
Principal's Newsletter

4 October 2019

Dear Parents,

There has been much about stars this week. The fantastic Year 4 Forest School/Stargazing lesson from 7 to 8 in the evening has led to inspired writing in the Prep School. I thoroughly enjoy my brief interaction with pupils during their extended writes. Today, a pupil asked me about the use of synonyms from his pocket thesaurus. I urged him to enrich his vocabulary by using this small pocketbook.

A few minutes later he proudly showed me a changed sentence. In the earlier version he had written "I walked up the steep hill." This had now become "I walked up the costly hill." I tried as best as I could to explain that steep has two meanings. He looked at me quizzically. Why use a book to help you when it causes such confusion!

The Forest School is much on the mind of Prep and Pre Prep pupils. They are keen to get there as often as possible. Now there is to be an outdoor library, a place where one can read a book under a tree, surely one of the most delightful activities known to man. The drive to read more fluently, more confidently, and more enthusiastically involves some amazing cross College activity. The Year 4s help the Year 1s, the Sixth Form are reading buddies to Prep Schoolers.

The big news today is the award of the National Careers Mark to Liverpool College. Under Mrs Cassidy's effective leadership, we are one of the first schools in the nation to achieve it, and we have plans to move our programme to ever greater heights. We were delighted to be invited to serve as an example of best careers practice at future conferences and workshops.

We had all caught a glimpse of the amazing progress of careers provision at the parent information evening last night. You can see the slides of this evening [here](#).

Parents made many good observations. Some of these related to publicizing parent information evenings better. There was some discussion about how many more people would attend if they knew what the evening was about. There were traffic concerns and suggestions for managing it better and there was extensive discussion about catering. We track parental suggestions and our responses to them on our website. Mr Stamper and Mr Devine presented their efforts in developing our primary curriculum. Ms Haynes spoke

about our LCA+ maps and Ms Drew introduced her work in careers. We invited parents who are able to provide time or expertise to the initiative of starting an annual journal of excellence, a published collection of inspiring art, poetry, and other pupil and student work from across the College to contact me if they have any questions or suggestions (principal@liverpoolcollege.org.uk).

There are now weekly House competitions. They range from news to poetry. I was very struck by the winning entry from Leigh Y (Y7 Howard's) who had been challenged, like other contestants to write about truth as part of the house poetry competition to mark National Poetry Day:

Truth

Truth is something you have to give

To at least one person in your life.

Sometimes truth hurts and

That is alright.

When you find out the truth,

And not lies, there are

Many reactions like sad, shocked

Or surprised.

Truth can be good, bad or neither,

But don't worry, it won't cause a fever.

If you tell the truth, the rumours

Will not begin to flow.

Tell the truth

And tension will no longer grow.

We have sent you an email about the logistics of **Founders' Day** (Friday 11 October) which I hope you will attend. As part of our preparations we conduct a risk assessment. It is in this context that I must advise you as parents that, in the event of a fire or evacuation of the premises, you can collect your child from our emergency muster area, the entranceway

walkway outside the Cathedral. A reminder also that on Founders' Day (11 October) the school is closed.

On Thursday we went sailing. As part of the leadership education programme, some of our Year 9 pupils sailed their Pico dinghies through the docks of Liverpool. Some fell in the very cold water, emerging undaunted to helm their boat again. I enjoyed encouraging them from the dry comfort of the safety boat. It is amazing to see a person learn something like sailing. It appears on the face of it to utterly contradict the narrow definition of learning and progress now being deployed with missionary zeal. Learning is a change in long term memory so say the experts at Ofsted. Progress is simply knowing more and remembering more. It occurred to all of us watching young people learn to sail that whilst this definition may be sound neuroscience it is at best a highly reductive educational philosophy. It seems we are determined to turn our children into robots and explain to them that their own experiences and passions do not fit our deterministic models. Fortunately, in these experiences, not even Ofsted can kill the fun.

Pupil voice events across the College show the strange similarities and differences in approaches to learning across a wide age range. Sixth Formers want more silence in the library. Year 6 prefects want to move about more. One acute prefect in Year 6 told me that as the Scots Guards get to move every five minutes when they stand guard for the Queen, he should be allowed to move around the classroom. Food for thought.

I am always intrigued by the answer to the question: How much homework do you do, per night, per week. Answers vary enormously, perhaps understandably. The pupils themselves are not against homework at all, just boring homework. Food for thought.

The amazing Ms Rogers is really leading the drive to establish multiple scout groups and packs in our Prep School. We are hoping this might be possible as soon as next term, because of her great work. It remains a highlight for many Old Lerpoolians that they went camping with their Prep School scout group in Sefton Park! I promise that the rebirth of scouting will not lead to this sort of dangerous expedition. It will be yet another wonderful addition to our LC+ curriculum.

Mr Lowes has provided some useful **e-safety advice** for parents that you can download from the College website [here](#). He provides helpful conversation points and tips for parents to start a discussion with their child about staying safe online.

All rugby is cancelled unilaterally by Lymm High School. Our bones can recover. But there is hockey for Year 7-10 and a big cross country meet in Calderstones Park.

May I wish you and yours a happy and dry weekend.

Yours sincerely,

Mr H van Mourik Broekman
Principal