



August 2010

Dear Parents/Guardians

I write to you at the end of an extremely busy and productive year, and must apologise for missing my letter at May half term. We have had busy houses, busy boarders, busy staff and much success to celebrate at the end of term. By now of course you have settled into the long summer holidays and are already excitedly looking forward to 2010/11 at LVS.

The year started with new tutor systems and new staff. Staff and students have embraced the new vertical system and are making it work extremely well. The Heads of House report that the students like the fact that they can mix year groups and that it has helped integration within your houses. I also hear from them that they would like more time with students, and so we are going to use the Monday slot for tutorials rather than assemblies, as from September.

There is much to report from a busy year and also much to look forward to for the new academic year, so perhaps we should go ‘round the houses’.

Bass News

Bass House has seen much in the way of change over the last few years, increasing numbers and staffing changes have set us challenges. We are committed to working to solve these challenges and are convinced that this house will remain an outstanding one. We lose Miss Ryan, and our language assistants this year. We wish them all well, especially Miss Ryan who is beginning a very exciting chapter of her life at university. In turn we gain new staff. Miss Taylor joins us as Resident Tutor after graduating in Sport, and she looks forward to working with two new language assistants again one from France and one from Spain. Down the other end of the corridor, Mr Hunter is staying and will be joined by Mr Percy a Physical Education teacher from Northern Ireland who will also be the Year 7 Bass tutor, and Mr Sullivan, a Business studies teacher who will tutor boys in Guinness House – he has the distinction of having played rugby league for Harlequins. At the start of next term the staff team will select the Head of House for Bass from the current Year 6. Over the summer of course Mr Blunt finished his cycle ride from John O’Groats to Lands End, raising a considerable sum for charity, and he would like me to thank you for your support in that venture.

Carlsberg News

Carlsberg has been going through some exciting times of late with walls painted interesting colours, and the refurbishment gathering pace. Over the summer the project will be completed and our hope is that you will come back to a very different looking

sport, winning both rounders tournaments. We congratulate the girls on their efforts on the sports field, they are truly impressive, and so consistently good. Girls in the house will know that Ms Palmer has left us for a quiet life in Derbyshire. Mr Simpson has decided to concentrate his work on LVS and becomes Assistant Head of House; we are lucky to have him. We also welcome Miss Bunyan, a Physical Education teacher into the house. We are of course delighted that Miss Betteridge stays part of the house team. Mrs Towse, and Miss Murawksa are the other tutors, though of course we will be without Mrs Towse for some of next year due to her new arrival. We wish Head of House Kirsty McNeill and her team of prefects all the best. We are delighted to welcome Poppy J Sylvie Simpson to Carlsberg; she was born on Saturday 3rd July weighing 8lb 6oz.

Guinness News

Guinness House welcomed new staff and a refurbishment last year, so this summer will be a quiet one by comparison. Mr Win bought a house last Christmas and so his flat has now been filled by Mr Hunt, a Geography teacher that some of you may remember as a student teacher here last year. There will also be new tutors in Guinness including Mr Sullivan as previously mentioned and Mr Leather, who stays with us and takes on a more full role within the school. He will contribute towards more sport and also help Dr Clarke run the 6th form enrichment programme. He will also be starting an international politics society. The head of House will be Mitchell Field and we wish him and all his prefects well.

Gilbey News

Gilbey have enjoyed another year of steady development since Mrs Lister took over two years ago. A much calmer and more academic approach has helped all the students fulfil their potential. In addition Gilbey students of course form much of the senior sports teams and hold some vital roles on the senior prefect team. A measure of the settled nature of this house is that the staff team will remain the same and heads of house, Liam Hoadley and Becky Blackburn will I'm sure have a big impact, in addition to Jake Lane who will be Head Boarder. This year has seen the new kitchens and improved common room furniture in Gilbey and over the summer we are introducing the netbooks to Gilbey so that prep will be done in house, with a network printer in the common room.

Over the summer of course the school will change, an invisible change but a significant one nonetheless. Any change of leadership will have an impact on the school and I'm sure the new leadership team will drive the school forward with boarding very much at its heart. Sometimes I hear it said that boarding is an 'add on' at LVS, and this will always be partly true as we are a community of 190 amongst a whole school population of 950. However, I can assure you that both Mr Mullins and Mrs Cunniffe are extremely supportive of the boarding community and you can rest assured that I will continue to work hard to represent the community in all areas.

Over the course of this year, I have spoken to a number of you and also received your feedback in the boarders' questionnaire. I would like to thank you all for your support and also your constructive criticism; it is enormously useful. Many of you have hinted at our need to improve standards. This of course begins with the small matters, ensuring that our pupils are well dressed, that they have smart haircuts and do not flout school rules on

make-up or piercings. Of course we need your support on these matters, and wish to focus in this area with a new term and new uniform in place. We will be tolerant where there are genuine issues with uniform supply, but equally we will be firm when pupils challenge the rules. In other areas there will be a tightening of procedure and also a strengthening of sanctions. As a no smoking site, all pupils who are caught smoking, will be sent home immediately and will always be referred to the medical centre for rehabilitation. I strongly believe that the behaviour of our students is good, but I will be speaking with all staff to drive standards of manners, language, and interactions with peers and staff alike. This of course in addition to a renewed focus on the academic side of life.

I believe we are about to enter an exciting phase of development at LVS and boarding, and the boarders will be at its forefront.

Yours sincerely

Mr C Seal
Deputy Head