

January 2010

Dear Parents

First of all, may I wish you and your family a peaceful and Happy New Year. I do hope that you feel that your daughter is settling in to being a secondary school student. I have no doubt that her first term was both exciting and exhausting and that she was quite ready for a rest at the end of term.

As we contemplate a new term, I would like to explain some changes to the Year 7 girls' homework schedule that we are introducing for this term. I have spoken to them about this and how they need to proceed.

For the first half term, the girls will be set an extended task in each of four of their subjects. These pieces of work are NOT projects that they may have been used to doing at primary school. They are tasks that take longer to complete than the weekly 20 minutes homework and require the girls to use a variety of skills. The time allocation is the equivalent to 20 minutes per week, as for normal homework. I enclose a sheet which outlines the deadlines for each subject. The other subjects will continue with homework as usual. After half term, these subjects revert to the normal homework schedule and extended tasks will be set in four other subjects.

Giving the girls extended tasks with long deadlines gives them the opportunity to learn to manage their own work and time, but in a controlled way. It also allows the girls more flexibility as to when they do their work. This is particularly useful if your daughter has commitments outside school, such as dancing or horse riding. Girls may choose to do a little each week or to do the set task all in one go at a weekend, or perhaps a mixture of the two. These tasks are designed to help the girls to learn to work independently and to allow them to use their imaginations and creativity.

Of course, your daughter may never have worked in this way before. Consequently, it is important that the time she spends on each task is monitored carefully. It is all too easy to become carried away with research on the internet! I would ask that you help her to allocate her time wisely at home.

As I have already said, I have spoken to the girls about all of this and trust that they are all aware what is expected of them. It is not anything for them, or you, to become stressed about. It is simply a different way of working to enhance their learning. I do hope that I have managed to allay any concerns you may have, but please do not hesitate to contact me or your daughter's form tutor if you need any further clarification.

Yours sincerely

Mrs B Jones
Head of Lower School