



BSM's Weekly Newsletter 5 December 2009

News From The Principal

Swine Flu Summary – In the week before the recent holiday we had no known cases of swine flu. Since opening on 5 September we have had two confirmed and six suspected cases.

I will now only be contacting you if we have any cases to report. Therefore, unless you hear from me, please assume that we have no known cases.

In the meantime, please keep your children at home if you suspect that they might have a flu-like illness and also keep their brothers and sisters at home. This is very important. Please then follow medical advice, especially if your children fall into a high risk category. The Flu Hotlines for Oman are 92466422 and 92466642. Please contact Mrs Cath Healy, our nurse, if your doctor suspects that your child may have swine flu. You can contact her on 99432613.

Good personal hygiene, especially hand washing and respiratory etiquette, are crucial to preventing the spread of the virus. Therefore, please reinforce this at home so that we can work together to disrupt the spread of the virus. Thank you.

Dinner Theatre Nights 5.30pm – 9.00pm, Saturday 12 & Sunday 13 December, - Every year the Department of Drama, under the very capable leadership of Mrs Jilly Witcomb, usually produces a large scale performance for members of our community; last year, for example, it was *West Side Story*. This year, Mrs Witcomb has changed this traditional format so that more students will have an opportunity to perform in public. So, instead of a selected cast for one large production, the audience will be able to see students from Key Stages 3 and 4 and the Sixth Form performing several productions drawn from some of their assessed and examination pieces. This has the added benefit of encouraging each performer to polish their contributions to public performance standard in preparation for their assessments.

The range of performances includes extracts from:

Jabberwocky, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Macbeth*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Crucible*, *Blood Brothers*, *Lysistrata*, *Oedipus*, *The Killing Ground*, *Brothers in Arms* and *Les Miserables*.

We still have a few seats available on both nights, so please contact our receptionist, Mrs Angela Bham (Tel: 24600842) if you would like to attend. The cost of dinner and entertainment is OMR 20 per head.

Doors open at 5.30pm; dinner will be served from 6.00pm to 7.15pm, and the first performance will start at 7.20pm.

Double House Points – Last week I awarded double house points to the following primary children for exceeding their teachers' expectations: Struan Robertson (5H) for English and Anna Al-Aghbari (6B) for French. Congratulations and well done!

British Embassy's Community Carol Service - The British Embassy invites the British Community in Muscat to Christmas carols at the British Embassy at 6.00pm on Monday 14 December. Please come along to sing some favourite carols and enjoy mulled wine and mince pies. BSM's Junior Choir, conducted by Mrs Rosie Kolster, will also be performing.

Sixth Form Charity Fashion Show – Members of our Sixth Form's Fund Raising Committee have been busy planning for this year's charity fashion show, which will take place from 6.00pm to 9.00pm on Wednesday 10 March at The British Ambassador's Residence further details will follow.

Omani Day 23 November – British School, Muscat Celebrates Omani Culture

Lessons were suspended on Monday when the children from the primary section of the British School, Muscat (BSM) were treated to a day aimed at learning about and celebrating the rich culture within Oman. This event, which is held at the school every two years originated six years ago when the school joined partnership with the Language Centre at Sultan Qaboos University (SQU).

The Experiential Learning Programme delivers just that, learning from experience. Innovative and exciting, the programme brings education students from SQU to join classes and work alongside teachers in the primary school once a week over a period of ten weeks. “It’s a win-win situation” says Lynda Haynes, Head of the Primary School. “Our teachers gain an extra pair of hands in the classroom and our pupils gain cross-cultural experiences as the students are required to prepare presentations on aspects of Omani culture and traditions.”

Catherine Lonie, supervising tutor for the Experiential Learning Programme commented, “Whilst at BSM, the students are in an immersion situation where the medium of instruction is English and all interactions take place in English. The students are exposed to different methodology and teaching materials from those they may be used to.” As a culmination of the project the students and the school organise an enrichment day enabling the pupils to immerse themselves in Omani culture and gain a thorough understanding of their host country.

All 498 pupils took part in the carousel of activities, ranging from demonstrations of traditional bread making, basket making and weaving. The SQU students gave presentations on traditional Omani dress, traditional medicine and traditional games. Celebrations such as Hol- Hol were enacted and children were offered halwa, dates and coffee. A number of Omani students studying in the Senior School also prepared presentations and shared their experiences of growing up in Oman.

This event was also supported by the Shangri-La Hotel who provided musicians and craftsmen and women who are linked to the Heritage Village at the hotel. Music filled the air as musicians from the Shangri-La played throughout the day, showcasing instruments such as the oud, tabla and bagpipes.

The British School, Muscat which was graded as ‘Outstanding’ in a recent school inspection, places an emphasis on first hand experiences and looks for opportunities to make learning fun. Judging by the feedback from the pupils both during and after this event the school is achieving its aims.



6B students learning the art of basket making and weaving



Mr Edwards with Carmen Greasby, Sophie Perry, Emily Petrie, Eleanor Brooks and Sabrina Rosillo Silva (3E)



Miss Law & Mrs Hope with RL



Anna Al-Aghbari (6B) had henna done on her hands

Silver International Award Achievements - The Silver International Award students from Year 11 all successfully passed their assessment over the weekend of Wednesday 18 to Friday 20 November. Their expedition took them from an altitude of 2000m above sea level overlooking Wadi Bani Auf to the stunning village of Misfat Al Abriyyin near Al Hamra. Staff leading the trip were: Mrs Ginie Smith, Mr Andrew Mackay, Mr Duncan Grey, Miss Clare Lutwyche, Mr Alan MacDonald (PDO School) and International Award Leader, Mr Jason Reeves.



Silver International Award Students

The successful students, pictured above, were: Govind Peringod (11SS), Laras Hidayat (11CB), Charmaine Buckley (11CB), Jake Penrose (11LS), David Burnett (11LS), Marcel Borges (11LS), Amy Morton (11CB), Imran Cakir (11LS), Nouran El-Hilali (11SS), Amina Chaudhry (11SS), Rachael Studman (11SS), Lydia Butler (11JIR), Beatrice Karabaczek (11LS), Olena Kozak-King (11CB), Ellie Jack (11CB), Anis Bashir (11CB), Ammar Srour (11LS) and Lucy Ambrose (11SS).

Sports Round-up

Oman's Number 1 Tennis Champion – This term, Year 8 student Armon Rabiee, won the Oman Open Tennis Championships securing his place as Oman's Under 12 Number 1. Armon's outstanding achievement automatically qualifies him to enter Oman's Open Masters Championship, which begins on 7 December. Congratulations and well done Armon! We wish you every success in the Masters.



Oman's Under 12 Number 1 Tennis Champion, Armon Rabiee receiving his medals on 17 November

The perfect Christmas present! - In January 2009 ex British School Muscat teacher Mark Evans spent 28 days on a journey through the Empty Quarter of Oman with leading New Zealand Photographer John Smith. A 180 page hard backed book titled 'Desert Voices' has recently been produced of the journey, containing over 80 high quality images. Two thousand copies of Mark's last book of his kayak journey around the coast of Oman, '55 Days' sold out, raising 54,000 RO for the Oman National Association for Cancer Awareness.

Every baysa from the 20 RO cost of Desert Voices goes to fund Omani young people from government schools on an Outward Bound Oman course in 2010. These are available from Angela Bham in Reception, she can also arrange for Mr Mark Evans to sign any books bought.

Student Council Representatives - Each class in KS2 elects student council representatives, who meet every two weeks with Mr. Turley to discuss the issues which are important to the children. The student council reps have an important job, and they take their responsibilities very seriously. We thought it would be nice if we introduced them to a wider audience, so they have written short profiles of themselves. Each week we profile two members of the Student Council. This week it's Rebecca Cramp and Ismail Sufi from 3D:



Rebecca Cramp is 7 years old and was born in the USA. She loves swimming, dancing and singing. She is a reliable, happy girl who likes helping people. When she grows up she would like to be a world famous pop star. She hopes she can do something to reduce the amount of litter in the playground.

Ismail Sufi is 7 years old and was born in Egypt. He enjoys swimming and loves to write. When he grows up he'd like to be an Egyptologist. He would like to encourage more children to wear hats at break-time to protect them from the sun.

News From The Board of Governors

A Busy Week of Meetings – In the week before the recent holiday, members of the Board attended several meetings in the lead up to the full meeting of the Board on Sunday 6 December. Governors met, during four separate monitoring and evaluation meetings, with members of the school's Leadership Team in order to evaluate the progress the team is making towards achieving the objectives within the school's development plan. Additionally, members of the governors' Finance Committee met to review the school's financial position, and to consider recommendations from the Personnel, Marketing and Premises Committees Outcomes. Outcomes from each meeting have been reported to the full Board for consideration on 6 December. A summary of this meeting will be reported by parent governor Julie Towler in next week's newsletter.

Last But Certainly Not Least...

Safeguarding & Absence From School – Please contact us before 8.00am on everyday that your children are absent from school. This ensures that you and we know exactly where they are and why. Thank you.

Low Attendance, Low Performance – That's the conclusion reached by Ofsted after inspecting thousands of schools in the UK. Please try to keep your child's attendance levels up but follow the advice on swine flu first. Thank you.

Tag Your Bags – Please remember to tag your school bags and name your lunch boxes.

Car Parking - Parents are asked to observe the following when using the school's car parks:

- have security passes ready to show the security guards on arrival.
- do not park or stop for extended periods outside of the designated parking bays
- keep speeds to a minimum, no more than 20kph
- remain observant at all times
- pedestrians have priority at all times
- be patient and courteous to other parents, security guards and car parking assistants
- use the pedestrian crossings where provided when on foot
- do not use mobile phones whilst driving
- turn your engines off when leaving your car

Thank you for your co-operation.

Clunk-Click Every Trip – Please make your children wear their seat belts.

Cream-up and Hats On – Please protect your child's skin with sun block and a wide brimmed hat.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Have a good week!

Steve Howland
Principal.