



PRIESTLEY SMITH SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



Headteacher's Letter to Parents and Friends

22nd July 2010

SCHOOL FINISHES TODAY FOR SUMMER...

Today is the last day of term for students. The year has flown by and it hard to believe that we have reached the end of the academic year.

This year has been a very busy one for staff and students - and also an exciting one. The school got the final go ahead for its new Sixth Form which will be in place for September 2011 and our bid for specialist status has been submitted. We will know the outcome for this by 31st July and are keeping our fingers crossed! Students have taken part in an amazing number of curriculum, sporting and artistic ventures over the past year and academically our school was identified as one of the top performing special schools nationally. Overall, a fantastic year for Priestley Smith and I would like to thank all the students, staff, parents, governors and volunteers who have helped to make this year such a successful one.

YEAR 6 AND YEAR 11 GRADUATION

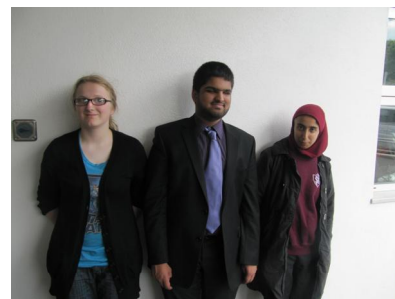


Yesterday we held our Graduation Assembly for Year 6 and Year 11 students. The school joined together with parents of Year 6 and Year 11 to

celebrate their achievements in music, song and dance. Graduation certificates were awarded to the students by our Chair of Governors, Denise McManus.

Avtar and Rebecca leave the Primary Department at the end of this term to join the Secondary Department in September. They have already taken part in induction activities in the Secondary Department and have met the new children joining Year 7 in September.

Year 11 have now reached the end of Key Stage 4 and are moving on to Post-16 studies. Alice, Ranyah and Ahmad have worked tremendously hard and have been a credit to the school. They have taken a full part in every aspect of school life and we will miss our departing students greatly. We wish them every success in the future and look forward to hearing about their many successes.



WOMEN IN THEATRE

Following our very successful work with Women in Theatre earlier this year, when Secondary students produced, performed and recorded radio plays at the BBC, Women in Theatre are very keen to work with our students again. They have made a successful bid for further funding and in

the Autumn Term will be working with our students and the local community to produce a play called *See Me, Hear Me*. Further information will be given in the next newsletter.

NATIONAL SECONDARY SPORTS WEEK

28th to 2nd July 2010 was National Sports week for Secondary schools.

During this week our Secondary students took part in a large number of sporting activities, including gymnastics at the GMAC Centre, dance with the Hi-bris Dance Company, golf at the Belfry, multiskills and swimming -and even saw an exhibition of breakdancing!

Here are just a few of the highlights



HEALTHY SCHOOLS AWARD

As you know Priestley Smith School recently gained the national Healthy School Award. On 8th July Mrs McCall, Mr McGonagle, Syan, Saima, Noman and Karamjot went to the Council House in Birmingham, to collect our certificate.



PRIMARY VI SPORTS DAY

On 9th July visually impaired children from mainstream Primary schools, resource bases and our own Primary Department took part in a sports day at the school. This was an excellent day, in which students took part in races, football competitions, dance and art activities. It was a beautifully sunny day and children and staff all had a wonderful time.



A GOODBYE TO STAFF...

At the end of this term we will be sad to say good bye to two members of staff who have been with the school for a long time. Mrs Braniff and Mrs Thursfield will both be leaving us and we would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their excellent work with the children, for their professionalism, commitment and caring approach. So many children at Priestley Smith have benefitted from being taught by these two members of staff. We will miss them greatly and wish them good luck for the future. We hope they will keep in touch with us and come along to our concerts and reunions.

...AND A WELCOME TO NEW STAFF IN SEPTEMBER

In September we will have three new permanent members of staff joining us. Mrs Sara Dover will be the Secondary Food Technology teacher, Mrs Mary O'Hagan will be joining us as Teaching

Assistant in both Primary and Secondary departments and Miss Joanna Davis will be joining us as Key Stage 1 teacher in the Primary Department. We are delighted that they will be joining our team.

A VISIT TO WOODLANDS

On 19th July our Junior pupils took part in an excellent visit to the Woodlands Outdoor Activity Centre.

As you can see from the photographs below, they took part in very exciting activities, including climbing, kayaking and punting while there. They also went on the Zip Wire Aerial Runway. All staff and students had a superb day.



SECONDARY DEPARTMENT DAY OUT AT DRAYTON MANOR PARK

As part of our end of year celebrations with Year 11, the whole Secondary Department went out to Drayton Manor Park. They came back full of stories about rollercoasters that went upside down and inside out, log flumes where they got soaked and very scary pirate ships. Overall, a brilliant day was had by all!



YEAR 10 WORK EXPERIENCE

At Priestley Smith all Year 10 pupils undertake two week work experience placements in the Summer term. This year our students have worked in a range of organisations, including Birmingham University, Birmingham Focus on Blindness, PDSA Charity and the Donkey Sanctuary. The students have gained an enormous amount from these experiences, with regard to work skills, expectations and preparation for employment. We would like to thank all the organisations who supported us in providing such valuable and important work experience opportunities.



BIKEABILITY TANDEM COURSE

Over recent months Jeremy Adams, our P.E. Teacher and staff from Bikeability have been developing an accredited SEN Tandem course for our students. I am delighted to report that 95% of our Secondary students have now gained their Level 1 tandem accreditation.



AUTUMN TERM

The school term ends for students today-Thursday 22nd July.

**The children will return to school on Thursday
2nd September.**

We hope you all have a lovely Summer.

With best wishes,

Helen Porter