

October 2008

Dear Parents,

I hope that you and your daughters have had a good start to the new school year and will now enjoy a well-earned break. I am enclosing a copy of our **Annual Report 2007-8**, which contains a review of the year for the whole school and is the public report on all the activities of the JAGS charity. As ever, it makes a stunning read and we are exceedingly proud of our pupils of all ages who contribute so much to the school and the wider community, supported by our staff and you, their parents. Your daughter should also have brought home a copy of the latest JAGS **School Magazine**.

We have made progress with our **building works** and girls and staff are enjoying many of the new facilities. The Sixth Form Centre should be fully completed before we return after half-term and the new dining hall, café and kitchens are due later in the term. We have continued to receive **upgrades to our public examination results** and are now waiting to see whether all our GCSE English Literature papers are to be reviewed. We are keeping our website up to date with revised results.

Many **events and trips** have been enjoyed since the start of this term. We hope that the staff and girls participating in overseas visits during the half-term break will have successful trips. The Geography department are visiting **Morocco** with the Sixth Form; girls from Year 10 are undertaking a Spanish study trip to **Barcelona**, and Year 10 and 11 girls a French study trip to **Montpellier** and Sixth Form girls are visiting their Italian exchange partners in **Venice**. We wish them all a safe journey. We were pleased to welcome our Italian exchange partners from Venice to JAGS in September. Girls and staff have already participated in two **Duke of Edinburgh's Bronze Award** expeditions and a Silver expedition takes place this holiday. Year 7 girls have enjoyed two weekend **Outdoor Education** trips to the Bowles Centre and Sixth Formers and Year 10 have had successful **Geography field trips**. Numerous outings to the theatre and art galleries have occurred, including a visit by the whole of Year 8 to the **Globe Theatre** production of *A Midsummer's Night Dream* and by our dance clubs to *Swan Lake* at the **Royal Opera House**. **Book Week** included a visit by author, Julia Golding, who spoke to all Year 7 pupils about writing her novels.

Our environmental and energy saving efforts are continuing. We had a visit from the Southwark Sustainable Services Officer to present us with a **London Schools Environmental Award** at the start of term. In early October we participated in the

GSA National "Girls Go Green Day" with a number of activities including a visit from the Eco-Bus. Our community action and outreach activities also continue to thrive and three girls from Year 13, Alison Eson, Emily Bradley and Emma Schofield, attended the **ISC National Community Service Conference** in Oxford in September where Alison and Emily made powerful presentations about the work they have undertaken.

Our **Music** Department have had a very busy start to term. The **James Allen Community Orchestra** Concert at St Barnabas was a triumph – their performance of Mahler's *1st Symphony* would have graced any professional orchestra and we raised a significant sum for Dulwich Helpline. This was swiftly followed by the **Foundation Schools' Concert** with orchestral and wind items played by the cream of musicians from all three Dulwich schools. At the start of October we were delighted to host the World Première of a special musical, *The Sun Rose*, about life in South Africa, performed by the **Sparrow Schools' Choir**. Our own **Gospel Choir** also sang that night and the final joint item was a real joy to hear. I was then privileged to attend a **lunchtime concert at St Martin-in-the-Fields**, where ten of our music scholars played superb solo pieces to a rapt audience. In the second half of this term we have an **Orchestral Concert** on 11 November at St Barnabas; we are hosting a Recorder Festival on 21 November (now scheduled for JAPS Hall); the **Senior House Music Concert** will be on 27 November in the Holst Hall and the end of term **Choral Concert** at St Barnabas on 16 December. JAGS musicians will be entertaining the community at the **Frost Fair, Borough Market**, on the afternoon of 5 December and at a concert for the elderly at **Dulwich Picture Gallery** on 10 December. Full details of all our musical events are on the website www.jags.org.uk/jags/events/music. Plans for the new **James Allen's Community Music Centre** are progressing well. We have now received two donations from trusts and are making some very good links. The final **information sessions** are taking place at 4.30 and 7.30 p.m. on Monday 3 and Thursday 6 November – do join us if you can spare the time; live music and refreshments are provided as well as tours of the new building.

Please be sure to look out for details of our **Senior School Production**, the musical *The Match Girls*, which will be performed in the Prissian Theatre from 3 to 6 December. This year's **Poetry Festival** will be held on the evening of Wednesday 10 December, with Jean Sprackland as our special guest poet.

Our sportswomen have also had a good start to the year. Our **netball, hockey and cross-country** teams from many different age groups have already played many matches this term and achieved some good results; these are posted regularly on our website. The U18, U16 and U14 **hockey** teams all played extremely well in their Surrey tournaments and the U18 were runners up in the Sevenoaks School Plumtre Tournament. Congratulations to the following girls who have been selected to play in the **Surrey County** hockey teams this year: Grace Johnson (Year 12), Alice Moseley and Ellie Webb (both Year 9), Rebecca Stormer and Sophie Cole (both Year 8). Special mention must also be made of Amelia Coe (Year 10) who has been selected as the youngest member of the Surrey U19 **Netball Academy**. In the **Surrey Netball**

tournament the U16 and U15 teams played very well. Well done to Ashleigh Campbell (Year 8), and from Year 9 Poppy Baron, Clemency Barrett, Annabel Norris and Ellie Webb who have been selected for the Surrey Netball satellite squad.

Congratulations to the junior and intermediate **cross-country** teams who both won the first round of the National Schools' Competition. Grace de Rome (Year 8) was first individually in the juniors and Katie Snowden (Year 10) came first in the intermediates.

We celebrated **National Languages Day** in September with a special assembly and language games and competitions. A group of Year 13 mathematics students enjoyed participating in the **Goldman Sachs Financial Maths Day** in September. In October, our **Hans Woyda Mathematics Quiz team** won their first match of the year, against St Joseph's College – well done! Congratulations to Zofia Bakowska (Year 13) who has been highly commended in the Robert Robson **Essay Competition**, run by Trinity College, Cambridge, for her essay on Henry VII. Our programme of Sixth Form **Careers Talks** has continued with visits from several alumnae: Kaci Peringer enthused about her Deloitte internship, Alexia Quin described her work running a charity training therapists in Romania and Shadia Syed spoke about her role as a leading news presenter on cable television in Bangladesh.

You will find the two designs for our latest **JAGS Greeting Card** (ideal for Christmas or for other occasions) on our website, complete with a downloadable order form. The cards will also be available on sale in the school after half-term. The art work is beautiful and the cards are priced at £3 for a pack of 5 cards.

May I remind you that there is no dropping off or **parking** at the front of the school in the mornings and immediately after school; unless there is a parents' evening or school event, the car park gates are locked at 6.30 p.m. to protect the site. Please be sensitive to our neighbours when you park on the street and do not block private driveways.

If your daughter loses anything please make sure she comes to the School Office to see Mrs Cottrill who is in charge of **Lost Property**. She always has a number of unnamed and named unclaimed items, so please encourage your daughter to come and check. Please also discourage your daughters from bringing **mobile phones** and **ipods** to school as these items make them very vulnerable in the street. If they do have to bring in mobile phones or electronic equipment, these items must be handed into the School Office first thing in the morning and collected at the end of the day.

Thank you to all those who attended the **JAGS Parents' Association AGM** and social evening. We are enclosing a flyer about the **JPA Quiz**, to be held on Saturday 29 November. We are very fortunate to have Henry Kelly as our quizmaster again; book early to avoid disappointment. The JPA welcomes good quality **second-hand uniform** for sale. Uniform should be brought to the School Office, appropriately labelled. Sales take place on the first Friday of the month 8.00-8.30 a.m. in the Holst Hall. Details are on the Parents section of the website. We are still working to improve our website: we continue to aspire to a reduction in the amount of paper which we circulate! You will only be able to access the jags/letters for parents section by a username and password

If you did not add your preferred email address for communication to the yellow contact sheet and are happy to receive information via email, please email your address to enquiries@jags.org.uk.

Thank you for all your support. I look forward to seeing you at some of our many events during the next half-term.