



From the Headmaster, Mark Ronan BA

12 February 2010

To: Pocklington School and Lyndhurst School
Parents and Guardians

Information: Governors, Teaching and
Support Staff

Dear Parents and Guardians

On Wednesday 27 January, the school held its second 'Help for Heroes' concert, with an Old Time Music Hall theme. It was a remarkable evening, with staff and pupils alike performing to raise over £2,000 for such an important charity. There was much enjoyment by all and the evening finished, rightly, with a most moving speech by Ben Parkinson, a soldier who has survived the most challenging injuries. After the event, we received the following letter from a retired officer of the Yorkshire Regiment:

Thank you so much for the invitation to join you at the 'Old Time Music Hall' last week. It was a great evening which I enjoyed enormously not least because it gave a wonderful insight into the underlying character of the school. Perhaps the best of this was seeing how the staff were prepared to throw themselves into the show and how the pupils responded to them with openness and enthusiasm. I came away with a real sense of a teaching fraternity who liked and enjoyed their charges, something very special in a school.

Well done also to the school for putting on the evening and exposing the children to some of the costs of what soldiers are doing on the nation's behalf and ultimately, with this, those at the evening as well.

I continue to be immensely impressed by the way in which staff and pupils work with each other to the benefit both of the school community and beyond.

In drama, the Middle School play, *Our Town*, will be performed on Wednesday 3 and Thursday 4 March and you will receive a separate communication regarding ticketing arrangements. Auditions have already taken place for the Lower School production of *Dracula*, with 54 Lower School pupils taking part, and the Lyndhurst school play, *Wind in the Willows*, with a cast of over 60. Both plays will be performed in the Summer term.

House Music was a remarkable event, with 278 pupils participating. Last Friday, as I walked past the RS department at lunchtime, I heard angelic voices and came across Dolman house rehearsing their choral piece led by Sixth Formers, with 1st Years and members of the 1st XV sharing song sheets. Later on in the afternoon I was distracted in a meeting by Hutton house rehearsing their finale outside under leaden skies. The commitment, energy and drive of each house shown in rehearsing and performing over two evenings is such an important part of a broad education in preparing young people to live in a world where they will need to work together to tackle the challenges that they encounter.

We were pleased that the number of external pupils sitting our 11+ entrance exam this year was up 18% on the previous year. At the Sixth Form Open Morning on Saturday 6 February we had the highest number of external visitors who have attended that event in 10 years. Also, the launch of the Pre-Prep has proved immensely successful and we will now be opening with a reception/Year 1 and a Year 2 class this September. We remain committed to ensuring that we are providing an education of value to both parents and pupils. We will be holding 'Come and See Us at Work' mornings on Friday 12 March at Lyndhurst and Saturday 13 March at Pocklington. Details will be forwarded to you separately, so do pass these on to any parents who may be interested in their children becoming part of our community.

Best wishes to all those going with the school over half term on the sports tour to Spain and the German exchange. New for this year, the Religious Studies department is visiting Krakow to look at the Holocaust sites of Auschwitz and Berkenau. We also wish every success to the girls' U18 XI when they play at the national hockey finals on 1 and 2 March.

I would like to wish you an enjoyable half term and finish with an email from the actor Martin Barrass who recently gave a workshop to members of the Sixth Form:

I just had to email you about yesterday's drama workshop! Thank you for a truly memorable session. You obviously have the highest standards at your school. I couldn't have wished to meet a more eager, polite, inventive and genuinely funny group of students.

I look forward to following their progress in school and beyond. Here's to seeing you all again very soon.

Yours sincerely

Mark Ronan