



GRENVILLE'S REVENGE

Dyslexic students at Grenville College Christmas 2007 - No. 35

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

To watch the Grenville eight cruising down the Torridge is to see something beautiful. The crew are all in unison, timing their strokes perfectly, they are all highly skilled, and the boat cuts through the water, it seems, with effortless ease. The boat has fluency, it is fluid, it flows. Of course, the apparent ease of the gliding motion is illusory – enormous energy and great skill is being applied, and has been developed over hours, weeks, months and years of exhausting training.

I wouldn't mind betting that when that boat is at its absolute best, the crew are not thinking about the skills they are applying, because those skills have become involuntary and habitual. Perhaps the greatest performance ever seen at Wimbledon was in the 1999 final when Andre Agassi was at the peak of his powers, playing superbly, and yet he was still swept away in three straight sets by a breathtaking, almost perfect performance by Sampras. Interviewed afterwards, Sampras was asked what was in his mind before he dealt the second serve ace which won the match. An apologetic, slightly baffled Sampras replied: "There was absolutely nothing going through my mind."

Such a Zen-like state, what American psychologists refer to rather tritely as being 'in the zone', I suspect comes to all of us at our own levels when we are carrying out actions in which we are skilled. Conversely, it's not something we are likely to achieve when we are doing things in which we are not so good, in my own case speaking a foreign language or drawing, for example. When attempting those skills, the brain is cluttered with too much information, much of it conflicting, and an automatic, fluent response is just impossible.

As you read this edition of *Grenville's Revenge* I hope that you will get an idea about the variety of skills which our dyslexic students have developed. However, reading fluency, by definition, is unlikely to be amongst them. One of the problems that we constantly encounter as teachers is the intelligent, agile mind of the dyslexic reading through lines quickly, wanting to devour the information, but not quite having the automacity of reading skills to allow that to happen fluently. Typically, the student will guess at the word based upon its general appearance, but such an approach is full of dangers in a language as subtle and nuanced as English. Think in geography, for example, of an exam question asking you to analyse the characteristics of a 'developing country' but which is read as a 'developed country', or a statement in maths that 'A quadrilateral whose four corners lie on the circumference of a circle is called a cyclic quadrilateral'.

The headmaster, Mr Waters, takes advantage of the subtle differences in our language in a message that he has constantly reinforced to the school: it is ATTitude that counts and not APTitude, that your persistence and effort is more important than your talent. He supports this idea by quoting the American president, Calvin Coolidge: "Nothing in the world can take the place of Persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent. The slogan 'Press On' has solved and always will solve the problems of the human race".

It's a strong message elegantly expressed that the staff tries to promote at all times. I rather like the former Arsenal manager George Graham's succinct answer on the same theme when asked what he thought made a successful team – "good players working hard". I hope you enjoy reading about our own good players working hard.

SENIOR STUDENTS

Y11

With the caring and thoughtful guidance of Mrs Roberts-Key, the Y11 students are developing extremely well. They have attended a study skills seminar, taken part in a successful post-16 meeting, and listened to an inspirational talk by former dyslexic student Luke Evans about what Grenville meant to him, and what he has done since leaving.

Josh Braddick, Chris Buse and **Andrew Dykes-Simmons** [all English], **Luke Cann** [maths attainment], **Jeremy Manning** [drama attainment] and **Finlay Marrian** [art] have all received well-deserved nominations.



James

Four students who are performing particularly well in English are **Peter Meyrick & Henry Lamb** [progress], and **David Braund-Phillips & Kirstin Dunn** [attainment]. They have also received nominations for progress in technology, RS, drama and maths respectively.

Jess Heard and **Oliver Taylor** maintained their consistency with 3 nominations each, Jess for applied science, RS and music, and Oliver in physics, chemistry and attainment in maths. Ollie, do you remember the problems you had with maths in Y7?

Pride of place this term goes to **James Bunnay** who was awarded a Progress Prize in final assembly for his work in geography, physics, chemistry, art and English. Well done, James – it hasn't always been a smooth ride, but you're peaking at just the right time.

Public Exam Results

The statistics: 16 dyslexic students sat 132 GCSE exams at an average of 8.5 subjects each. This does not include students who are mildly dyslexic and do not attend the dyslexia department, but benefit from the whole-school teaching policies in place at Grenville. 60% of all grades were at grade C or better, with 38% at A*, A or B. In total, 88% of all grades were at grade D or higher.

Expressed in a slightly different way, these results meant that 62.5% of our dyslexic students achieved 5 GCSE passes at A* to C, and that 94% of them achieved 5 passes at A* to D.

There were only three dyslexic students sitting their final A-level exams or the equivalent, but a 100% pass rate was achieved.

The human story: At Prize-Giving in September, **Bethan Heming** [AAABBCCCC] was awarded the prize for "The Best Performance by a Dyslexic Student at GCSE". Severely dyslexic student **Rupert Osborne** [ABBBBCDD] won the Head of the Dyslexia Department's Prize and the Technology Prize. Another severely dyslexic student, **Peter Mackinnon** [BCCCCDD], won the Endeavour Prize in recognition of his efforts over the two GCSE years. Well done, too, to **Miriam Elliott**, who won the Food Nutrition prize.

At A-level, special congratulations to **Matthew Verney**, who won the Business Prize, and to **Mark Lobato** on his place at Aston University to study product design.

Perhaps the most important thing of all is that all of our 22 leavers have gained places doing what they want to do, whether at A-level, on vocational courses, at university, or on gap years, and we wish them every success.

The 6th Form

We are particularly pleased to welcome back four dyslexic students into the Lower 6th: **Francis Manning, Alistair Soffe, Katie Wilton** and **William Poole**. They are joined by new student **Alex Bunnay**, who has already made considerable impact, and along with the seven U6th dyslexic students they make a strong presence in the Grenville Sixth Form.

The AS results from last June were very promising with dyslexic students achieving an 81% pass rate, and **Sam Sleep** winning the Art Prize.



'Surveillance' by Sam Sleep

One of the benefits of studying in the 6th Form at Grenville is that students get the opportunity to take on responsibility. Two people who are doing this are **Alice England** and **Ben Jennings**, the heads of the best house, Exmoor. They have been leading by example, energising the younger students and doing a first-class job. Ben represented the house in the Public Speaking Competition, and his talk about the declining stocks of fish in British seas helped Exmoor to a convincing overall victory.

Ben has also been working hard as a school prefect, along with **Kerrie Manship** and **Harry Langdon**.

SPORT



Judo fighters [l→r]: Alex, Sarah, Brad, Lander

Surfing, Westward Ho!

Judo: Grenville came away from the British Schools Championships with more medals than any other school, including gold for **Brad Lacey**, silver for **Alex Way** and bronze for **Sarah Heard, Lander King, Ryan Ashton & James Norton**. **Alex** has also been selected for Devon.

Water sports: **James Bunney** and **Oliver Taylor** have been successful in regional swimming relay and biathlon competitions, winning through to national finals in 2008. **Alex Bunney** and **Ryan Ashton** also swam strongly. James, Oliver and **Tom Pugsley** played in the school's first ever water polo matches, when they travelled up to compete against Charterhouse & Eton, impressing everyone with their play and spirit.

Surf Life Saving: Representing the Saunton club, **Alex Bunney** became national U-19 champion in ski paddling.

Rowing: Tom has also starred in the winning coxed four and received his rowing colours.

Hockey: Congratulations to **Charlie Morgan** on his selection for Devon. **Alex Stapleton** has been a key player in the girls' teams.

Cricket: **Macaulay Harrison-Hooton** continues to train with the Devon team through the winter.

Cross Country: **Tom Pugsley** and the unbeaten **James Bunney** have also led the way through the mud, and both will be running for North Devon in the New Year, along with **Alex Bunney** and, hopefully, **Charlie Morgan**. Good support has been provided by **Emma Richards, Tori Morgan, James Pugsley, Harri-Joe Paine** and **Alex Schmarsel**.

Rugby: **Harry Langdon** has been outstanding for a 1st XV which has improved dramatically during the season. **Alex Bunney, Ollie Taylor** and **Chris Buse** were awarded their rugby colours. Well done to **Charles Kivell, Josh Hunt, Brad Lacey, James Owens, Macaulay Harrison-Hooton** and **Adam Hughes** for playing regularly for the U-13's, and to **Ben Giddy** and **Raife Gaskell** for some gutsy defensive displays.

Awards: **James Bunney** and **Oliver Taylor** have been honoured with the presentation of full sports colours because of their excellence in so many sports. It's a rare award, but fully deserved.

BOARDING

The refurbishment of Crabbe has continued with the provision of new changing, toilet and shower facilities for the senior boys, and the opening of a separate block for games changing. Downstairs has been given a facelift, most notably the entrance hall, and the replacing of windows in Crabbe and Scott should be complete over the Xmas holidays.

Recently, the boarders have been kept awake by a commotion in the nearby woods. Head of Boarding, Mr Sturrock, has investigated and the matter has been cleared up. Apparently it was caused by the pigeon wanting to go out with the owl. They made a date but the owl didn't turn up and the pigeon became agitated. But, as the owl said, "It was too wet to woo."

DANCING & POLITICS

Y11 student **Tomas Gatehouse** recently featured in the local newspaper because of his expertise in ballroom dancing, which he practises at a local club. It certainly showed us all a different side to Tomas.

Another Y11 student, **Andrew Dykes-Simmons**, has run for political office. After declaring his interest, Andrew had to speak at the hustings, and was then duly elected in a school election which replicates the real thing, and is designed to get young people involved in the workings of democracy.

Andrew now represents the school on Bideford Youth Council, which has a significant influence on youth policy in the town.

Y7



A group of 11 dyslexic students joined Y7 in September, coming from the Junior School, local primary and prep schools, and schools from further afield. Some are day students, some weekly and some full-time boarders, reflecting the make-up of the school as a whole. In the dyslexia department under Mr Cullingham's astute management, and more widely through the leadership of Y7 head Mr Norris, they have quickly formed a strong group who, at this admittedly early stage, seem full of enthusiasm for learning.

I'm delighted that all 11 received at least one subject nomination from their teachers. Talented actor **Macaulay Harrison-Hooton** received a nomination for attainment in drama, as did **Charlie Woolcott** for progress in English. Double nominees were **Antony Turner** [dyslexia dept & RS], **James Norton** [history & maths], **Adam Hughes** [chemistry & geography] and **Emma Richards** [progress in chemistry, attainment in the dyslexia dept]. Emma is the only girl attending the dyslexia dept in Y7, but this doesn't seem to have fazed her – quite the opposite in fact.

Raife Gaskell and **Ben Giddy** both have older brothers at Grenville, and both lads have made excellent starts to their careers at the school, with 3 nominations each. Raife received his for progress in biology & maths, and attainment in history; Ben for progress in maths & the dyslexia dept, and attainment in sport. They were joined by **Lander King**, who was commended for his work in chemistry, geography and the dyslexia dept.

Finally, two students have been outstanding in Y7. **Daniel Day** was nominated by his teachers for attainment in maths, biology & geography, and for progress in history & the dyslexia dept, whilst **Tom Hyam** received the Progress Prize for Y7 from the Headmaster in Final Assembly for his efforts in MFL, physics, geography, PE and music.

Congratulations to you all ... but remember – persistence!

Interview with two Y7 students:

How has your first term been in the dyslexia department?

Emma: I'm proud of myself because I think I am doing well and making progress, but I realise I still have lots of work to do.

Lander: I think I've worked very hard, but there's things I need to improve.

What's made the most progress in the dyslexia department and what would you like to improve next term?

Emma: Both my reading and my handwriting have improved with Mr Cullingham, and I'd like to improve my comprehension.

Lander: My reading comprehension has made the most progress. We do a lot of work on this and I'm definitely getting better. Next term I'd like to write better stories and make my writing neater.

What other subjects have gone well this term, and which do you need to work on most after Xmas?

Emma: Maths has gone well, and I think my ICT is a bit better, but I need to improve my concentration in PE.

Lander: Design, RS, PHSME, PE, maths and biology have all gone well, but I'd like to do even better in them.

How many merits have you won this term?

Emma: I have about 30 merits and I've been awarded a Bronze Badge.

Lander: I also have a Bronze Badge and I think I have about 67 merits.

What clubs and activities have you done in your first term?

Emma: I've played netball, hockey and cross country for house and school, and 'It's a Knockout' was so much fun. My clubs are dyslexia support, gymnastics, netball, cross country and genealogy. I also swim at Northam pool.

Lander: I do basketball for a club and took part in the house competition. I thought 'It's a Knockout' was great too. I also do judo, trampolining and genealogy clubs.

And finally, how many marks do you give your first term at Grenville?

Emma: 8/10.

Lander: 9/10.

A particularly good start for Tom, Daniel, Ben, Raife and Emma

DRAMA

What do 'One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest', 'The Graduate', and 'The Great Escape' have in common? Apart from being three of my favourite movies, their leads, Jack Nicholson, Dustin Hoffman and Steve McQueen are, or in McQueen's case was, dyslexic. Interestingly, there seems to be a large number of dyslexic actors, most famously I suppose Tom Cruise and Susan Hampshire. Yet, you would think that the demands of acting might put dyslexics off, such are the reading and learning requirements.

Highlighting, enlarging the page and listening to tapes can all help, but in the end there is no other way but to spend an enormous amount of time learning the lines. How come some of the world's greatest actors are dyslexic?

Actress Carol Harrison, who is dyslexic herself, casts some light on this when she says: *"I feel that having dyslexia has made me a better actor because instead of just saying the words, you have to feel them very, very deeply, take them inside of yourself, process them and bring them out again. Whenever I'm learning something, I deal with it on an emotional level so that it means something to me."*

Which brings us to this term's production, "Blood Brothers". This was without a shadow of doubt the best production I have seen at Grenville. There were even colleagues who had seen it on the London stage who said that this rivalled the professional production.

It was adventurously staged, skilfully acted and sung, it made you laugh and it made you cry, it was a deeply moving and powerful piece of theatre.

Key players in the production were Y8 students **Connor MacGillivray** and **Ryan Ashton**, who play Mickey and Eddie, the blood brothers, when they are 7 going on 8. Ryan has great difficulty with his reading, yet he and Connor commanded the stage, performing a vital section of the play with flair, drawing out the humour beautifully, but also providing the depth to the characters which is so important for later in the play. It was wonderful acting.

Jeremy Manning played Mickey in the all-important final part, when he is an adult. I watched Jeremy a year ago in 'Grease' and he was good, but his development as an actor in 12 months has been astonishing. He occupied the role at such a deep level that the final, highly dramatic scenes were utterly convincing.

Other dyslexic students who played important roles in the play included **David Braund-Phillips** as Sammy and ensemble player **Charlotte Donovan**, whilst the stage manager was **Jess Heard**, who also designed the set, along with **Simon Taylor**. The technical crew included **Andrew Dykes-Simmons** and **Ben Ratchford**, and everyone helped build the set.

Mrs Borsten and Mr White pulled off a tour de force.



Blood Brothers for life, Ryan & Connor



The Technical Crew



Jeremy

CREATIVE WRITING

The opening paragraphs of some Y8 stories ...

Ed: In the dark mines of Kaljrim an evil plan was being plotted. All the members of the Order of the Black Cobra were planning to do something that even the wise shaman of the Lunar tribe could not predict. They planned to summon Sharnockla, the terrible daemon with eyes as red as lava and scaly skin blacker than the pits of the abyss, and a roar so loud it could be heard by the death dwarves in the mines 1000 miles below.

Brad: My last birthday I had my best friend, Connor, round. We went to the cinema and then ate pizza. When we came home we laid out the tent in the garden, a green and brown army one which hid perfectly in the trees. Inside we had a telly, two deck chairs, a games console, a mini fridge and our mobiles. We messed around until 10.30 when we finally went to sleep. About thirty minutes later I was woken by a rustling noise outside ...

ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Y8

This tightly-knit group continue to work very hard and forge ahead. This term reading has included Oliver Twist, The 39 Steps, The Silver Sword, and a story by the Indian writer Narayan; the Guinness Book of Records has been well-thumbed, too!



James

Ryan Ashton [ICT], **Charles Kivell** [dyslexia dept], **Charlie Morgan** [attainment in dyslexia dept], and **Jamie-Leigh Sutherland** [dyslexia dept] have all earned nominations. Doubling that score have been **Edgar Hodges** for work in biology & RS, and **Josh Hunt** for progress in the dyslexia dept and attainment in RS.



Jamie-Leigh

However, the leaders in the class this term have been **James Owens** and **Brad Lacey**. James has made particularly good progress in the dyslexia dept and textiles, and his attainment in MFL has been excellent. Brad works really hard and this has paid dividends with nominations for progress in physics, geography, history & drama, and he's the champion for this term.

Y9

The spotlight falls on Y9 next term, but meanwhile their progress remains good. **Sean Dallyn**, **Francis Soffe**, **Jac Roberts & Holden Reeve** [all dyslexia dept], **Luke Giddy & Alex Stapleton** [chemistry], **Harriet Gregory** [maths], **Callum MacKenzie** [physics], **Alex Marcantonio-James** [attainment dyslexia dept] and **Jacob Sharp** [biology] received nominations.

It's been a good term for **Will Cole** [chemistry, biology], and he's joined on two nominations by **Tim Aitchison** [maths & music], **Sarah Heard** [progress in chemistry, attainment in ICT], **Alice Hutchings** [progress in the dyslexia dept & attainment in biology], and **Bradley Soffe** [dyslexia dept & drama].



**Alex & Harriet
Francis & Bradley**

The epitome of the headmaster's comments about attitude, **James Pugsley**, [chemistry, biology, ICT] continues to work extremely hard, whilst **Simon Taylor** is to be congratulated on the high number of nominations he received – 4, for progress in biology, drama & RS, and attainment in textiles.

The HM awarded two Y9 Progress Prizes this term, and both went to dyslexic students. **Harri-Joe Paine's** progress in chemistry, geography, technology, maths and the dyslexia dept was noted by his teachers, as was **Alex Way's** effort in ICT, history, textiles & the dyslexia dept, and the high standard of her work in chemistry, RS, maths & music.

Y10

One of life's pleasures is seeing how the onset of GCSEs can bring the best out in some students. One such is **Christian Quinton-Tulloch**, who is to be commended for his Progress Prize following first-class work in French, history, chemistry, RS & maths.



Christian, George & shotgun rack made in DT

Charlotte Donovan [drama], **Alastair Giddy** [maths], **Anton Guy** [music], **Robert Marchant-Greenslade** [English], **Harrison Grant** [attainment in PE] & **Joe Woolcott** [food] have all done well, whilst **Jack Burgess** [English & DT], **Hugh Baillee** [DT & food], **Sally Eveleigh** [English & art] & **Alex Schmarsel** [chemistry & attainment in art] continue to work very effectively.

Two students who seem to have turned important corners and are now working much better are **Tristan Carter** [business & DT] & **Ben Ratchford** [English, art & attainment in ICT]. New student **Michael Dodds** [English, art & attainment in DT] has made a great start, whilst in contrast **Milo George** [attainment in physics, biology & DT] & **Tori Morgan** [physics, chemistry, drama & attainment in English] are now in their 4th year of outstanding work.

Attainment Prizes are as rare as hen's teeth, so we especially celebrate the achievements of **George Rhind** this term. George's work in all three sciences has been tremendous, he is highly skilled in DT and he continues to work exceptionally hard in the dyslexia dept – well done, George.

AROUND THE DEPARTMENTS

FOOD TECHNOLOGY

This term has seen the Y11 students completing their practical coursework.



Sophie Simpson made a range of cakes with her final cake gaining top marks from all the tasters, chocolate and strawberries proving a popular combination!



James Brown made lots of different pasta meals with his final sauce being very smooth and tasty.



Josh Braddick produced a great cheesecake with some very good development. The final product showed careful thought at each stage. Mr Norris liked them too!



Luke Cann made snacks for children's lunch boxes, particularly mini quiches. He became a dab hand at pastry and developments were imaginative.



Kirstin Dunn also chose chocolate and strawberries but added some rich butter icing!



Tomas Gatehouse made his own pasta with a rich chicken and tomato sauce.



Peter Meyrick made a fantastic cheesecake and had great fun playing around with decorating ideas.



Tom Pugsley mastered the art of making pastry, he came up with some good development ideas and in one practical managed to make 2 full size quiches in just over one hour - brilliant!

DESIGN TECHNOLOGY

The projects were designed by Y10 students in preparation for their more ambitious GCSE projects next year. Mr Ker thought that Hugh's book ends were particularly well designed, but Y11 expert Peter Meyrick preferred the precision-made remote control holder.



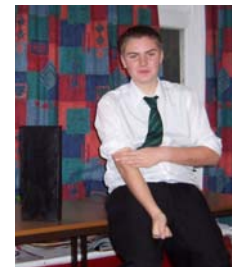
Tristan + DVD case



Jack + remote control holder



Hugh + book ends



Kieron + welding rod case

SCIENCE

Science is a subject which many dyslexic students enjoy – the combination of practical work, technical know-how, extended writing being less important so that the student can focus on content, and assessment often being through multiple choice or short answers all play their part. On the other hand, there's a lot to learn for exams, well-organised and effective notes are important, and the vocabulary can be tricky.

Interestingly, when head of science Dr Gurr initiated a science design competition with no use of language, dyslexic students dominated.

His chemistry classes had to design a paper boat which could carry a cargo of sodium for the longest period of time. For those of you who can't remember their school days chemistry, sodium and water is an explosive mix! Dr Gurr enjoys playing God, so he made it tougher by introducing bad weather in the form of water spray, and rocked the tank so that stormy waves were created. I understand that things became very competitive, and not a little emotional.

In one of his Y10 classes the boat designed by **Ali Giddy, Kieron Homer** and **Ben Ratchford** survived the longest; in the other Y10 class it was **Joe Woolcott's** boat; and in Y11 **Henry Lamb** proved the best designer.

THE BACK PAGE

CONCERTS

By our special correspondent:

The Xmas concert was billed as a 'festive family occasion' and also threatened 'audience participation', so it was with trepidation that I made my way to the hall and took my place at the back, safe amongst the old men of the dyslexia department and other fringe elements of the staff.

I needn't have worried: apart from some light singing duty, the evening was left to the professionals of the music department.



As always, it was an excellent evening, a true variety of choral, solo and ensemble pieces from all ages in the school. The really remarkable aspect is the range of music covered - everything from Lennon to Warlock, *Sleigh Ride* to the theme from *Star Trek*. The Lennon song was *Happy Xmas (War is Over)*, performed by a guitar trio, which included the

suitably hirsute **Anton Guy** [pictured] playing rhythm. The boys made a well-known song seem fresh.

David Phillips was 'king' of the backstage, and also joined **Jeremy Manning** and **Simon Taylor** in the bass section of the choir. There was a rumour that Simon had actually replaced himself with a cunning animation and was in fact at home, with his feet up.

Jeremy also played trumpet in the orchestra, where he was joined by **Ben Jennings** and **Alex Way** on cello, **Jess Heard** on trombone and **Antony Turner** on clarinet. The girls also sang in the choir, along with **Charlotte Donovan**, whilst Ben was part of the string quartet which played beautifully.

The evening included the customary visit from Father Christmas and prizes were awarded to the oldest and youngest man and woman. If they have a prize for the shortest man next year, I may be in with a chance.

Thanks as always to Mr White and to his team of helpers.

Kurt N Call

The Autumn concert was of an equally high standard, but was particularly noteworthy for **Jess Heard**'s debut as a soloist - she sang *I Don't Know How To Love Him* clearly and movingly, and her sister, Sarah looked more nervous than Jess. Also in the choir on that occasion were **Sarah**, **Kirstin Dunn** and **Jamie-Leigh Sutherland**.

A word or two also in praise of **Josh Hunt** and **Jeremy Manning**, who both volunteered to read at the Carol Service, and did so clearly and well in front of an audience of about 700!

SNIPPETS

English GCSE: A visiting examinations moderator for speaking & listening was very impressed with the Y11 students, especially **Tom Pugsley** and **Kirstin Dunn**. They were both hot seated as Macbeth and Lady Macbeth respectively - this means they have tough questions fired at them from the rest of the class about their thoughts and motivation during the play. Speaking & listening makes up 20% of the overall grade for English, and is crucial to our students.

Year Reps: Congratulations to **Emma Richards** and **Tom Hyam** [both Y7], **Tori Morgan** [Y10] and **Jeremy Manning** [Y11] on their election as Year Representatives for 2007-08.

Access Arrangements: The organisation of access arrangements for public exams used to be finalised in January of Y11. With the examination conveyor belt picking up students much earlier, the deadline is now a whole year earlier, with some Y10 students sitting science modules after Xmas. The necessary assessments have all been completed and the relevant information is being sent to the three examining boards. However, we are finding it increasingly difficult to cope with the invigilation of all the different facilities that we now need - for just one exam we may need invigilators for the main hall, a smaller room, a reading room, a computer room, and perhaps three scribes! That's not easy in a small school such as ours. If there is anyone out there who could volunteer a hand during exam periods, we would very much appreciate it!

Over-learning: This is when a student has learnt some material but continues to study it in an effort to remember it long term. The latest research suggests that this is an ineffective way of learning. Much more effective is to review the material to be learnt at some stage in the future. It seems that the best time to do this is between 10% and 30% of the way to the final exam. The authors of the research also think that the custom of ending a chapter in a text book with numerous problems which prompt over-learning of that chapter's material is wrong. It would be more effective if a variety of problems relevant to several chapters were set at the end of each chapter so that students were continually reviewing material studied in earlier chapters. Food for thought!

And finally ... We started with a quote from Calvin Coolidge, so we will end with one too:

"Christmas is not a time nor a season, but a state of mind. To cherish peace and goodwill, to be plenteous in mercy, is to have the real spirit of Christmas."

A very peaceful Christmas to all of our readers.