Dear Parents,

We come to the end of the first week of the new academic year and we are looking forward to a very positive term with much optimism. This optimism is based on a number of factors.

1. The extensive summer refurbishments have improved the quality of the school environment both aesthetically and for learning
   - The music room has been extended by 30% and three new music practice rooms have been installed
   - The primary ground floor corridor has been given a remarkable facelift and is a much more friendly place
   - There is a new data centre with the whole site re-cabled to enable us to really develop educational technology
   - The primary ICT room has been remodelled and upgraded
   - In addition there were many modest upgrades in many classrooms

All these improvements indicate the commitment to upgrade school facilities and to invest in our campus. I thank all those involved in these ambitious projects from school governors, school staff and contractors.

We are also optimistic because we had a very successful staff training week before school opening. In comparison to August 2014, we extended this training from 2 to 5 days and this enabled us all to be prepared well and to be focused on the year ahead.

We are optimistic because we are delighted that our new teachers, Miss Marsden, Mr. Crowhurst, Miss Patterson, Mrs Charles, Mr Gilliland and Ms Drummond, have joined our excellent team and that they have settled so quickly and already seem at home at OBS.

We are optimistic because of our external examination results. We attach headline data to this newsletter but we have achieved our second best set of IB results in the school’s history (the record was August 2014) and we believe that we compare very favourably both internationally and in comparison to other Portuguese IB schools.

We are optimistic because of the successful first week of school. The academic review meetings with form tutors were positively received. The primary information evening was well-attended and effective. The routines and procedures for all are well-established and embedded after the first few days.

We are optimistic because of the positive and focused start by our students and the positive vibe at school.

This year I wish to build on the sense of community at OBS and please join us for a coffee morning hosted by the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) on Thursday, 17th September in Teage Hall at 9am. This is a welcome event for all parents and we especially invite new parents to join us and meet up.

This week was also a memorable one as HM Queen Elizabeth II became the longest serving monarch in British history surpassing Queen Victoria’s record of 63 years and 217 days. We pay tribute to her Majesty on this remarkable achievement. I include an excerpt from her coronation speech of 1952; Queen Elizabeth has remained true to her pledge through her decades of service.
“The ceremonies you have seen today are ancient, and some of their origins are veiled in the mists of the past. But their spirit and their meaning shine through the ages never, perhaps, more brightly than now. I have in sincerity pledged myself to your service, as so many of you are pledged to mine. Throughout all my life and with all my heart I shall strive to be worthy of your trust.”

Tom McGrath, Headmaster

WHOLE SCHOOL NOTICES

PERMISSION FOR USE OF PHOTOGRAPHS
Throughout the academic year, photographs are taken of pupils taking part in different events and/or activities. We may use these photographs for various publications, promotional material e.g. yearly prospectus and/or banners, and general marketing purposes. If you do not wish your child’s photograph to be used for these materials, please email the School Secretary, joana.saraiva@obs.edu.pt, by Wednesday, 16th September. No response will be regarded as providing parental consent for your child’s image to be used in promotional material.

CLASS & INDIVIDUAL PHOTOGRAPHS - 14th-16th SEPTEMBER
Mr Abílio, the school photographer will be taking individual & class photographs in the Secondary Section on Monday, and Primary Section on Tuesday & Wednesday. Please ensure your children come in to school looking smart and in keeping with the uniform policy: http://www.obs.edu.pt/en/our-students/student-life/uniform/

UNIFORM SHOP OPENING TIMES
Tuesday: 8:30 to 9:30
Wednesday: 15:00 to 16:30

CHANGE TO PARENT CONTACT DETAILS
If your email address or mobile phone number has changed recently, please ensure you inform the school as a matter of priority so that we can update our files. Please email: Vera.Silva@obs.edu.pt

CAFE
The Canteen booking system is now up and running again http://obsvpn.dyndns.info:8085/FormLogin.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2fdefault.aspx. If you have any problems booking your child’s lunches however, please contact Mrs Alice Amaral Marques, who will be more than happy to assist you: canteen@obs.edu.pt
PRIMARY NOTICES

Form 5 Team Building Trip in Póvoa de Lanhoso

AFTER CARE

We welcome Sofia Goldstraw Fernandes as After-Care Coordinator and she begins this role from Monday, 14th September.
SECONDARY NOTICES

I hope that you have had the chance to see our excellent IGCSE and IBDP results over the summer. 2015-16 seeks to build on this strong academic success. It also seeks to build on other aspects of education such as the arts, games and computing to ensure your child grows to be a confident and responsible young adult. At the heart of everything we do is your child and supporting them to develop the characteristics of the IB Learner Profile. This half term there is a key focus on thinking skills and as always literacy skills.

The Academic review day was very well attended and supported. I thank you for your participation and support in this. I hope that this meeting will be the start of strengthening the relationships between the school, parents and pupil. At the centre of this relationship is the Form Tutor. Please do keep in touch with the Form Tutor in relation to the wellbeing and learning of your child. As you know, you will have the chance to meet with the Form Tutor at least once per half term to discuss your child’s progress against specific targets and as well as discuss any other successes or concerns.

Dr P Jones, Head of Secondary

BASELINE TESTS

A reminder that students in Forms 6, 9 and 11 will sit their baseline tests during September. These online computer adaptive tests are designed to help us get a full understanding of your child’s learning style and strengths; it is not the type of test they need to prepare for. We will discuss the results with your child once they are published.

Ailish Corcoran, Head of Form 6-10 and Exams Officer

IBDP –FIRST WEEK BACK

We would like to give a warm welcome to our new form 11s and especially Jamie Rose Graham who has joined us from the UK and Alberto Halfeld, who arrived in Porto last month from Brazil. They have all begun the term bubbling with excitement and enthusiasm for starting their IB courses. With the new mentor scheme in place, we will be setting targets and raising awareness about the university options available for them under the watchful eye of tutor Mr Hooley.

On Wednesday 16th September there will be a coffee morning for form 11 parents to come along and meet our new IB coordinator, Claire Marsden and Rita Quintas. This will be a great opportunity to meet the new families and discuss any teething problems which may have arisen over the first week. We hope to see as many of you there as possible: 9:00 am in Teage Hall.

After a relaxing yet (hopefully) productive summer holiday we welcome back the form 12s. With a busy year ahead, there has been no easing back into school life. Numerous deadlines are already looming and tutors, mentors and teachers are poised and ready to give them the support they need. Being a form 12 student at OBS not only means fulfilling the IB learner profile but also promoting this to the rest of the community. The prefects have met with Miss Marsden and are already planning a number of events to build on school/house spirit.
Exercise plays a huge role in ensuring a healthy approach to study. Being given the opportunity to let off steam, get some fresh air and move your body after a hard day of study has been proven to lift the spirits, calm the nerves and increase productivity. We will be devising an after school club for our form 11s and 12s which could include yoga, zumba, football or fitness. More information will follow.

Miss Marsden, IBDP Coordinator
Claire.marsden@obs.edu.pt

COBIS/KING´S GROUP STUDENT LEADERSHIP WEEKEND
King's College, Madrid, 9-11 October 2015
€390 per student

We are pleased to announce that students of Form 10, 11 and 12 are invited to participate in a Student Leadership Weekend will take place at King's College Madrid, 9-11 October 2015.

The Student Leadership Weekend will provide leadership training and life skills for senior pupils. Through interactive activities with trainers and prominent motivational speakers, the students will be presented with opportunities to develop self-awareness, interpersonal skills and life competencies.

The programme will include sessions on:

- Personal branding
- Presentation and public speaking skills
- Creative problem solving
- University life skills
- And more

If you are interested in your son/daughter participating in the Leadership Weekend then please contact Miss Marsden or Miss Corcoran by 18th September. A short list of those students interested in the event will then be made and students invited.

Miss Marsden, IBDP Coordinator
Claire.marsden@obs.edu.pt

FORM 9-10 IGCSE

Form 9&10 students have settled back into school well this week. Form 9 have a clear understanding of IGCSE requirements across subject areas and form 10 have returned with focussed attitudes, ready to face the demands of their exam year. This week the focus has been on homework and study timetables and all students have been asked to devise a timetable to manage their academic, extra-curricular and social commitments.

We have been pleased to welcome Qifeng Chen into Form 9, Yiting Cao into Form 10 and Hanisha Kanani who has returned to OBS to join Form 10.

Please do not hesitate to contact myself or the Form Tutor about any matter.

Miss Weston, Senior Tutor F9-10
Pia.weston@obs.edu.pt
FORM 6-8

Form 6-8 have had an excellent start to the year. I have received much positive feedback from teachers about the great attitude pupils have shown so far. Form 7&8 have matured and are showing that they are organised, focused and on time for their lessons. I hope they build on this. Form 6 have begun their transition to Secondary well. Some are still finding their books, their rooms and their feet. Within a few weeks they will be settled and be familiar with the differences that the Secondary Section brings. Over the next couple of weeks we hope to organise an information evening for Form 6 parents. This will aim to clarify how we can all support Form 6 in the transition from the Primary to Secondary Section.

Overall I wish all pupils a great year ahead focusing on their learning and building relationships.

Please do not hesitate to contact myself or the Form Tutor about any matter.

Miss Denisova, Senior Tutor F6-8
Anastasia.denisova@obs.ed.pt

EXAMINATIONS

This year’s November examination series, including IGCSE and IBDP resits, will run from 28th October until 18th November. Please note that the first Form 10 Mathematics IGCSE will take place on Wednesday 28th October which is during the half term. Full details and timetable will be sent to parents of Form 10 and students who have applied for resits next week.

A reminder that students in Forms 6, 9 and 11 will sit their baseline tests during September. These online computer adaptive tests are designed to help us get a full understanding of your child’s learning style and strengths; it is not the type of test they need to prepare for. We will discuss the results with your child once they are published.

Ailish Corcoran, Head of Form 6-10/Examinations Officer

NOTICES

- Homework timetable: This will be provided to all pupils on Tuesday. Please support your child in organizing this and meeting deadlines.
- Extra-curricular activities: We have a range of opportunities at OBS from sports to music to subject related clubs. The schedule has been emailed out. Please encourage your child to take full advantage of these activities.
- Phones:
  
  We actively discourage pupils from bringing mobile phones to school. If you feel as a parent that it is beneficial for your child to have a mobile phone, we will allow this under the following conditions:

  1. The mobile phone should not be audible and visible during the school day and on the school premises.
  2. Pupils should leave the phone in their locker in silent mode or switched off.
  3. Pupils cannot carry the phone to lessons. If detected it will be confiscated. This includes having a phone in your pocket.
  4. Pupils cannot use a mobile phone at morning break or at lunch time or between lessons. IB pupils are allowed to use mobile phones at specified times and only in the IB common room.
  5. If deemed necessary phone calls can be made from the Front Office or Head of Secondary office. Urgent notices from parents will be relayed to pupils.
  6. Any phones used without permission will be confiscated and repeat offenders will have the privilege of having a phone at school removed.
• Lunch time food: All pupils must bring either a pack lunch or have a school dinner. Take away foods or delivery foods are not allowed during school time or lunch time.

• Birthday cakes: If you would like your child to share their birthday celebration with a cake at school then this must be with the consent of the class teacher and happen after 4pm.

• Tutor/Mentor Meetings: These will begin 21st September

DATES FOR DIARIES

16th September
IBDP (Form 11) Coffee Morning in Teage Hall at 9am

17th September
PTA welcome coffee morning in Teage Hall at 9am

28th October-18th November
IGCSE and IBDP resits Examinations

3rd-4th October
Duke of Edinburgh practice expedition

26th-30th October
Half-term Break