



## BELMONT HOUSE SCHOOL NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2011

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Dear Parents

It is again my pleasure to write to you to both update you on recent developments at the School and to draw your attention to a number of important forthcoming events.

### Staffing

As most of you will be aware Mrs Veronique McMillan retired at the end of September after 18 years excellent service to the school in our Modern Languages department and we wish her every health and happiness as she returns to her native France. We have been fortunate to secure the services of Ms Brigitte Leray as Mrs McMillan's successor. Ms Leray is also a native French speaker and in addition to her teaching experience she brings a wealth of experience from her previous career in commerce in both the UK and France.

The School has also appointed a Marketing Intern, Ms Colleen Burton, who is a US citizen, has wide-ranging experience in journalism and PR and will be undertaking a number of marketing and development projects for the School over the next few months.

### BBC's Children in Need Appeal – Friday 18<sup>th</sup> November 2011

The School will once again be actively supporting this very worthwhile cause and our Senior 6 Charities Committee is busy making preparations for this. Last year we raised an astonishing £1750 and we aim to surpass this total this year. Events in School for the pupils will include our annual "*Belmont's Got Talent*" event, the opportunity to "gunge" senior prefects and possibly, assuming a large amount of cash is pledged, myself. Additionally this year our Choir will be recording a song on video for the Appeal which will hopefully be aired on the BBC Scotland Highlights Show on the Saturday evening.

We have also been given some 30 seats out of an audience of just over 300 for the live show on the Friday evening and hope to be able to present a very substantial cheque live on air. It has been suggested that any parents who would normally make a personal contribution to the Appeal direct to the BBC might wish to do so via the School in order to boost the sum raised by Belmont and to that end members of the PTA [Chair Mrs Lynn Fairservice, Secretary Mrs Lorna Bruce and Treasurer Ms Frances O'Hare] will be on hand at the beginning and end of the school day on the 18<sup>th</sup> to accept donations. Senior 6 pupils will also be available at the end of each day that week to accept donations via the usual "charity buckets" and the 18<sup>th</sup> will, of course, be a non-uniform day. The School has a proud track record of supporting worthwhile charitable causes and those less fortunate than ourselves – I would thank you for your previous generosity and your continued support in these more challenging economic times.

## **Jingle Belmont – Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> November**

The PTA's annual and highly successful Christmas "extravaganza" is rapidly approaching. It again promises to be an excellent night, with a diverse and interesting range of stallholders already committed to be in attendance in addition to the usual fun activities for the children. Entrance is £5 for adults, including refreshments, and free for all pupils and children. Please do come along and support and bring a friend. Last year the PTA donated £4000 to the School for the purchase of portable staging and this year the target for their fundraising activities is the purchase of a sound system for the Hall.

### **Adverse weather conditions**

As you will no doubt recall, last winter presented a number of occasions with significantly adverse weather and associated road conditions which called into question the ability of the School to open on certain days; indeed, we were forced to close along with almost every other school in the West of Scotland for three days last December. Such closures are rare events for Belmont House and I would again emphasise that any decision to close is taken very reluctantly and in the context of advice from the relevant authorities, particularly Strathclyde Police. The prevailing weather forecasts and road conditions in the vicinity of the School and in the wider area, in addition to our own assessment of the underfoot conditions on the School site itself, are also key determinants in any decision that is reached.

We obviously hope for a milder winter this year but the long-range forecast would seem to indicate that this may not be the case and I would take this opportunity to remind you of our procedures for such eventualities.

If a decision is made to close the School, a notice will be posted on the website [[www.belmontschool.co.uk](http://www.belmontschool.co.uk)] as early as possible on the morning concerned. Please check for a notice to this effect from 0645 onwards on any day for final updates on whether the School is open that day or not – a decision will always be taken before that time. Please be assured that the School will always open if it is considered safe to do so.

If there is no notification of change on the website and the conditions are obviously reasonable and travel is possible, the School will open as normal.

For those pupils who travel by any of our bus services operated by Dodds or Shields Coaches, please note that early decisions will be taken by the operators in conjunction with the School of the advisability of travel. Parents are able to contact Dodds directly on 01292 288100 or Shields Coaches on 07795 565864 if they have any doubts as to whether the buses will operate.

### **School Web-Site/E-Mail Communication**

As mentioned in previous newsletters, the School considers the Internet to be an important communication channel and intends to fully harness the interactive potential of the technology for the benefit of our various internal and external stakeholders.

We continue to move towards all communications from the School to parents to be by electronic means. As far as is possible, to move towards a position where lengthy letters such as this and all key School information are only available via the website and/or is e-mailed directly to parents.

However, we have current e-mail addresses for only approximately 70% of the parent body and I would again encourage you to use e-mail as your primary means of contact or enquiry whenever possible. An email update form is enclosed and I would urge you to complete and return this to your child's Teacher/Tutor by the date indicated.

## Fees

I would take this opportunity to remind all parents of the importance of paying fees on the due dates and of the School's policy in relation to non-payment of fees as outlined in the Fees Notice issued at the start of this academic session.

## Session Dates 2012-2013

Please find enclosed a copy of our Session Dates for the academic year 2012-2013.

## Forthcoming Events

In addition to the dates listed in the Calendar of Events issued at the beginning of term. I would particularly remind pupils and parents of the various examinations scheduled over the next few weeks for some Senior School year groups and also the various end of term events. Please note the following key and/or additional dates/events:

- Our Celtic Group and soloists will be performing in John Lewis, Glasgow, on **Friday 25<sup>th</sup> November between 7pm and 9pm in aid of Breast Cancer Research.**
- Some of our senior musicians will also be visiting a number of Care Homes on **Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> December.**
- Our Junior and Senior Choirs will be performing in Princes Square, Glasgow, on **Monday 12<sup>th</sup> December between 2pm and 4pm.**
- **The Junior 1-3 Christmas Show - "Too Busy for Christmas!" - Monday 12<sup>th</sup> December at 7pm in the School Hall.** The PTA will be providing tea/coffee and mince pies before the show with all proceeds will go to their fundraising efforts on behalf of the school.
- **Seasonal Concert – Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> December at 7 p.m. in the School Hall**  
This is, as always, a whole-school event and all parents and pupils are warmly invited.
- **Nursery Christmas Show – Friday 16<sup>th</sup> December at 10 a.m. in the School Hall**  
Parents are asked to park in the surrounding streets – tea/coffee and mince pies will be available in the Hall from 9.15 a.m. on Friday morning. The term will end immediately after the show for the Nursery.
- End of term is at **12 noon on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> December** and the Spring Term commences at **8.50 a.m. on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2012.**
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I look forward to seeing you all over the course of the next few weeks.

Kind regards



Melvyn D Shanks  
Principal