

N GRAEME HIGH News



Issue 19 - June 2016

Fit for Girls



Our Fit for Girls Elective has had another busy year. We have managed to fit in taster sessions in an number of activities including Self Defence, Zumba and Nutrition and visited Bannatynes Health club

to experience gym life. A number of the girls involved have commented on how much they have enjoyed the course and have noticed an improvement in their self-confidence and overall well-being.



Stay Safe

With the Summer and (hopefully) better weather fast approaching, Scottish Canals would like to remind everyone to stay SAFE (Stay Away From the Edge) when they visit any water, including the canals, this summer.

**Scottish
Canals**

While the still, cool water of the canals can look inviting on a hot day, we are urging anyone, especially young people, to resist the temptation to jump in and cool off.

For further information please visit the Scottish Canals website:
<https://www.scottishcanals.co.uk/news/stay-safe-this-summer/>

School Uniform

Black trousers or skirt, white shirt, school tie, school blazer (available from Trutex in Falkirk town centre), black school jumper or cardigan, black school shoes and a school bag. School jumpers and cardigans with the school badge are also available from Trutex.

If your son/daughter is a prefect for next session, remember to give Trutex plenty of time to add the blue braiding to the blazer.

Please do not allow your child to wear leggings or hoodie tops to school.



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Parental Voice

You said, so we will do!



Our Parent Council undertook a survey covering a broad range of key aspects of school life with over 300 parents/carers in April. There were many strong and positive messages from parents and some areas we will want to improvement.



Almost all parents/carers are confident that their children are happy, safe and treated fairly in school, are cared for by staff and progressing well. If there is an issue or concern, parents know who to contact and that something will be done. One parent commented ***'the school is very progressive, socially inclusive and a positive experience for pupils'***. Another said ***'I'm very happy that teachers are so helpful, encouraging pupils to do well'***.



The survey also highlighted that our school community has confidence that pupils are being challenged to achieve of their best and staff have high expectations. ***'My son already has 15As and 3 Advanced Higher results to come, no parent could ask more of a school than that'*** and another focussed on wider achievement opportunities saying ***'the S6 girls who lead the cheerleading club are fantastic role models for the younger girls'***.



Almost 90% of parents said that there is a good range of subjects and courses to meet learners' needs and aspirations. However, some parents would like to see this further strengthened. One of the areas highlighted was the desire to see an additional foreign language.

This also appeared in the previous survey in 2014 and since then our teachers of French have undertaken training in **Spanish and this has been introduced in to our curriculum for next session**. We will also continue our work to



provide a **broader range of courses in the Science Technology and Maths (STEM)** area and have worked

with Police Scotland and Forth Valley College to introduce an HNC in Police Studies. Some parents also asked that we make subject choice information evenings more engaging alongside the information that is given. For next session, **we will review the purpose and format of these evenings and seek to make them not only informative but engaging and linking them to transition beyond school in terms of careers, further and higher education**.



Again, almost 90% were confident in our target setting, reporting and communicating processes. However, some parents told us they would like to see some of **the practicalities around parents' evenings improve** and, following advice from the Parent Council, we have plans for next session on how to improve. Over 30% told us that they are still not using the school website or Twitter as a source of information and advice. Some parents commented that they find the website difficult to navigate, some areas cluttered with out of date information and not enough that is relevant to them. In line with Council budget savings policy, we have been without an IT technician for almost 6 months but will be appointing soon. It is our intention, to support this improvement, **we will recruit someone with skills and expertise in web design and maintenance**.



Thank you to everyone who responded to the survey, your views matter and will feature in our future improvement plans.

Baskets of Fun at GHS

The basketball club and school teams have had another great year with a number of highlights worth mentioning.

Both the senior boys and senior girls represented the school in the Scottish Cup under Mr Robertson and Miss Cavanagh. The boys were dealt a tough qualifying group but showed great improvement throughout all their games scoring their highest number of points in their final game against a school from Perth. The girls had a very successful qualifying campaign winning 4 out of their 5 games. With basketball not being many of the girls first sport they showed great desire and energy to out play other schools, many of whom have established club basketball teams or academies at their school. Unfortunately the girls were beaten by a strong Dunbar side 43-42 in the quarter finals with a few late shots missed from both teams deciding the outcome of the game. Mr Robertson is still recovering from the drama!

The junior team was also well represented this year in the local Falkirk league with many 1st years representing the school for the first time. Their season concluded with a well-deserved first win against Braes High School. Thanks go to Rebecca Shaw and Carmen Tran who have committed to coaching the junior team throughout the year and will continue to do so next season.

The final event of the year happened at Grangemouth Sports Centre with the junior team representing the school.

We thank all pupils for their commitment to basketball throughout the year and look forward to seeing everyone again next year. As always new pupils are welcome to join the club.



U13 Football – The Champions!



After fighting their way through 7 rounds, almost 150 teams, snow, hail, rain and gales, Graeme HS U13s faced Holyrood Secondary from Glasgow in the Scottish Shield final in May.

Both teams came close to scoring in an extremely wet and evenly matched first half, with Graeme High hitting the post on 2 occasions and goalkeeper Jay Hogarth denying Holyrood with 2 outstanding saves. Midway through the second half a shot from Kai Collinson rebounded into the path of Ben Woloszyn who smashed the ball into the net off the underside of the bar to give Graeme a 1-0 lead. The victory was clinched in the closing seconds when Kyle Russell scored after excellent work from Greig Moore and Kai Fotheringham. Minutes later the captain, Greig Moore, lifted the Scottish Shield, the first time the school has won the Under 13 national championship.

Well done to the 16 boys who performed superbly on Thursday and to all 24 who represented the school magnificently throughout the campaign.



LandWords Project

Twelve pupils took part in this collaboration with Edinburgh International Book Festival and Falkirk Community Trust.

Working with author, Kerry Hudson and performance artist, Donna Rutherford, the pupils collaborated on stories of Falkirk and how it has changed.



They met with local senior citizens and a walking group during a six week residency programme.

A show case was put on at Callander House during the Easter Weekend and there was a follow up on Saturday 14th May – all part of their mobile book festival.

This has been a hugely successful project with an external partner.



Xtreme Karting in English



A group of S2 pupils had the chance to live life in the fast lane at the Xtreme Karting centre in Larbert. The group had been developing their literacy skills in English by completing a series of lesson linked to cars and racing. This trip was a fitting reward for all of their hard work and also gave them a first hand experience which they could take back to class to develop their work. On the day the boys demonstrated a number of key skills such as listening to instructions, working together as a team and taking turns – in all senses of the words. Perhaps best of all, everyone had great fun too.

S3 Sky Skills Academy Trip



Everyone likes watching the telly but have you ever wondered how they actually make TV shows? The English department gave a group of S3 pupils the chance to find out with a trip to the Sky Skills Academy in Livingston.

The pupils planned a news report on the topic of animal rights then took responsibility for different roles such as: producer, director, scrip writer, camera operator and presenter in order to bring the script to life. With the help of Sky staff and state of the art technology our pupils created a slick news item that communicated a clear message but also managed to squeeze in a record number of animal puns too.

The project was an excellent example of collaborative working with four separate teams focusing on a specific part of the film while making sure communication meant that they all came together in a coherent way at the end. Well done to everyone who took part.

Lights, Camera, Axis!

The students taking the Personal Development course this year had an exciting opportunity to work with the Barnardo's Axis service to produce two short films.

Barnardo's Axis work with young people who need support and education on the subject of substance use. The money to make the films came from a generous grant from, 'Cashback for Communities'.

The young people enjoyed writing the script, rehearsing, acting and working with the professional film crew from Media Voodoo. The films have received high praise from all who have seen them.

Barnardo's are delighted with the films which will be used by the charity in their vital work in schools, colleges and prisons. The students involved showed real commitment and talent throughout the project. Well done to all!



RMPS @ GHS

Pupils have been busy in RMPS this term. S1 and S2 pupils have taken part in the Inspire>Aspire Character Award - this is based on Commonwealth Values linked into a Curriculum for Excellence.

Pupils over a two week process decide the direction of their research and learning, it involves self-reflection and evidence gathering, researching people who have inspired them and considering the type of person they want to grow up to be. The level of thought and detail involved has been great to see. The top 5 across year groups will be forwarded to a special awards ceremony at Hampden Park. Watch this space!!

S3 pupils are also getting ready for the Social Subjects and RMPS trip to London in June 2016. There has been a number of bake sales to help raise funds for this and we just want to say a big thank you to all who have baked and bought!

In September 2015 two senior pupils Carmen Tran and Rebecca Shaw along with Mrs McGuinness had the opportunity to visit Auschwitz as part of the Lessons from Auschwitz project - run through the Holocaust Education Trust.

On their return Carmen and Rebecca fed back to classes the impact of the experience and also what they thought they could do to pass the information on and 'Don't Stand By' the theme of this



year's event - this included raising funds for Amnesty International through a School Leadership event and bake sale run by Jaimee McDonald (S5) focusing on petitioning to save the Human Rights Act in the UK. This also included Carmen and Rebecca speaking at the local event for Holocaust Memorial Day on Jan 27th 2016 and speaking about their experience - they also linked it to events happening in the world today and tied into their speech ideas such as Refugee rights, Islamophobia and also Donald Trump's 'hate filled rhetoric'. They challenged everyone there to not give in to hate and media bias and to form their own opinions and Not Stand By.

Carmen also had the honour and experience of hosting the National Event later that evening, where she carried it out with her usual confidence and style. The RMPS department was really proud of the level of work and commitment that both Carmen and Rebecca showed whilst also sitting Prelims and maintaining work commitments.



Traditional Building Skills Taster Day

Saskia Liddell S4 and Chloe Barbour S4 attended the Forth Valley Traditional Building Skills Event at the Tradstocks Quarry in Thornhill, at the beginning of June. They had a chance to experience a range of different traditional building skills including: roof slating, stonemasonry and decorative painting. The event was run in conjunction with Forth Valley College and Historic Environment Scotland. Both girls thoroughly enjoyed their day learning new skills and found it a valuable experience.



Junior Apprentice

On Tuesday 3 May, Primary 7 pupils from Westquarter Primary School visited Graeme High to participate in a Junior Apprentice style task. The event, organised by Mrs Marshall in the Business Education department, saw the pupils undertaking a variety of tasks in groups to develop and market a new brand of shampoo.

On the day, representatives from Lush Cosmetics in Stirling came and spoke to the group of pupils, providing them with information on different hair types, how different natural ingredients can be used and discussed their ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility policy. As well as judging the teams, Lush also gave each pupil a free shampoo bar.

The event was a great success and gave the Primary 7 pupils an opportunity to participate in an Enterprise



Street of Dreams –

2016 brings the third Graeme High School original production, 'Street of Dreams' – written and directed by our very own Miss Galletly.

'Street of Dreams' tells the story of a precocious young girl, Amber Black (played by show veteran Elena McNinch) who is brought up to think only of herself until one day, a dramatic event makes her question her entire life. As the plot unravels and other characters are introduced, we discover their stories, their dreams and how their lives are eventually brought together on 'The Street'.

As the 11th show under the current production team, 'Street of Dreams' follows in the footsteps of previous shows; showcasing not only Graeme High School's talented actors and actresses but also our gifted dancers and singers as an exciting mix of old and new tunes help to tell the story.

The audition process for the show began in February when many brave hopefuls faced panel of staff and were asked to demonstrate their skills in acting, singing and dancing. Successful auditionees were taken through to 'Boot Camp' where they were again put through their paces to compete for parts. Following numerous casting meetings, a group of pupils from S1 to S6 were finally chosen to be the cast of this year's show and allocated their own roles. As with every production, each cast member brought their unique influence to the part and truly made it their own. Miss Galletly, Miss Ringrose and Mrs Duffy were impressed by the high calibre of new talent discovered in this year's auditions and were delighted to see each cast member grow with both confidence and ability throughout the entire process.

With weekly rehearsals beginning later than normal, hours of hard work and preparation were put in. As performances drew closer, cast were supported by a huge number of pupils and staff who worked behind the scenes in stage management; sound and lighting; scenery painting; advertising; photography; programme design; ticket sales; catering and front of house duties. Without the team effort of everyone involved, 'Street of Dreams' would not have been such a success.

Monday 20th June 2016 saw the 'Street of Dreams' debut and the culmination of the dedication and enthusiasm from cast and crew, this was then followed by further outstanding performances on the Tuesday and Wednesday evenings respectively. Audiences were entertained and hugely appreciative of the talent from strong acting performances, excellent choreography and dancing to phenomenally powerful vocals.

As the curtains closed on the final performance, nine S6 pupils who have been crucial to the success of Graeme High's productions took their final bow - Elena McNinch, Lewis Dawson, April Duncan, Adam Sneddon, Rebecca Paterson, Rebecca McDonald, Megan Coutts and Hannah Hopkins. Fantastic performers and even better role models for their younger peers, the 'Show Family' will definitely miss these talented young men and women but wish them every success in their future endeavours.

Thank you to all members of our school community who came along to support the show. It is always a pleasure to see so many familiar faces from previous shows and all support is greatly appreciated by all cast and crew, your laughs and cheers make all of the hard work worthwhile. We look forward to entertaining you again next year!



- Brand New Show!





Big Fit Walk 2016

We have once again participated in the Big Fit Walk initiative supported by Paths for all. Our new S2 pupils were treated to a walk around Callendar Park and returned to a delicious treat of fruit kebabs prepared for by our Home Economic pupils and staff. Well done and thank you to all involved in the preparation and participation of this event. A special welcome must go to a new member of staff PC Cattigan who joined us this month.

S1 Class Election

As the nation went to the polls on May the 5th, so did the Modern Studies department. The 4th block class with Mrs Wallace ran a very successful election campaign complete with a media team and polling station staff.

Four parties competed for votes in a tightly fought race that saw issues ranging from reduced transport costs to increased spending on schools.



Just as with the actual Holyrood election result, the winning party gaining only a minority government but, under the First Past the Post voting system that the class used, this was still enough to win the election.



Glasgow Science Centre

S1 pupils visited the Glasgow Science Centre last month for a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) experience to witness where and when numeracy appears in real life. Pupils were engaged and enthusiastic throughout the day they visited and viewed hundreds of interactive exhibits contained within the Science Mall.

The majority of pupils enjoyed a presenter led show in the Planetarium learning about the solar system and beyond. This was identified as a highlight of the trip for many. Pupils were also given the chance to explore "My World of Work Live" where they found out how their personality and interests matched with particular STEM careers and were then given the opportunity to find out more information regarding these careers.

Pupils were also involved in a "Cracking Cryptography" session where they were trying out their skills as Cyber Security Analysts by coding programs to encrypt and decrypt messages. Over the two days in the Science Centre the pupil's behaviour was excellent and were a credit to themselves and the school.



G in the Park 2016

Thursday 26th May 2016 brought the 6th annual 'G in the Park', Graeme High School's festival of learning. This two week interdisciplinary project brings together the skills, qualities and interests of staff and S2 pupils, who work together to research, plan and stage their own music festival; showcasing the talents of local music artists and highly skilled dancers and singers from Graeme High School. All proceeds raised on the day were donated to the House charities, Strathcarron Hospice, Simpsons Special Care Babies and Teenage Cancer Trust.

On the day, festival goers were entertained by a talented range of acts, including Graeme High School's very own Samba Band; staff and pupil bands; school show cast; and Pitch Perfect group. In addition, we were also treated to exciting dance performances by the Dance Elective and musical performances from The Patryns and Lewis Irons who were met with screams and cheers from their audience.

Ex Graeme High pupil Stefan McGechie also sang on the day and followed his performance with an emotive and motivational anti-bullying talk. Stefan wanted to address anyone who is being bullied, reminding them that they can follow their dreams and achieve success – a wonderful and welcome message to share with the school.

As in previous years, S2 pupils were given the chance to develop their skills and talents in a particular field; electing which 'job' they wished to undertake for one full week. Some opted to be a Musician or Dancer, a Caterer, a Graphic Designer, Textile Designer or Tourism Officer, a Charity Ambassador, a Music Researcher or part of the Media Team. Others ventured into the great outdoors as an Eco-Warrior or Festival Camper.

This year, thanks to Grangemouth based

organisation, Sound Sense, we had one new job advertised - Sound and Light Technician. The Sound Sense team worked with a group of S2 pupils interested in the creative industries to develop skills in risk assessment; sound and lighting; and stage engineering. A combination of classroom based theory and practical work experience in these areas provided pupils with the fantastic and unique experience of managing crucial aspects of the G in the Park Festival, including building the stage and setting up sound and lighting. This wonderful new 'job' complimented the other roles perfectly, giving this year's S2s an exciting range of electives to choose from, providing the best opportunity to develop new skills and raise money for our charities.

At the heart of G in the Park is, of course, the three charities we support. With them in mind, staff and pupils took the opportunity to generously splash their cash on buying hot food, getting glitter tattoos and having their photo taken with silly props. In addition, Charity Ambassadors planned and facilitated a fun range of original activities, with an extensive amount of effort put into approaching local

and national businesses to donate prizes for their games. Thanks to the combined efforts of the Charity Ambassadors and other stall holders, over £2200 was raised, an impressive sum which truly highlights the generosity of our school community.

Not only did G in the Park allow pupils to gain and develop new skill sets, it also fosters personal growth. To evaluate their experience over the two week period, S2 pupils took part in a survey monkey, with a significant amount of pupils identifying that they had gained confidence as a result of taking part in the G in the Park. One pupil said that they had more "confidence interacting with others and working together" and another feeling that they "learned to be confident in front of people and talking to them...you can use confidence everywhere in life" – a key message that we hope pupils carry through all aspects of their lives.

As this year's school session comes to a close, we would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the G in the Park experience as, without your input, none of it would be possible. Bring on G in the Park 2017!

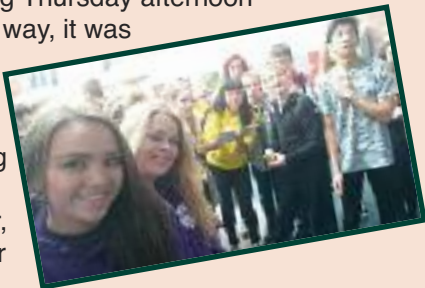


Inter-House

After a range of exciting and challenging activities over the school year, Morrison, Steele and Lockhart pupils have done themselves proud with their efforts. From Sort It and Just Dance in the early days through to Heads Up and Bucket Basketball more recently, this year has been fantastic for the number of Graeme High Pupils taking part in Inter-house.

A massive thank you must go out to our House Leaders who's planning and delivery of activities have made it a year to remember. Having led the standings for much of the year and dominating Thursday afternoon competitions along the way, it was

Lockhart who entered the home stretch out in front with Steele and Morrison only dreaming of the success that could be had. However, on the P7 looking wider



day which was the final day of competition, there was to be a late surge from another house.

The P7's performed admirably, and Steele took 2 of the 3 activities on offer. In turn they have over turned Lockhart's lead and the final standings are as follows:

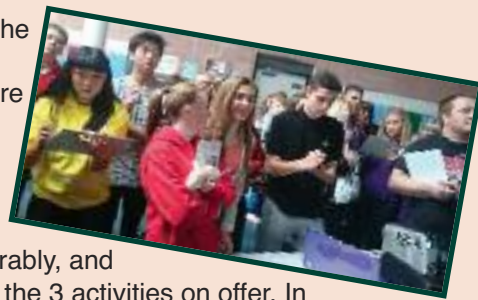
Steele – 12283

Lockhart – 12187

Morrison – 11574

Congratulations to Steele who have wrestled the trophy from Lockhart and will look to go on and repeat this success next year.

Finally, a massive thank you to all pupils who have taken part and to the staff who have also ran activities on behalf of their departments this year.



GHS @ Knockhill

First it was bikes..... now motorbikes!

We were able to build on the skills gained in the Bike Academy to get to grips with motorbikes. Our partnership with RUTS UK (Rural and Urban Training @RUTSUK) delivered 6 sessions where our pupils got to grips with motorbike servicing and riding. They swapped wheels, brakes and even completed an engine installation. The highlight was visiting Knockhill's off road circuit for a whole day in the saddle. 'Best school day ever' summed up the mood. If you head over to the RUTS UK facebook page you can catch photos and video of the whole process including



Engineering the Future for Girls Success for Tegan!

Tegan Clark S4 has successfully secured a place on the Engineering the Future for Girls BP Summer School at the University of Strathclyde. A large number of pupils completed a rigorous application process from across Scotland and Tegan has done exceptionally well to be offered a place on the course. We wish Tegan the best of luck on the week long course and hope she is inspired to pursue a career in engineer in the future!



ROCK NEEDS YOU!!!

Or is that the other way round?! GHS 'School of Rock' is expanding in August.

We currently have 2 well-established pupil bands and a staff band. They have performed regularly at school events this year including G in the Park, P7/Creative Industries Showcase & Prizegiving.

In August we're looking to build on this. We're recruiting singers/bassists/guitarists/drummers/keys and open to offers for any non-standard band instruments... Anyone can join from S1 – 6, you just

need to be past beginner stage. We're especially interested in forming a PARENT BAND so please come forward and contact Mr Burke in the Music Department.

Follow our progress on twitter @GHSMusic1 – in the words of AC/DC – for those about to rock... We salute you!



2015-2016 Sports Leaders/Community Sports Leaders

Once again Graeme High school Sports Leaders and Community Sports Leaders have been out in force assisting with our cluster primary school sports days and other sporting events. They have been out in our local community taking part throughout the months of May and June at events such as potted sports, playground parties and a football tournament.



They are a credit to themselves and to the school for their hard work and boundless energy shown each and every time they assist at an event.

Sports Leader

Sports Leaders have again contributed heavily to the wider school community and to our cluster primary schools by leading afterschool clubs and transition events. They also received specialist sessions in Bikeability, Tennis and First Aid.



P7 Maths Event

P7 pupils from St Margaret's, Victoria, Hallglen and Laurieston primaries came to GHS on Friday 20th May for a day of Enterprising Maths.



Competing in teams of 4, the pupils had to negotiate their way through 3 tough challenges in order to see who would be crowned champions.



First came the team round, where they had to work together to complete a set of questions in the time limit to gain maximum points.

Next up was the strategy game Nim, where they went head to head with pupils from other teams. The main aim was to devise a strategy that would allow them to be victorious in each round, regardless of who got to start.

To end things was the relay round, 30 minutes of intense questioning mixed in with a lot of running.

The pupils demonstrated a great attitude, gave it their all and were a credit to their primaries. The Maths teachers were all very impressed with their levels of ability and effort.

The winners on the day were St Margaret's team A, who got to go home with their very own scientific calculator as a prize.



Cheerleading Success

A huge congratulations to our school Cheerleading teams who competed at the Falkirk Inter-schools Competition and placed 2nd in both the Pom and Cheer categories. Their coaches Katie Dickenson and Amy Duvall did a superb job in organising the squads and choreographing their impressive routines. Cheer club will be running again next year and is open to all new members. For more information see Miss Dougall in the PE Department.



Graeme Positive Families 2016

This year's programme was a great success with all families attending 100% of the sessions. The group participated in a range of activities from creative art making positivitrees, family food to make pasta and tiffin, my map self-esteem computer skills and top tips for coping with conflict. Families involved made huge improvements to their positive relationships which they stated had a good impact on their whole family.

The programme was open to Primary 7, S1 and S2 pupils and their families and lasted 6 weeks, meeting for 2 hours on a Wednesday after school.

"I feel my daughter and I are able to communicate better and listen to each other more."

"Me and my Mum are happier and have a stronger relationship"

"Helped to show me how my child feels and how I can help make our relationship work."

Many thanks to Mrs Fail and Miss MacLean who helped support the activities again this year, your input is much appreciated.



Sports Council

Our Sports Council have been busy again this year, organising events, promoting sports and participation, recruiting new members, team building at Ratho and they have been heavily involved in the renovation of our fitness suite. Look out for our launch night next year.



Summer Message from our Headteacher

How did we get to the summer holidays again? My mum says it's old age but I prefer to think we've been very busy. Alongside all of our usual excitement, we've introduced new Advanced Higher qualifications and reviewed the broad general education. It really is testament to the energy, drive and commitment of our staff that we have successfully introduced so many major changes over the last few years without losing sight of all the other excellent opportunities provided to our pupil.

With a quick read through this summer newsletter I'm sure, like me, you will be very impressed with all that our pupils have engaged with and everything that has been achieved. Whilst this describes a very impressive array of activities and achievements, these are just the tip of the iceberg.

I would like to thank our fantastic pupils, committed staff and supportive parents for their ongoing dedication to our school community. We will continue to aspire to be the very best that we can be, individually and collectively.

Whatever your plans, watching the Euro Finals or Wimbledon, relaxing by a pool or in your back garden, I wish you a safe and enjoyable holiday. I look forward to seeing our pupils back in their full school uniform, with blazer, on **Wednesday 24 August at 8.35 am.**

