
Principal's Newsletter

6 September 2019

Dear Parents,

And so it begins.

It seems a decade ago when our Year 7s began their secondary phase journey with a sun-dappled sports afternoon under the tutelage of Mr Cook and their rugby, hockey and netball coaches. We have now had a week of frenetic school life, a sort of time warp in which time both slows and accelerates. We have been impressed greatly with our new pupils from Reception to Year 12. Everyone seems to have started with the purpose, passion and embrace of challenge which drives our school forward.

Over the weekend I considered wistfully whether I might legally prorogue school. This arcane device, recently in the news, would greatly lift the spirit of all involved with schools, providing an occasional period of relaxation before new work is announced. I reflected however that I could not be sure that I would have the courage to face parents or bear their howls of protest after such a decision. A further five weeks of summer holiday might finish some parents off. It is impossible not to notice the joy with which parents bring their children to the first day of school at the end of the summer. Indeed, the first days of term are a study in contrasts. Parents bounce to school with smiles on their faces, relieved one must assume to finally get a break. Pupils appear somewhat weighed down by the return of all the responsibilities which school imposes. However, they soon cheer up when they see old and make new friends and throw themselves into everything the College offers.

An early test of the Liverpoolian standard is the Year 7 House run, a gallop around Sefton Park with all 145 pupils on the first day of term. The race was competitive if not combative. Early congratulations to Freddie B (Howard's) and Isabella H (School) who can claim the first prize and house points of their careers.

It has been good to see the gradual plastering of the blazer breast pockets of this school with the house strips. Pupils all have strips and must have them attached to their blazer by next Monday. The zen of attaching the strip is a small meditation of the school year to

come. It may be ironed on, but experience teaches that the strip remains in place throughout the year if it is stitched on.

A few dates for the calendar. Saturday, September 14 is a Year 7 Open Morning and takes place from 9.30am to 12pm. We will need once again an army of pupil and parent volunteers to help out on the day. Thank you for encouraging your child to help out.

If you are new to the College, I want to give an early plug for the **PTA**. This organisation supports the school through fundraising and social events. Every parent is automatically a member and the PTA will hold its AGM on September 24. I hope you will consider coming along to this welcoming group of people and getting involved in the various activities and events the PTA supports.

The PTA have also issued an urgent appeal for items of nearly new school uniform particularly school coats, blazers, skirts and pinafores, jumpers and PE kits. Any donations of uniform would be gratefully received - donations can be left at any of the school offices. Thank you for your support.

On Saturday 28 September, the Greek Academy will reconvene. This is a programme funded by a national charity, Classics for All, and operated by the University of Liverpool where pupils from all Liverpool schools are able to learn Ancient Greek. It is open to interested pupils in Years 8, 9, and 10. Your child can sign up or express an interest by mentioning their curiosity to one of the classics teachers.

We already have a block fixture this Saturday. The current Year 7 are still learning the basic laws of rugby. Many boys have never touched a ball with such a ridiculous shape but they are making rapid progress. Some teams will travel to Oswestry School to play, and of course we will host Scarisbrick Hall School at our school, with a Prep School team facing off in front of the pavilion. It is a sure sign that summer is over and autumn has begun when you have to find your wellies and go watch the rugby.

Our girls are playing hockey at Wyncote and there is also a netball assessment morning for Year 7.

Next week, I will be taking 14 students from our Sixth Form to Magdalene College Cambridge. I am not looking forward to the four hour drive, but I am looking forward to learning more about this College which is "matched" to Liverpool and finding out what they are looking for in their applicants.

The *Sister Act* audition posters are already up, summoning thespians, dramaturgs, and other pupils of and for the theatre to get involved in the annual musical production. Ms Clark and Mr Bishop have of course moved into their new Rushworth Music Centre. The Centre is the result of generous donations from anonymous donors and from the Rushworth Foundation. It means we finally have a dedicated rehearsal space for the growing choir and orchestra.

Our hope is that this facility will be a further spur to musical endeavour and participation. Later in the term we will open the facility formally.

There are as ever new members of staff. I propose to introduce you to them over the next few newsletters:

- **Mrs Crook** is our new College SENCO and joins us from St Michael in the Hamlet Primary School where she has worked as a teacher, SENCO and since 2008 as the Inclusion Manager.
- **Miss Crosby** joins us as the Assistant SENCO. Prior to working at the College, Miss Crosby was a Data and Exams Officer at the Academy of St Francis of Assisi.
- **Mrs Drew** is our Assistant Careers Leader. She was a Personal Achievement Tutor at Carmel College where she has worked since 2011 providing students with careers guidance and advice.

No beginning of term letter can be complete without three key exhortations. The first is to download the app. More than 1600 people have downloaded this handy tool. It means we can communicate with you about all the details of school life, and it enables you to follow what is going on. Those with the app already received an early notification that the term dates for the 2020-21 school year are now published on the school website [here](#). Do not delay, download today.

Secondly, please do not park illegally. I consider parking at St Anthony of Padua as a form of trespass, unless of course you are going to early morning Mass. Our neighbours and other drivers send cascades of pictures and fulminations in my direction. They lament the character of parents, their callous disregard for others. We must all do better, and I beg you to consider whether your travel arrangements and driving and parking habits are conducive to the safety of young people.

Thirdly, please talk about school with your child whether they are 4 or 18. Engage with and stimulate their learning. You are their best teachers and your interest in the actual content of what is being taught and learned in school, in and outside the classroom, is an absolutely essential compass for your child, pointing in the direction of maturity and full human flourishing. I know these chats can be the equivalent of extracting water from a rock, as pupils typically answer the question how was school today with the answer fine. If you persist and ask about the things learned that day, the passions and emphases of teachers and classmates, if in other words, you refuse to be deterred, your child will derive an enormous benefit.

May I wish you and yours a pleasant and restful weekend.

Yours sincerely,

**Mr H van Mourik Broekman
Principal**