of Aston Martin and Prodrive, and the Earl of March, whose Goodwood Festival of Speed has become the premier motor show in Britain, were on hand on to see students compete for the overall crown in the Formula 24 race for 11-16 year olds. Leading the international charge was the newly-formed Team USA, a project backed by engineering and electronics giant, Siemens, a long-time

partner and supporter of Greenpower's work. Other teams came from South Africa, Poland, Portugal and Ireland.

'*The Chicken*', with new race number 58, was transported down to Goodwood the night before where it waited in a trailer for the night whilst its drivers nursed a set of batteries, keeping them warm and charged in a hotel room overnight. Dedication! We hoped for a top 10 Kit car placing at the end and an overall place better than last year's which was 121st out of 200 and so the challenge commenced. We were given our own pit garage to unload the car, check it over, and get it ready for scrutineering which was completed with little fuss allowing us to complete an hour of testing with our first two drivers. New settings seemed to work superbly on the 2.4 mile circuit.

A break before the race saw our chicken mascot and team manager, Ed Shinner, interviewed by the Greenpower organisers where he did a superb job of explaining to the hundreds of attendees why he was dressed like a chicken, where the car was from and what we had planned for the first of the two races. This was then followed by many high fives in the pit lane, images on the huge TV screens around the circuit, further interviews with Siemens, selfie photos with Gadget show presenter Jason Bradbury, personal photo shoots for the Greenpower website and team photos by many who passed.....life as a chicken mascot has never been so exciting.

In the first race we moved up and down the field but most of the teams had improved their cars' abilities and we struggled to move away from our start position on the grid: 10th fastest Kit Car out of 18 and 66th overall out of 81. In the second race, despite a wheel blow and some heavy rain, we improved our position to finish 8th in the Kit Car category and 60th overall. After this race '*The Chicken*' (Mark 2) in only its 2nd season had won two trophies, improved its standings by 60 places, attended the world finals and made most people who saw the team smile in a way that only a chicken outfit could.

Mr Broadbent writes:

"We have had a superb year where our aim was to improve over last season and we certainly did this in style. Our 3rd season will start after half-term with plans to build another car from scratch which will compete with the fastest F24 cars and with the aim of getting '*Chicken 3*' into the top 30. It will be a busy time for the Bromsgrove School Greenpower Race Team. Again, brilliantly done by Ed Shinner, Brook Rotheroe, James Bromley, Aled Luckman, Toby Lam, Archie Freer and Alex Spurgin.

With sponsors needed for the 3rd season we would like to ask anyone interested to contact Mr Matthews or Mr Broadbent. We have been indebted to John Pullara at [Digitalspeedos.co.uk](http://Digitalspeedos.co.uk) who supplied us with a superb GPS guided speedo.

Last weekend 12 pupils from the Expedition Club went to Snowdonia for hiking and climbing. With expert tuition from a local instructor in climbing technique, safety and mountain etiquette, 5 of them climbed and abseiled on several crags around the Llanberis and Capel Curig areas. Meanwhile, 7 others hiked through the surrounding mountains and valleys, instructed by another local expert in various mountain crafts necessary to survive in wild country. The weather was excellent and pupils were treated to perfect walking and climbing conditions and outstanding views of some of Britain's most impressive mountain scenery. This was a truly inspirational weekend.

Last Sunday it was time for the CCF female cadets rise to the challenge at the 143 Brigade Orienteering Championships. A team consisting of CSM Ellie Ball, Cpl Amy Mason-Towers, LCpl Brittany Collie, Cadet Kate Ward, and Cadet Imogen Slater competed in the Senior Girls' event. The team was placed 3<sup>rd</sup> overall and Brittany achieved a very commendable 5<sup>th</sup> position as an individual. Well done to all involved.

David Maxwell from Aberystwyth University gave an interactive presentation to the 5<sup>th</sup> form on interview technique, and what to expect in different environments. From a panel interview at University to the first 'big' job, David explained the importance of preparation, planning and presentation.

The Mary Windsor girls enjoyed their annual Halloween party on Sunday evening. For many this was a highlight in the house calendar with the chance to shake the cobwebs off their fancy dress outfits and have some fun with party games and the traditional apple bobbing. There was some very artistic pumpkin carving and prizes for the scariest costume and the best dressed mummy.

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Housman Hall completed their second annual Krispy Kreme doughnut sale during the recent fixtures against Millfield. This year the money raised was in aid of the Teenage Cancer Trust and the pupils went about their work in an inspired fashion. From advance ordering to face to face selling there was apprentice style entrepreneurship and endeavour on show throughout. The event enabled a donation of £550 to the charity from the sale of over seven hundred doughnuts and raised awareness of this important issue.

On Tuesday, in autumnal conditions at a wet Blackwell Golf club, we met Malvern College in a double header. The top 3 golfers played in the Independent Schools Golf Association Cup and the next 5 golfers in the Border's League match. All were singles matches with no handicaps.

The results from the league match came through first. Captain Harrison Hill lost but wins from Patrick Dolan (against a player with a handicap nine shots better), Joseph Bellamy and Alfie Broadhurst led to an unexpected 3-2 victory against our toughest local rivals.

That was just a taste of the drama to come. All looked lost in the cup game; Tommy Robinson's opponent played virtually to scratch to win putting Malvern one up, Lawrence Hill finished well to record a half but Sam Bellamy was three down with four holes to play. However, Sam dug deep and won the next three holes but still required to win the 18th to win and take the match to extra holes. Two great shots left a birdie opportunity and his opponent had to play from the bunker. The shot from the bunker was heading out of bounds when it struck a badly placed Bromsgrove golf bag and rebounded to 10 feet from the hole. Fortune favoured us as Sam held his nerve on the putt to win and square the match. So, despite darkness looming, Lawrence set out on extra holes. One hole looked enough but a impressive bunker shot and putt from Malvern kept them in the match. Both players missed the green on the 20th hole but Lawrence put his chip close; a shot Malvern could not match. Two putts later the match was won 2-1 in near total darkness. The golfers remain unbeaten this term and the Midland Final now awaits in the Spring.

Well done to all involved.

The Biology Field trip left yesterday evening for Pembrokeshire; the U15 rugby tour to Ireland and the Geography Field Trip to North Wales departed this morning. The U14A girls' hockey team plays matches in Bristol. We wish them all safe travels and very enjoyable and rewarding experiences.

At Chapel on Monday the Chaplain told the story of the way in which God chose David to replace Saul as King. Ben Payne (Ly) played David and from the back of the building came Goliath – inevitably it was our Deputy Head Boy, Justin Clegg. He towered over L4th Ben but of course was felled - Millfield had failed to do that to Justin all Saturday afternoon. It was a memorable start to the week and drew spontaneous applause from the School.

Boarders' weekend trips have been very popular so far this year with a record number of pupils travelling to Alton Towers, enjoying a High Ropes Adventure course as well as shopping at the Bull Ring. There have also been trips to the Cinema and the National Paintball Fields which all pupils have enjoyed thoroughly.

The 10 House visits have been a real joy and privilege – Housman Hall to come. I thoroughly enjoyed visiting Hazeldene recently, with Millie Doherty the perfect host.

In all Houses the L4ths just beamed at me – they told me what they loved about the Senior School but could not think of anything they disliked. (In one House the mention of the Housekeeper brought instant smiles throughout but especially from the U6th. Little moments like that actually speak volumes.)

I wish all our pupils an excellent half-term holiday. Newsletters resume on Monday November 3<sup>rd</sup>.

## NOTICES

- 1. The House Songs** can be found on [www.youtube.com/bromsgroveschool](http://www.youtube.com/bromsgroveschool)
- 2. The U4th Parents' Evening** takes place on **Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> November**. Please see the attached letter from Mr Dowling. Please ask if unsure of any arrangements.

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3. **Remembrance Services take place for the whole School on Sunday November 9<sup>th</sup>** at 9.45 am (4<sup>th</sup> Form) and 10.55 am (Senior); parents are most welcome to join us at either Service. Pupils need to be seated no later than 5 minutes before their respective Service. **(U4<sup>th</sup> cadets meet at the Armoury at 9.00 am).**
4. **The termly meeting of the School Parents' Association Liaison Committee takes place on Thursday evening 13<sup>th</sup> November. Items should reach me by Monday 10<sup>th</sup> November.** Please ask if unsure about process and procedures.
5. **After half-term all 6<sup>th</sup> Form drivers must park at Housman Hall. Building work there has almost finished.**
6. **Calling all singers! Our Choral Society performs Fauré's 'Requiem' and the 'Cantique de Jean Racine', plus Vaughan Williams' 'Five Mystical Songs' in the Memorial Chapel on 21st March 2015.** What a programme! **Rehearsals take place on Tuesdays from 6.00-7.30pm in Routh Hall, commencing Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> November.** (Please bring your own score if you have one; others will be provided.) We are using Watkins Shaw/Novello edition).
7. **Our sincere apologies to day parents for the serious traffic chaos on Wednesday evening** with all day pupils leaving at the same time. I know it caused considerable inconvenience for many. We will take various steps to alleviate the situation in 2015.

Yours sincerely,

Philip Bowen



**Deputy Headmaster**

**PS**

Further to last week's account of the first House Music Song Competition, two letters followed from boys:

'Sir, I am one of that much despised race, the Philistines, and there is quite a gallant band of us here. One of our great horrors is music and singing. We do not grudge other people their pleasures; it is our persons that we grudge. We have no interest in songs or music, are forced to leave the pleasures of a book and a comfortable chair so that we might amuse ourselves. Could not those members of the house who are keen on singing represent it in the unison song? This would mean that about twenty-five per cent would sing instead of seventy-five and the singing would probably be much better. The singing competition is meant for enjoyment - why then should it be made a punishment? If we poor low-brows could be eliminated, I am sure that everyone would be quite satisfied'. Goliath ('Nevertheless, we beg to offer our congratulations on their excellent performance in the Competition').)

There was an eloquent riposte:

'Sir, It would not give a fair impression of the state of musical appreciation in the School if last term's letter from 'Goliath' were allowed to pass unchallenged. This term over 36% of the School have volunteered to sing in 'The Pirates of Penzance' at next Commemoration, knowing that it involves many hours of hard work. There are two Musical Societies both of which are full. These are a few indications of the musical keenness in the School and yet we are asked to believe that only 25% are prepared to sing in a House Unison Song lasting about three minutes, and that 75% regard 'music and singing as one of the great horrors'.