

Weekly News Update Friday 29 April 2022

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope you all managed a restful and peaceful Easter break and that you are able to enjoy this coming bank holiday weekend. As we return to the summer term, we do so with hope and positivity as we renew those aspects of the education that we offer here at Stringer that have not been possible for some time. Our in-person assemblies this week followed the themes of hope and respect. It was the first time in over two years that Year groups have been fully back together, and it was wonderful to see them all in the hall. I talked to the students about taking up the opportunities that we have in school, from sport, to art and music, extra-curricular activities as well as residential trips. This half term is very short; however, as usual, we will fill it with as much teaching and as many extra-curricular activities as we can for all Year groups, and of course the GCSE exams are also on the horizon for our Year 11 students, making this a crucial half term for them.

This week we also remembered two of our former colleagues. Heather Cowl, our previous Head of Music, sadly passed away recently and a tribute to her is below. We also gathered to remember Andy Latham, our former Head of Science, who was sadly taken from us last year, as we unveiled the new sign for the renamed science area (The Andy Latham Science Block) and a bench dedicated to him with the inscription, "In memory of Mr Andy Latham, an inspirational teacher who never gave up on anyone."

Tribute to former Head of Music, Heather Cowl

At the end of last week, we received the sad news that our former colleague, Miss Heather Cowl, has passed away. Heather was a remarkable music teacher and Head of Department; she worked at Dorothy Stringer from 1975 to when she retired in 2002. Many tributes to Heather have been shared with us from former students, parents and colleagues. Charlie Linford (former head boy) summed up the thoughts of many: "Miss Cowl was the inimitable driving force behind Stringer's musical scene for decades. Her infectious enthusiasm and tireless effort to put on shows, concerts and recitals, helped share her love of music with thousands. She will be sorely missed by all."

Heather's fierce and formidable commitment to children's musical education continued after her retirement and students across the county benefited from her relentless energy and passion. Leading the school orchestra and choir for 25 years, Heather organised some remarkable gigs: from singing in the chorus of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* starring Jason Donovan at the London Palladium to performing Handel's *Messiah* in the Albert Hall; from children's choruses for operas at Glyndebourne to orchestra tours to German venues in Hamburg and beyond, Heather ensured her students made memories of a lifetime. Although her background was in classical music, she supported all musical genres and she continued to support the performing arts at Dorothy Stringer long after her retirement. In 2002 Heather was justly awarded an MBE for her admirable services to music and education. She will be fondly remembered as an inspirational teacher and a kind and generous colleague. Whilst we wish to celebrate her life and work, we shall also miss her.

PE news

Our Year 9A Boys Football team played in the semi-final of the County Cup on Wednesday evening. In the previous fixture, Downlands came out on top 4-3, and sadly the outcome on this occasion was no different. The two teams were well-matched, but Stringer hitting the woodwork and the Downlands keeper having a strong game meant this time Downlands won through to the final with a 4-0 victory. We wish them well with their endeavours and we will aim to come back stronger next year. Both teams are to be congratulated on the respect and resilience they showed in both fixtures.

Local parents invited to join Brighton beach walk-and-talks

A series of accessible community-support beach walks, facilitated by mental health professionals, will form part of a new programme designed to encourage parents and carers who may have experienced social isolation to meet up, share and support each other. For details of locations, dates and to register your interest, please visit: www.makegoodtrouble.co.uk/beachwalk

The initiative will also include virtual meet-ups via Make (Good) Trouble's [Facebook group](#), [Raising Teens](#), for those that cannot attend the weekly beach walks. Expert guests will be invited to cover topics such as eating disorders, self-harm, substance misuse, school stress, conflicts in the home and LGBTQ+ support.

Make (Good) Trouble also offers support with their hugely successful radio show *Raising Teens*, broadcast on BBC Sussex and Surrey. The show aims to dispel myths around teen mental health and offer practical help and tips. All four series are available on catch up, search 'BBC Raising Teens' or go to: www.makegoodtrouble.co.uk/raising-teens/

Year 10 Varndean College Taster Day – Wednesday 6 July 2022

We are very grateful to Varndean College for organising a separate Taster Day for all our Year 10 students on Wednesday 6 July. This will be a whole Year 10 event; our normal Year 10 timetable will be collapsed so that all Year 10 students can attend. Please see the email that has been sent to all Year 10 parents and carers for full details, including the schedule for the day and the registration link. Registration for this event must be completed by Friday 6 May.

Year 11 Reminder: national exam contingency day – Wednesday 29 June

As has previously been stated in exam bulletins to Year 11 parents, carers and students, may we remind you that **all Year 11 students taking GCSE exams need to be available to come into school for exams up to and including Wednesday 29 June**, regardless of when their last timetabled exam is. This is a national exam board requirement in case any exam needs to be rescheduled, therefore please do not book any holidays before this date.

Brighton & Hove City Parks Play Area Consultation

Brighton & Hove council have asked us to let you know about a public consultation on improvements to play areas across the city. The consultation is online – please visit <https://consultations.brighton-hove.gov.uk/environment/childrens-play-area-consultation>. Please contact cityparks@brighton-hove.gov.uk or call 01273 292929 if you require any assistance regarding this online questionnaire.

Spring Term Stringer Press

Thank you to everyone who took the time to read our Spring Term stringer press. We had a record number of views, and we hope you enjoyed reading about school life during the Spring term. It certainly was a busy one and we look forward to seeing what the Summer term has in store for us! We would like to inform parents and carers of an error on page 35 - the last day of term stated is incorrect. The last day of the academic year is Thursday 21 July 2022 and school will close early at 12.30pm. Apologies for this error. If you didn't manage to catch up at the end of last term, you can view the Stringer Press [here](#).

Reminder: Parent Calendar Photo Competition 2022/23

Deadline Extended to Monday 9 May

Entries are still open for students for our Parent Calendar Photography Competition. The winning photos will be selected in the summer term and printed in our 2022/23 parent calendar. Please see the SLG newsletter item for this year's categories and more information. All entries should be emailed to photocomp@dorothy-stringer.co.uk.

Reminder: Tickets on sale for Prom – Friday 1st July 2022

We are excited to be returning to the AMEX after a break for the last two years, for Year 11 students to celebrate completing their examinations and their time at Stringer. Further information has been sent home and a link to the letter can be found on the Trips page of the SLG.

Root Word of the Week – Migr, meaning 'wander, moving' (Latin root word)

- **Migrant** – a person who moves from one place to another, especially in order to find work or better living conditions
- **Emigrate** – leave one's own country in order to settle permanently in another
- **Migrate** – (of an animal, typically a bird or fish) move from one region or habitat to another according to the seasons

Key Dates

Bank holiday: Monday 2 May 2022

Half term: Monday 30 May – Friday 3 June 2022

Last day of term: Thursday 21 July 2022 (early closure 12.30pm)

Key Dates for 2021/2022 and 2022/3 are on our website: https://public.dorothy-stringer.co.uk/ds/pages/key_dates.aspx

***Note: If any of the hyperlinks in this update do not work, please copy and paste the link address into your address bar.**

