



# BEECHWOOD

## *Sacred Heart School*

*An Independent School for Boys and Girls (3-18)*

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4 September 2018

Dear Parents,

I hope you have had a wonderful summer enjoying the glorious weather with your children and that they are now looking forward to starting the new academic year.

I would firstly like to congratulate our Year 13 and Year 11 pupils who have all done so well in their exams. Following their successes at A level we have students going on to study a wide range of subjects at some of the UK's most prestigious universities such as Durham, Exeter, SOAS, UEA and Trinity Laban in London. Our GCSE results were particularly good this year with 37% of grades at A-A\*/7-9 compared to 20% nationally and a pass rate of 91% compared to 67%, (4/C or above).

You may recall that on Beechwood Day I spoke about our search for a new Head of the Prep School and the developments scheduled for the summer. I am delighted to announce that the Board has appointed Mr John Coakley as Head of the Prep School for the forthcoming academic year, on an interim basis, to lead the Prep School in its next stage of development. John has had a distinguished career as Principal of The Schools at Somerhill for twenty-one years and he will be bringing to Beechwood his widely recognised expertise, enthusiasm and love of teaching. Amongst his many interests, he is a keen sportsman and gardener. Usefully, he is also an ISI inspector. You are warmly invited to join us at a drinks reception at the information evenings on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> September at 7.00pm for Year 6 and at 6.30pm on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> for Years 1-5 to meet him, myself and Mrs Constance Williams, our Chair of Governors.

Mr Gerard Garcia has joined Beechwood as the new Bursar after many years working at a high level in the City. Gerard has been working tirelessly over the summer looking at the school's finances and strategies and he is also leading the development of the school site. If you have visited Beechwood over the holiday you will see that he and his team of builders and decorators have been working extremely hard to improve the fabric of the school. The Gym has now been completely gutted ready for the internal improvements and is scheduled for completion during October. The Sixth Form Common Room has been redecorated. The Nursery has moved into the main Prep School building and has new toilets, a kitchen and an office for the staff. The Science Department has a new Chemistry lab, the Maths Department has had new windows fitted in all the classrooms and the Auditorium and Conservatory have been re-decorated. I would like to thank the Friends of Beechwood and particularly Mrs Victoria Barwick for the generous gift of three outdoor table tennis tables. These have been set up to the side of Fountain Lawn and I am sure they will be much enjoyed by the students in their free time.

In addition to the appointment of Mr John Coakley I am very pleased to announce the following new staff who will be joining us this term. Dr Silvia Mitchell who will be joining us from Maidstone Grammar, Mark Porter from Luckley House School, Raquel Bernal, Karen Wright from Skippers Hill, Katie West from Bethany School and Joanne Atherton from Meadows School. I warmly welcome them to the Beechwood team and am sure that you will have the opportunity to meet them in the weeks ahead.

Two key internal appointments were also made at the end of the summer term. Mr Josh Rowe will now take over as Head of the Middle Division and also Head of Sport, and Mrs Rebecca Smith is our new Head of the Junior Division. Both staff are very well known to the parent body and students; I

wish them well in their new positions. Mr Angel Sandoval has taken up the role of Head of EAL after having worked successfully in our Spanish Department for many years. I am also delighted that Mrs Michelle Newton has taken over as the school's Sacred Heart Coordinator. I know that she will continue to strengthen our increasingly valuable links with the other Sacred Heart schools in the UK and across the world. Mrs Louise Neill has been appointed as the new Examinations Officer and Miss Katie Molloy will now be Head of Prep Music. Following her retirement Mrs Carol Mitchell will be working part time as a Senior Pastoral Teacher bringing her years of pastoral experience and her knowledge of the school and our families to support both students, parents and staff.

I have been lucky enough over the summer to welcome back some of our former pupils, who have shared with me their happy memories of Beechwood. A recurring feature of their thoughts about the school is its warm and supportive ethos. This spirit, coupled with the academic excellence to which we aspire, means that our students are able to fulfil their potential and to rise to all the challenges of adult life.

I am very honoured to be leading the school at this exciting time. Please remember that we operate an open- door policy and that I am always happy to meet with you to discuss your child's progress and our future plans for the school.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Helen Rowe". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mrs Helen Rowe  
Head