18 October 2019

Dear Parents

The first half of term has flown past, and it certainly does not seem like seven weeks ago when we welcomed you all back to the school. I hope that everyone, old and new, has settled into the Copthorne routine; the feeling from my colleagues is that the vast majority of children are working hard and making good progress.

My thanks go to all the parents who supported and enjoyed the wonderful Pre-Prep Harvest Festival Assemblies – thank you for your generous donations to Crawley Open House; to all the guides, musicians, chefs, artists and Parent Ambassadors who helped show the school off so well at the recent Open Mornings and indeed to all those who have supported the school at sports fixtures and other events so far this term. I remain deeply grateful for the very positive messages you continue to spread about the school. The children and staff all deserve a very well-earned rest, and I remind you that School restarts on Monday 4 November at 8.15am.

Please do read the important messages contained in the rest of this letter.

New Prefects
Congratulations to Matthew Foss who has been promoted to school prefect today.

Boarding House Parent(s)
Sadly, Miss Suzanna Harwood who has been running our Boarding House since September will be leaving Copthorne at half term and returning to Athens where she has a permanent home. However, I am delighted to announce that Mrs Charlie Lee (Director of Wellbeing and Head of Maths) will be moving into school after half term to take charge of our boarding, initially until the end of term. She has already contacted all our overseas boarding parents, but any day children who wish to consider some "hotel" boarding after half term, should email her at: clee@copthorneprep.co.uk .

Change to end of day routine (in the Prep School)
As it will be dark at 5.30pm after half term, all pupils who have not signed out by this time will be taken to the dining room, (even if they are not staying for tea), and parents will need to collect them (and they can sign out) from there.
After tea, at around 5.50pm, all day pupils will stay in the dining room where they will be supervised by staff until parents collect them. This will be a quiet session and all children will be expected to bring a reading book or some homework to do whilst in there. They will no longer be allowed in the computer room in an attempt to reduce the amount of screen time they have.

School Uniform
All children should return after half term wearing winter uniform. Following the most recent safeguarding advice, parents should no longer label children's clothing on the outside of their uniform or more particularly their sports kit. Nametapes should be sewn in (preferable to iron on, or sharpie) on the inside of each garment.

Christmas Shoe Boxes
Details of the wonderful "Love in a Box" charity have been explained to the children in assemblies and leaflets distributed in this half term mailing. It would be nice to see if we can beat last year's target of just over 150 shoe boxes full of Christmas gifts; if every Copthorne family filled one box we would have nearly 200. Boxes will need to be ready for collection in the week commencing Monday 11 November. Please leave them on the 'coffer' outside my office or in the Pre-Prep near the front door. For more details about the Charity and the sorts

of things that can go into these boxes, please refer to the flyer enclosed in this mailing or look on the Mustard Seed Relief Mission charity website at: www.msrm.org.uk

Remembrance Day Service

On Monday 11 November we will be holding our traditional Remembrance Day Service. Sadly, there is no room for parents in the Chapel, but I would like to invite as many of you as possible to join us for our two-minute silence at 11.00am. This silence will be broken by a pupil, who will play the 'Last Post' and "Reveille" from the roof of the Chapel Tower. Parents are then welcome to join us for coffee in the Rendall Room in return for a small donation to the Royal British Legion. Please arrive in good time as the main school gates will be closed at 10.55am. The choir will also be performing at the Ardingly Choral Society Remembrance Service on Sunday 10 November at the Dolphin Centre in Haywards Heath. (Information has been circulated to children directly).

Parking on the road (Nursery & Pre-Prep parents)

Please can I remind parents NOT to park on the road (Effingham/Mill Lane) at any time, as this causes an obstruction to other road users and children crossing the road to Games. In the mornings, if there is a queue to enter the Pre-Prep car park, please can I insist that cars keep to the left so they do not block the road for other vehicles.

In the afternoons, there is plenty of parking available by the Chapel at 3.30pm, and the asphalt car park is open at 4.30pm. Please can I also ask parents not to drive whilst using their mobile phones, to obey the 5mph speed limit that applies and to park accurately in the marked bays. Can all parents respect the one-way system in place for school parents from 8.00am to 8.30am? We ask that parents do NOT drive up towards school from the Curious Pig; it creates jams and it is much easier for everyone if our school parents only drive down the lane towards the pub in the mornings.

CAT (Cognitive Ability Test) scores and Assessments (Year 2 – 8)

All parents from Year 3 – 8 will receive a hard copy of their child's CAT score within this mailing. Year 2 parents will receive their child's scores after half-term; their tests were completed on paper and had to be sent back to GL Assessments for marking.

The CAT4 assessments are designed to identify the Cognitive Ability of pupils based on age appropriate expectations, and are taken by over 25,000 pupils in the UK. During the assessments pupils are given a series of tasks to see how they can reason with and manipulate different types of verbal, non-verbal, quantitative and spatial material and the results are then analysed by GL Assessment. We receive the data in the form of standardised results along with the explanations that you have also been sent today.

As cognitive ability is not particularly curriculum related, the results are not significantly influenced by a pupil's previous schooling or subject knowledge and they are useful guides for understanding a pupil's potential for academic attainment. The CAT4 data is particularly helpful for teachers to plan lessons, identify learning needs and adapt curriculum areas. Increasingly, it is also the yard-stick that is now used by senior schools to determine entry requirements, rather than common entrance (knowledge based) exams. These 'pre-tests' often take place in Year 6 and, as such, we will be inviting all the parents of pupils in Year 5 to meet either Mr Jones or Mr Close, to discus these CAT scores in relation to future senior school selection.

As most of you are aware, for parents of children in Year 3 and above, Assessment Cards (and end of year reports) are no longer emailed out to parents, but are made available on the Parent Portal*. (Our half term assessments will be available to view on the portal from next Monday 21 November).* Parents need to log in to the portal in order to access these, and details of how to do this for new parents are included in this mailing. All other parents should already have a log in. The school can see whether parents have accessed these reports, and I am surprised by the numbers who have not read their child's end of year report from July!

If you need help logging in, please email Mr Bone – mbone@copthorneprep.co.uk – and he will be happy to help. Please do not confuse the Parent Portal (where your child's assessments and reports are found) with the Parents' Zone where you will find general information, letters, handbooks etc.

RS Academics Survey – feedback to parents

Included in this mailing is the report to parents produced by RS Academics. As a school we are delighted that 92% of our parent body would strongly recommend us to their friends and relatives. My marketing department would also be delighted if this recommendation could be passed on to the wider public, by way of reviews on our Facebook page and/or our Google page!

As always, there are areas that we need to work on and the survey results helps us to focus on such areas.

School exams (Years 8)

Important "mock" Common Entrance trials take place for Year 8 in the week beginning Monday 11 November. Whilst a certain amount of revision is essential to prepare for these, I do not expect children to be working for 8 hours a day as they work very hard over a long school day and do deserve to have a rest in the holidays! Children in Year 8 have been encouraged to take home their books and have been given some guidance on the best way/what to revise.

ISEB Pre-Tests

Year 6 (and some Year 7) children already registered with Senior Schools will be sitting their ISEB Pre-Tests at Copthorne in the weeks beginning 11 or 18 November.

Children in Need Day – Friday 15 November – also "bring a bottle day" for the FOC

The School will be supporting this charity event by holding a non-uniform day. Children can wear home clothes - the spottier the better - and are all encouraged to bring a donation (£1 minimum please) for this very worthwhile charity. The Pre-Prep children will be also be baking and selling cakes and biscuits after school. In the afternoon, Prep School children will be running "form fundraising stalls" in the Sports Hall from 3.30pm and we encourage parents to come along to support this.

This day also doubles up as the "bring a bottle day" for the adult tombola at the FOC Winter Bazaar, so please bring (full!) bottles (wine or spirits) that will be collected from you when you arrive in school.

FOC Winter Bazaar Sunday 1 December at 11.00am

The Friends of Copthorne will be hosting a Christmas themed fun day with shopping opportunities for parents and festive fun for the children including a visit from FC himself. Please put this date in your diary and more information will be circulated later

Old Boy and Girl Sports matches – Sunday 1 December at 2.30pm

The current 1st XI soccer team should be ready to take on the might of the old boys, whilst the current girls challenge the old girls to a netball match.

Carol Service - Thursday 12 December, St Swithuns Church East Grinstead, at 7.00pm

All children from Year 3 to 8 are involved and expected to attend. More details will be circulated later, but please do put this date in your diaries now, as parents are required to transport their children to and from the Church, and stay for the Service!

Copthorne Scholarships 2020

As mentioned on Speech Day, only children in Year 6 are now eligible to sit scholarship assessments that start when they join Year 7. We do assess children for academic scholarships as well as in music, sport, art and drama. Children in Year 6, currently in receipt of a scholarship, will need to be re-assessed so that we can confirm (or not) that their scholarship will continue into Years 7 & 8! The website will be updated shortly with more information and application forms.

Ski Trip March 2020

There are still some places left on the trip to Pila in the Italian Alps, departing immediately following the end of the Spring term on Saturday 28 March 2020. Anyone currently in Year 3 or above is eligible to go. More information is available from the Prep school office.

Off Games

If children are too ill to take part in games, parents need to email Matron (matron@copthorneprep.co.uk) and their form tutor. We do need to know who is off games. Children are not allowed to put themselves off, only Matron (at school) or parents (at home) can make this decision.

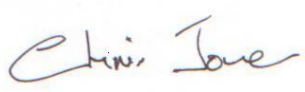
Coding

Although we do teach coding in school, for those children with a particular interest in this area, we have obtained an exclusive discount code from Software Academy for their e-learning platform. They have launched an online course, designed to teach children lifelong industry level coding skills. The course is accredited by the NCFE, a nationwide recognised awarding body, who will issue a certificate for students upon completion of the course. Since the course is online, students can study at home and at their own pace. It's divided into 3 terms, and each term consists of 2 to 3 hours of step by step video tutorials.

- Each term costs £99, and there is a one-off registration fee of £50.
- The discount code we have obtained will give you 50% (£25) off of the registration fee.
- The discount code is: copth103**.** You can sign up directly at Software Academy's website: www.softwareacademy.co.uk

Have a wonderful half-term break and I look forward to seeing everyone back on Monday 4 November, as we prepare for important exams for Year 8 and the build-up to the festive season with the Carol Service always one of the highlights.

Yours sincerely



Chris Jones
Headmaster

Key Dates for the second half of the Autumn Term 2019		
Monday 4 November	8.15am	School restarts
Tuesday 5 November	6.00pm	Year 5 SB Parents' Evening
Thursday 7 November	6.00pm	Year 5 HH Parents' Evening
Sunday 10 November		Choir singing at Ardingly Choral Society – Haywards Heath*
Monday 11 November	10.15am	Remembrance Day Service (parents welcome at 11.00am for the "Two Minutes Silence" followed by coffee Start of Exam Week for Year 8
Tuesday 12 November	6.00pm	Year 5 SL Parents' Evening
Thursday 14 November	3.30pm	Nursery Parents' Evening
Tuesday 19 November	From 6.00pm	Year 5 & 6 Music Concert (selected musicians only)*
Wednesday 20 November	Early morning	Year 7 & 8 trip to Spain departs (Returns late on Saturday 23)
Tuesday 26 November	From 6.00pm	Year 8 LC Parents' Evening (children to attend also)
Sunday 1 December	10.00am 2.30pm	Xmas Fair* Old Boys & Girls Sports Fixtures
Tuesday 3 December	10.30am	EYFS Nativity Play* Year 8 IP Parents' Evening (children to attend also)
Wednesday 4 December	10.30am	EYFS Nativity Play*
Thursday 5 December	2.00pm	Year 1 & 2 Nativity Play*
Friday 6 December	2.00pm	Year 1 & 2 Nativity Play*
Thursday 12 December	7.00pm	Carol Service (East Grinstead) all Year 3 to Year 8 to attend*
Friday 13 December	**3.30/4.00pm**	**Term Ends**
Key Dates for the Spring Term 2020		
Monday 6 January 2020	**8.15am**	**Term Starts**
Saturday 1 February	10-12 noon	Open Morning
Tuesday 4 February		Choir singing at the Young Voices concert at the O2*
Thursday 6 February	6.00pm	Year 7 & 8 Music Concert (selected musicians only)*
Monday 10 February		Week of Year 7 & 8 exams
Friday 14 February		Half term starts after normal school day
Tuesday 25 February	From 6.00pm	Year 7 AA Parents' Evening
Thursday 27 February	From 6.00pm	Year 7 MB Parents' Evening
w/c Mon 2 March		Pre-Prep Parent Consultation week
Thursday 5 March		World Book Day
Tuesday 10 March	6.00pm	Year 6 DC Parents' Evening
Thursday 12 March	6.00pm	Year 6 LD Parents' Evening
w/c Mon 16 March		Nursery Parent Consultation week
Monday 23 March		Week of Year 5 & 6 drama performances*
Friday 27 March	From 3.30pm	**Term Ends after School**
Saturday 28 March		Ski Trip departs
Key Dates for the Summer Term 2020		
Monday 20 April	**8.15am**	**Summer Term starts**
w/c Monday 4 May		Year 3 & 4 Parent consultations to be arranged this week
Friday 8 May	**Bank Holiday**	**Change of date from Monday 4 May ** VE Day**
Monday 18 May	Mon - Thu	Final CE exams for Year 8 End of year exams for Year 7
Friday 22 May		Prep School Sports Day Half term starts after school (from 4.00pm after Sports Day)
Saturday 30 May	3.30pm (tbc)	Year 8 children depart for France (return on Saturday 6 June)
Sunday 31 May	9.00am (tbc)	Year 7 children depart for Snowdonia (return on Friday 5 June)
Monday 8 June		Start of the Year 8 Enrichment programme
Thursday 18 June	10.30am 1.30pm 6.00pm	EYFS Sports Day Year 1 & 2 Sports Day Young Musician of the Year Competition
Friday 19 June	7.00pm	FOC Quiz Night (tbc)
Monday 22 June		Week of the Senior drama production
Sunday 28 June	11.00am	FOC Family Fun Day (tbc)
Wednesday 1 July	8.45am	Pre-Prep & Oaks End of Year Concert
Saturday 4 July	10.30am 12.15pm	**Speech Day** **Term ends**