

23<sup>rd</sup> September 2008

Dear Parents

Now that the new school year is successfully underway I thought it would be a good time to update you on the latest developments at Belvedere.

### **Examination Results**

External examination results at A level, GCSE and, for the first time, Key Stage 3, were excellent with some outstanding individual performances.

At A level 41% of all grades were A, 74% were A or B, and 92% were A, B or C. As a result, the vast majority of girls gained places in their first choice university with Kate Barry and Philippa Edis both going to Cambridge University to study Law and Engineering respectively.

The GCSE results were also excellent. 57% of all grades were A\*-A, 84% were A\*-B and 95.4% were A\* - C. Ten girls achieved ten grade A's with Emily Fulham achieving an outstanding 10 A\* grades.

As an Academy, Belvedere is now required to enter girls for Key Stage 3 tests or SATs. I had formally requested that last year's Year 9 should be disapplied from SATs due to lack of preparation time for both staff and students, but this was refused by the DCSF. Belvedere girls, however, performed brilliantly in these national tests with 100% achieving level 5 in Maths and Science and 99% achieving level 5 in English. Even more impressive was the fact that 33% achieved level 7 in English, 38% achieved level 7 in Science and 80% gained a level 7 in Maths, with a remarkable 27% achieving level 8 in this subject. (Level 7 is the highest grade possible in English and Science).

I would like to congratulate all our students on their outstanding results and also take this opportunity to thank all the staff for their hard work and our parents for supporting their daughters throughout their time at Belvedere, and particularly during the examination period.

We will celebrate our examination successes and recognise the achievements of our students at Prizegiving which, this year, is at Liverpool Cathedral on Monday, 3<sup>rd</sup> November at 1.30pm.

### **Buildings Update**

Progress on our new buildings and facilities is excellent, as can now be seen from Belvidere Road. A great deal of work was carried out during the summer holidays, including the completion of the dining room extension, the construction of new

changing facilities at the rear of the gym and various internal works including improvement to classrooms, new flooring and redecoration. The steel substructure of the new teaching block is now almost finished and brick work is about to begin.

A new stage is to be constructed in the hall/gym which will be enlarged as part of the redevelopment of that area. The new teaching extension should be completed around Easter 2009 when work will begin on the existing classroom block.

The Academy maintenance team have been busy during the summer and have even created a new garden area with a summer house, new fencing and pathways which forms a relaxed, quiet external space which students can use during breaks and lunchtime.

### **Academy Coach Services**

As you are aware, the Academy changed its bus operator in September. The service is now provided by Holmeswood Coaches and the feedback we have received to date, from both parents and students, is very positive. Due to strong demand for places we have increased the capacity of the coaches and there are now a limited number of places available. If you are interested in your daughter using the bus service, further information is available from the Finance Department.

### **Calendar of Events**

All Belvedere girls have now received a full Calendar of Events for 2008-09. I have enclosed for parents an abbreviated calendar for this year which shows the dates which will be of particular interest and relevance to parents. I hope this is useful.

### **Sixth Form**

I am delighted to report that the Sixth Form is expanding gradually as planned and that 23 students have joined Year 12 from other schools. There are very limited places remaining, however, and anybody interested should contact our new Director of Sixth Form, Mrs Cliffe, as soon as possible.

### **Admissions to Year 7**

Open Evening takes place on Wednesday, 24<sup>th</sup> September beginning at 4.00pm and concluding at around 6.30pm. I will be addressing prospective parents in the hall/gym at 4.30pm and 6.00pm. There will be a further Open Day on Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> October between 10.00am and 12 noon and in the afternoon between 1.30pm and 3.00pm. The Academy will be open for anybody wishing to look around the school on a normal day and talk to staff and students about life at Belvedere.

### **Photographs**

After seeing an exhibition of their work at an Academies conference in London, I have booked Ward Henry Photography to take individual pupil portraits of our students. Parents will be offered studio quality images at school photography prices and will be able to purchase a range of packages including an image CD. Ward Henry will be at Belvedere on Wednesday, 5<sup>th</sup> November and photographs will be available before Christmas.

Later in the year, I hope to arrange for class and group photographs to be taken which will, of course, also be available for parents to buy.

### **Enrichment Programme**

I am pleased to inform you that our Enrichment Programme, which was introduced so successfully last year, has started again with an even wider range of activities on offer.

For example, girls can now study Russian, photography, cooking, journalism or join a Pop Choir or Textiles and Craft Club after school on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. All girls have been given a full programme of Enrichment activities and details are available on our website.

Although the Enrichment Programme is voluntary for students, we strongly encourage girls to take part in at least one activity and hopefully more from what is a truly exciting and innovative development at Belvedere.

### **Parents' Discussion Group**

As part of our ongoing development of the Academy, we are keen to harness the views and opinions of all stakeholders. We do this internally with staff working groups and student councils, and we are now anxious to further enhance this partnership by involving parents. We would like to begin by holding regular discussion groups for parents where members of staff, led by Mr Irwin, Vice Principal, will present the latest Academy developments, and other information to parents who will be able to provide us with feedback and ideas related to their daughters' education.

The first meeting will be held on **Thursday, 6<sup>th</sup> November at 5.30pm** in the Dining Room where refreshments will be available from 5.15pm. Topics will include the enrichment Programme, an update on progress with our new facilities, our new reward system and an open discussion about the parents' discussion group and how parents can support Belvedere's development.

Thank you for your continued support.

With very best wishes

Yours sincerely

P M Kennedy  
Principal