

Have a Merry Christmas and a very happy New Year!



Weekly Newsletter

22nd December 2010

From the Principal

Thank you to all who read the Newsletter each week. We hope that you find it a useful and a brief summary of information, so that you can keep up to date with happenings in the BSA.

Please take time over the holiday period to read the letter, sent jointly from the Chairman and from me. I apologise that it comes to you on the very last day of term; I have been waiting until the very last for more detail on the Spring Term Inspection visit. The Inspectorate's plans are still unconfirmed - as the letter indicates.

Finally, the very successful Winter Market raised the wonderful sum of €3,384 which, after minor costs have been reflected, will give a net figure of just under €3,000. Thanks again to all who worked so hard to organise a memorable day - and to all who supported, as customer or as stallholder.

Have a wonderful holiday with family and friends - and a very successful and happy year in 2011.

John Light

CONTACT US...

Nursery & Infant School

Anthonie van Dijckstraat 1

1077 ME Amsterdam

Tel +31 (0) 20 6797840

Fax +31 (0)20 6758396

Lower Junior School

Jan van Eijckstraat 21

1077 LG Amsterdam

Upper Junior/ Secondary School

Fred. Roeskestraat 94a

1076 ED Amsterdam

Web: www.britams.nl

Email: info@britams.nl

Message from the Chairman of the Supervisory Board and Principal

Dear Parents

The end of the term is almost upon us, a time to reflect on the past months and to point the way ahead in 2011 and beyond. We have no grounds for complacency - but much to celebrate.

Back to priorities

This term, we have kept our focus firmly on the priorities of sound learning, good teaching and clear direction to all pupils. We hope that they have noticed that clarity of purpose, and that they feel personally supported and appropriately challenged in their tasks every day. We hope also that we have identified targets which are appropriate for each pupil, and that we have shared those targets with you as parents.

Beyond the classroom

We do want to develop each pupil, not only in their Maths and language, but as people who are interested in their world and interesting to meet. Hence, we are working together as teachers to encourage good manners, ambition, and most important of all, a smile and a sense of humour which make difficulties smaller. We hope that you find that the staff set a good example in this respect, for we aim to be open and welcoming to all ages and to all nationalities.

Building on stability

Now that we have a steady platform, we aim to move forward. Importantly, we have been delighted to receive the support of the Council of British International Schools, CO-BIS. Some months ago, they suspended our membership until key criteria had been met,

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including the establishment of a Complaints Procedure, evidence of cooperative governance, and regular contact with the staff Works Council (Ondernemingsrad). This month, they informed us that they are pleased to see progress on all these points, and that they have restored us to membership. That membership will be confirmed, provided that a follow-up visit in February or March 2011 by the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) gives a favourable report on three specific areas; governance, leadership and management.

We are grateful to COBIS for their advice and positive guidance over the past months, and we look forward equally to working together with ISI when they visit. They will be thorough, they will expect good standards, and we hope that they will be reassured by what they see, following their visit in 2009.

Building the buildings

We are well aware that parents have been expecting news of plans for a move to a single site. The Supervisory Board and Principal have been examining opportunities over recent months, and have concluded:

- a) That the cost of a new build would involve heavy borrowing at a time of general economic uncertainty. The Board is not prepared to put the stability of the school at risk by starting out on expensive building projects.
- b) Although there is a significant amount of property in the city available for rent, we have not identified a site which would serve the majority of families. We do not wish to consider a move to a distant location which would cause more problems than solutions for families.
- c) We remain vigilant for opportunity, and our target is to cater for the needs of younger and older pupils, separated for good management but working on a single site. Our aim is to move to that site in the next 3-5 years.

Meanwhile

Meanwhile, we must find alternative accommodation for our Nursery pupils, currently located in the Jubilee Building in Albrecht Durerstraat, for our lease there expires in Summer 2011. Given our goal of a single site in 3-5 years, we see no merit in a move to, and an expensive fit-out of a new rented building. We therefore plan a re-allocation of year-groups, as follows:

Anthonie van Dijkstraat	All Nursery and Reception pupils
Jan van Eijckstraat	All Year 1 and Year 2 pupils (KS1)
Fred.Roeskestraat	All Year 3 to Year 6 pupils (Upper Junior) and all Secondary pupils

We have already worked to identify space in Fred Roeskestraat which will be sufficient for our projected requirements. Jan van Eijckstraat will need little, if any alteration. However, some building work will be necessary in Anthonie van Dijkstraat, and three tenders have already been received for the relatively small-scale projects required.

We are arranging a meeting **on Tuesday January 18th 2011 at 7.00 p.m. in Fred.Roeskestraat**, at which parents may put questions. Please note this in your diary if you wish to raise any point.

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Spreading the word

In conclusion, we are progressing with purpose, establishing first a foundation and then building prudently upon it. We can see benefits already, not least in the number of pupils (over 40 as of today) who will be new to the school in January. However, we ask your help to spread the good word about the school, to neighbours, to colleagues in the office, to friends. We want to emphasise five key messages about the BSA, and we ask you to help us to put those messages out to every community.

People matter

Who you are is as important as what you know

We want learners to enjoy learning

We are ready to listen – not just to talk

A smile can go a long, long way

Special thanks, finally, to all the staff, those who teach and those who support, for their hard work this term, and for their commitment particularly in these difficult weather conditions. To you and to your family, thank you for your support and every good wish for the coming holiday, for a wonderful Christmas if that is what you celebrate, and for a very successful and happy year in 2011.

Yours sincerely

John Cowie

Chairman of the Supervisory Board

John Light

Principal

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