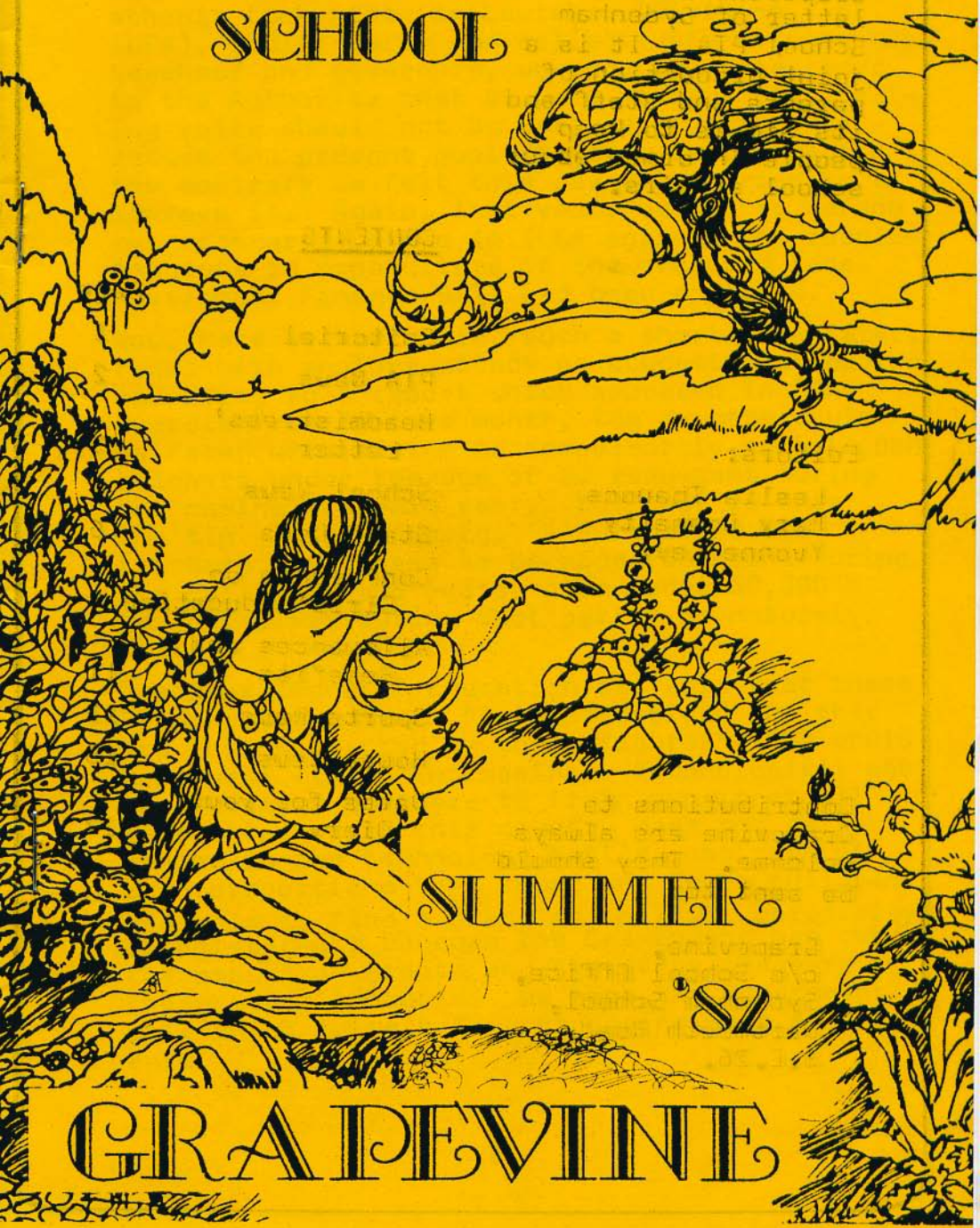


SYDENHAM

SCHOOL



SUMMER

'82

GRAPEVINE

Grapevine is the news letter of Sydenham School PTA. It is a joint production of parents and staff and its aim is to keep people informed about school affairs.

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Contributions to Grapevine are always welcome. They should be sent to:

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EDITORIAL

When the review and reorganisation of secondary schools took place in Lewisham (Division 7 of ILEA), individually and collectively as parents, teachers and governors, we made it quite clear to the Authority that we were anxious that falling rolls should not be used as an excuse to reduce the present pupil/teacher ratio, and on the contrary we felt this was an opportunity to improve it. Again, last year, we had to defend the standards we had in ILEA against the resulting cuts in expenditure if the proposed Local Government Finance Bill had been approved.

Now, here we are again, such a short time later, faced with another attack on education standards. According to a report which appeared in "The Guardian" early this month, the country could be faced with having to compulsorily make 14,000 teachers under the age of 50 redundant during the coming academic year. But that is only the tip of the iceberg. A further 15,000 teachers would have to be made redundant during the following two years, plus about 30,000 teachers lost during that period by natural wastage

The Department of Education has said that these figures are only an "interpretation" and they are "not committed by these figures". We would hope not! In an increasingly technological age we need more teachers to train pupils at all levels to ensure this country does not fall behind in the technology battle, not cuts of such proportions that fewer and fewer children are able to find a place at college, university or polytechnic because the Government has cut the amount of grants and therefore teachers at these establishments. We hope the Government will think twice before proposing such senseless cuts.

PTA NEWS

Our apologies to everyone who sorted out jumble ready for our Jumble Sale on May 22. Unfortunately we had to cancel it because none of us realised it was Cup Final Day, and we felt we just couldn't compete with that event! We now intend to hold the Jumble Sale some time during next term.

In spite of changeable weather, our stall in Wells Park on Gala Day during the Sydenham Festival, did a brisk trade in strawberries and cakes. We also raffled a bottle of whisky which had been donated by Elizabeth Ray, one of our Parent Governors. Many thanks to everyone who helped both on the stall and by providing items to sell which gave us a profit of £41.50 to add to our funds.

Our thanks also to chairman, Mike Stone, who was recently able to acquire shelving for the Handicraft Department for only £15.

Sydenham School in common with just about everyone else in the country, has had to face up to inflation. For at least the last six years (and probably a great deal longer) the donation for School Fund has been only 25p. for a year. This sum has now become grossly inadequate and although the school regrets having to increase the donation at this particular time of increasing costs in living expenses, and unemployment, it could not be put off any longer and the donation you will be asked to contribute in September will be 50p. for the year. You will, of course, be receiving official notification of this from school but we want to support the school in this very fair increase and point out that if there are any parents who would like to make a much larger contribution to the School Fund they are very welcome to do so.

HEADMISTRESS' LETTER

Dear Parents,

Now that examinations are over many tutor groups' thoughts are turning to educational (or not so educational) visits. This year many of them have persuaded their long-suffering teachers to arrange a Saturday trip to Margate. Perhaps this information will serve as a warning to those who may have contemplated a quiet visit to the coast one weekend in July! The 2nd years as usual, are off on their day visits to Boulogne, this having now become such an established part of the modern language course.

It was obvious this year that examination entries, and hopefully successful results have meant much to our 5th year girls. Only twenty of them, out of a year of almost three hundred, did not wish to be entered for public examinations; a large number of these were because of ill-health, and only a handful of girls chose to leave school at Easter. Miss Killeen reports that more girls than ever before have asked to come back to follow a 6th form course. It looks, therefore, as if in the middle of the economic crisis parents have wisely decided that their daughters would benefit from further education rather than from enforced unemployment. In addition to this, of course, a number of girls will be continuing to study in colleges of further education.

Sadly we shall be saying goodbye to a number of members of staff this term (the list appears elsewhere). We thank them all for their services to Sydenham School and we wish them well in the future.

With good wishes to you and your family.

Yours sincerely

Yvonne Zackerwich

Headmistress

SCHOOL NEWS

Congratulations - to the 6th Form who, as a result of activities organised by them during their Rag Week, raised £361 for Dr. Barnardo's, and £100 for the Royal National Institute for the Deaf. A representative from Dr. Barnardo's attended an assembly last month to present them with a shield in recognition of their donation.

- to Mrs. Moy and members of the Gardening Club who recently held their last plant sale for this year and raised a total of £25 for Ryder House charity. This was in addition to £9 which was used to cover the cost of soil, pots and plants.

- to 2Y1 and everyone who supported their sponsored crisp bag collection which raised £30 for St. Christopher's Hospice.

- to everyone who paid 15p for a ticket enabling them to attend school in "mufti" for one day in May which again raised money for St. Christopher's Hospice.

- to 1R1 who raised £92 from a sponsored jog which they donated to Greenpeace to help save wildlife.

Females First 2T's efforts to change the law which prevents an elder daughter of the monarch from succeeding to the throne before a younger brother, are continuing now they have received an acknowledgement from 10 Downing Street of their suggestion to Mrs. Thatcher that she should promote a new law giving equal rights of succession to male and female children of the royal family. A Home Office official has written to 2T and Mr. Holbrook explaining that the Queen is also sovereign of a number of Commonwealth countries whose parliaments would

have to agree to any changes put forward by our Government, and also pointed out that our Government have no plans to amend the 1701 Act of Settlement which governs the succession. 2T are now thinking of asking local M.P. Christopher Price to help them with their campaign.

Dance on Thames Twelve girls from the 1st and 2nd years appeared on Thames TV programme "Free Time" on July 16. They were dancing to illustrate a story called "Queen of Bubbles". Congratulations to Miss Jobbins and the girls for continuing to maintain the high reputation of our Dance Department.

Head Girls The two new Head Girls for next year are Frances Field 6O and Yvette Stanley 6G, and their deputies are Casey Ray 6R and Eleanor Stevens 6R. A large number of girls were nominated and eventually the votes were shared between 12 candidates.

"The Tiger" is the name of a picture painted by Evelyn Martin who left Sydenham School last July. It has now been framed and presented to ILEA Education Officer, Mr. Peter Newsam, who is leaving ILEA to take up an appointment as Chairman of the Commission for Racial Equality. Mr. Newsam chose Evelyn's picture and also a print by Kathryn Munnery.

High Praise Social Worker at the Grove Centre, Mrs. Leek, wrote to school to thank the Social Studies girls who helped with the Grove Centre Youth Project. She said that "without exception they were helpful, enthusiastic and very willing, and their efforts contributed much to the improved appearance of our Youth Hall. It was a pleasure to work with them, and I only hope the experience was as positive for them as it was for us". Well done!

Music Successes Congratulations to Helen Sharp 6R who passed the Grade 5 Theory examination of the Royal School of Music; to Suhanya Skanthan 2P1 and Clare Ingamells 2W2 who have both passed their Grade I Piano examinations with merit; to Anagha Samant 2O2 who passed her Cello examination with merit; and to Stephanie Mostert 2O2 who passed her Cello Grade II examination with distinction.

Mayors' Walk Mr. Tom Bradley, last year's Mayor of Lewisham and currently our Chairman of Governors, took part earlier this year in a sponsored walk with all the Mayors of London, in spite of the fact he had a leg removed less than 18 months ago. Mr. Bradley managed to walk one mile to raise money for St. Christopher's Hospice and the staff, pupils and Governors of the school sponsored him for £261.14.

STAFF NEWS

Mrs. Webber, Housemistress of Ryder House, is retiring after 14 years at Sydenham School. Miss Colney will succeed her as Ryder Housemistress.

Mrs. Slaughter, from the School Office, who is Deputy School Secretary, is retiring this summer, also after 14 years at the School. We are sorry that Mrs. Slaughter has been very unwell since February and sadly has not been able to resume her duties. We are glad to hear now that she is on the road to full recovery.

Mrs. Wallis, Head of Business Studies and Senior Teacher, is leaving after 7 years to become Deputy Head of Waverley School. Mrs. Scott has

been appointed Head of Business Studies in her place.

Miss Whitlock from Centre One, after 6 years in London is returning now to her home town in the West Country.

Miss Massey, after 5 years in the English Department is leaving as her husband's business has moved out of London.

Miss Lee, after 4 years at Sydenham, is re-marrying and going to live in the USA.

Mrs. Atherden, after 4 years part-time in the Business Studies Department is moving out of London.

Mr. Plumb is leaving to be Head of the R.E. Department at Spencer Park School.

Mrs. Vickers is accompanying her husband who is moving to a job in Canada.

We are also sorry to say goodbye to Mr. Gray, Mrs. Milstein and Mrs. Stopani, who having helped us during this year at Sydenham, are now moving to other posts.

On Leave The Governing body have granted Mrs. Richards and Miss Hipkin leave of absence of one year. Mrs. Richards is going to Sierra Leone and Miss Hipkin to the USA.

Staff Tennis The staff held their own tennis tournament at the end of June when the champions were Miss McMillan, who is a student teacher in the German Department, partnered by Mrs. Still from the School Office. The runners up were Miss Massey from the English Department and Mr. Moy from the Science Department. We also hear a whisper that Miss McMillan happens to be Junior Tennis Champion of Denmark!

Lost and Gained Congratulations to the twenty-one members of staff who were recently involved in a sponsored slim for Save the Children Fund. They lost 126 lbs but gained £252.89!

CONFERENCE ON GIRLS' EDUCATION

As promised in our last issue, we bring you a report of the Conference on Girls' Education organised by ILEA in March, which was attended by 600 parents, teachers and governors, both male and female.

Five main topics were discussed in groups and unfortunately we only have the space for a brief review of the main points arising from those discussions. Later this year the ILEA Sub-Committee plans to publish a document on girls' education which will be available to all schools, and we will keep you informed about this.

Stereotypes

However much is done in schools to increase girls' ambitions and widen their horizons, we still have to counteract the influence of advertising and the media. It was suggested that ILEA approach official bodies responsible for advertising and media standards and stress the Authority's concern and attitudes to such issues. Secondly, the curriculum should provide pupils with the ability to evaluate material put out by the media.

The term 'ambition' was thought to be in need of re-assessment. Schools should 'open doors' but not prescribe routes through either education or life. We should re-assess the values attributed to parenting, and the traditional hierarchy of school subjects should be questioned as too frequently the practical and domestic subjects are made to appear less important.

More Guidance Needed

There was strong support for all secondary

schools to have a full time careers teacher holding at least a scale two post, and that schools should be equipped with specialist careers rooms readily accessible to staff, pupils and parents. It was also felt that the Careers Inspectorate had an important role to play in supporting equal opportunity work in schools, and an inspector for girls careers was recommended.

Strong views were expressed on a point which we have heard voiced many times prior to the Conference that schools should make it impossible for pupils to drop important subjects too early. That it widens pupils career choices if they have to study english, maths, physical sciences and social education up to the age of 16. It was also important that pupils of all abilities and ages should be able to take courses in craft, design and technology.

In these days of fast changing technology which brings new jobs it was vital that secondary schools should be able to teach about future employment prospects, from the first year onwards, as part of the social education programme. Political education was also seen as an important element of this course as well as learning how to cope with official language and form filling.

Democratic Responsibility

Many delegates expressed the view that it was important that females take a more active part in democratic public life and to this end schools should ensure that girls be encouraged to take opportunities to exercise responsibility and to take part in debates, decision making, and public speaking.

It was realised that it was as equally necessary

to change the attitude of men and boys as it was of women and girls, and it was thought the first step should be the provision of facilities in all schools which would allow the same curriculum opportunities to both sexes. There was also support for an anti-sexist "skills for living" course covering home economy, child development, etc., as an accepted part of all schools curriculum.

Early Action

Obviously attitudes at primary schools were of the greatest importance in beginning the fight against sex-stereotyping. Schools need to review critically the published material being used and displayed in classrooms. Teachers should observe closely whether it is always the girls who tidy the classroom; do the boys spend more time than girls making models. It is not sufficient just to ensure that both sexes have free choice of activities because social and home attitudes have already influenced them. Positive intervention by the teacher is necessary to counteract these influences.

Having made a host of recommendations where did we go from there. What were we trying to achieve ultimately. Some thought it was to all schools being mixed, but this suggestion brought continuing support for the existence of single sex schools or for single sex groups within mixed schools for some subjects.

How many of the recommendations ILEA will finally be able to implement and how quickly is anyones guess, but the debate on how to get real "equal opportunities" and change attitudes continues.

ALLOWANCES & BENEFITS

— THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

SCHOOL CLOTHING ALLOWANCE

An increase in the School Clothing Allowance, albeit far too small, is welcome news these days to financially hard pressed parents. For the school year 1982/83 the value of school clothing allowances for secondary school ages 11+ and 13+ has been increased from £55 to £58, and for age 15+ has been increased from £42 to £44.

Although the allowance is usually given in the first, third and fifth years at secondary school, it is also possible to claim the allowance at 12+ or 14+ if circumstances change and a family then becomes eligible to claim the allowance.

Parents may buy any clothing, shoes or P.E. wear suitable for school, but if there is a school uniform requirement, the allowance must be used to buy that. The allowance can also be spent on another child of school age in the family providing the child for whom the allowance was issued has satisfactory clothes for school.

Clothing allowances are issued in the form of books of vouchers bearing different values (50p, £1, £2, £3 and £5) to give flexibility in how they are spent. Many hundreds of shops throughout the GLC area accept the vouchers, and schools will accept them for items like badges which they often sell direct.

FREE GLASSES AND PRESCRIPTIONS

I suppose it is only human nature that when "official" departments require money from us they always have an efficient system for letting us know, but when we are entitled to claim back something, we are rarely informed and all too often miss out.

For example, if your daughter is over 16 and is still in full time education, and does not have a part-time job in the evenings or weekends, then she is definitely entitled to claim for free prescription charges and free spectacles. This can be a considerable saving if your daughter is prescribed medicine or drugs regularly for any reason. The situation is different if your daughter receives any income regularly, and whether she was still entitled to free prescriptions and glasses would depend on how much her income was.

Make sure you know your rights by checking with the Department of Health & Social Security, and if you are still not satisfied, check with the Citizens Advice Bureau. Don't rely on asking chemists, they are not always reliable sources of information I have found.

LIABILITY TO PAY N.I. CONTRIBUTIONS

If your daughter has a part-time or holiday job and is under the age of 16 she does not have to pay National Insurance contributions, but she is still covered for Industrial Injuries Benefit. Once she reaches the age of 16 and earns £29.50 or more in any week then she is liable to pay N.I. contributions.

Children of 13, and under school leaving age, are only allowed to do limited part-time work and must apply for the necessary work permit to ILEA's Divisional Office at 47 Rushey Green.

SPORTS NEWS

The P.E. Department has produced the following report on various sporting activities for the Summer term.

Athletics An excellent season, Sydenham's most successful one for a number of years.

In the Southwark Athletics Championships we gained the following results: 1st year team - winners; 2nd year team - 2nd place; 3rd year team - 3rd place; 4th year team - 2nd place.

Sandra Charlemagne 1R1 gained 1st place in the 100m in an amazing time of 13.4 sec. establishing a new Southwark record. Nina Simao 1R1 gained 1st place in the 800m and Grace Ashaye 1G1 gained 1st place in the Hurdles. The 1st year Relay team gained 1st place in 58.4 sec.

From these championships a number of our girls were selected to represent Southwark in the All London Championships:

1st Years - Sandra Charlemagne 100m Relay; Grace Ashaye - Hurdles; Nina Simao - 800m; Venetia Grant - Long Jump; Julie Gordon - Relay. 2nd Years - Lorna Clarke - 200m; Wendy Lehec - 800m; Susan Moore - 150m. 3rd Years - Morice Skelly - Hurdles. 4th Years - Antoinette Chambers - 800m. Seniors - Pauline Reid - 200m Relay.

Cross-Country In the London Junior Cross-Country Championships the Sydenham team not only braved appalling weather conditions, but ran very well to gain 3rd place.

Hockey League matches were badly affected by the weather this year, but our new Junior and Senior teams show much promise and skill. In the Kent U15 Hockey Tournament Sydenham played well and won their section but lost 2-1 in the

semi-finals to the eventual winners of the tournament. In the Orchard Road Sports Centre Tournament the U15 team were winners and the Junior Team were runners up.

Netball The Netball teams have again had a successful season in both matches and tournaments. In the 1st Year South London Sports Tournament our 1st Year B team won, and in the Orchard Road Sports Centre Tournament our 1st Year A team won; 2nd Year team - 3rd place; 3rd Year team - won; Senior Team - won.

Swimming This year we entered the Scott Lidgett Swimming League, but were only able to compete in two of the matches. Final results have not yet been received, but Sydenham gained 1st and 2nd places respectively in the two Galas. Two inter-schools matches have been held at Alleyns School in which Sydenham gained 1st and 2nd place again. In the London Schools Swimming Gala Wendy Lehec swam a superb Individual Medley to gain 1st place, and she will represent S.E. London in the All London Finals to be held later this year.

Tennis The Tennis Teams have had a poor season having lost the 3 matches played. Hopefully the game will gain in popularity next season.

Volleyball This game has become very popular, weekly practices being well attended. Sydenham has been able to field 3 teams, one mixed and two girls teams. Results have improved with match practice.



HOUSE NEWS

RYDER HOUSE

Looking back over nine years as Housemistress of Ryder House it is difficult to choose just a few things to recall in one short article. Inevitably House Evenings spring to mind. They are such fun to remember but cause weeks of sleepless nights beforehand! Barn Dances, Pantomimes, Hallowe'en Happenings, Christmas Miscellany, etc. - all of them happy events and all producing good sums of money to send to Sue Ryder for the wonderful work she does for so many people.

We have supported many other charities too, and one of our best and most enjoyable efforts was a Sponsored Walk at Crystal Palace, when we raised enough money to buy a guide dog for the blind. This year our 6th Form girls walked to the middle of London in aid of Cancer Research and they raised just under £200. Well done!

Over the years we have provided several excellent Head Girls and we have had academic successes too. We have never come first in the School Sports, but we have some very promising athletes in the House at present - perhaps next year?

I am grateful to have had such loyal staff and girls and so many kind, co-operative parents, whose help has been invaluable. As I leave, I wish them all well.

I hope my successor, Miss Coley, will be as happy in Ryder House as I have been. It's a very good House, in a very good School. My best wishes to everyone. See you!

Jean Webber

HOUSE NEWS

FERRIER HOUSE

Ferrier House were pleased and proud to be invited to send representatives to the opening of the Early Detection Cancer Unit at Lewisham Hospital on June 30th. We have supported this appeal as our House charity for the past two years, and took along a further cheque for £200 to hand over after the opening ceremony.

We are very lucky to have none of our tutors leaving School this summer. We are, however, having to say two farewells, one to Mrs. Atherton, who as a part-time teacher in the Business Studies Department has been attached to our House. Our second good-bye is to Mrs. Slaughter who is retiring after serving the School for 14 years in the office. We wish them both every happiness and success in the future.

P. Eldridge

THORNDIKE HOUSE

Thorndike House girls and parents greatly enjoyed the gymnastic and judo displays at their House Evening in May. Dancing, music and some competitions and bingo completed the activities which helped raise another £100 for charity. We have also now sent over 50 cardigans and toher clothes to the baby unit. The money is mainly being spent on specially small sized clothing.

Many thanks to all parents, friends and relatives who have helped a very successful effort this year.

P. James

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Monday 6th Sept.	7th Years Return - 12 noon
Tuesday 7th Sept.	1st Years - 8.50 a.m.
Tuesday 7th Sept.	4th Years - 8.50 a.m.
Wednesday 8th Sept.	2nd Years - 8.50 a.m.
Wednesday 8th Sept.	3rd Years - 8.50 a.m.
	6th Years - by arrangement with Miss Killeen.
Wednesday/Thursday 13/14th October	Jamble Dance Production.
Wednesday 20th Oct.	Keller House Evening
Monday 25th - Friday 29th Oct.	Half Term.
Wednesday 17th Oct.	Medieval Evening
Wednesday 24th Nov.	6th Form Parents' Evening
Monday 29th Nov. - Friday 10th Dec.	Mock Examinations.
Tuesday/Wednesday/ Thursday 14/16th Dec.	Christmas Play
Tuesday 21st Dec.	Break-up

We regret we were unable to get the Summer Issue of "Grapevine" to you at the end of last term owing to circumstances very much beyond our control. The machine which prints "Grapevine" became full of gremlins (so full that even the engineers couldn't cope!)

However now the gremlins have all fled and as most of the contents are not out of date we are at last able to send you the Summer Issue.

Editor.