
Principal's Newsletter

11 October 2019

Dear Parents,

Founders' Day never fails to lift the spirits. The august surroundings of the Cathedral, the antiquity of some of the service, the support of visitors, parents, trustees, governors, foundation members, former pupils of the College and old boys of the Collegiate, Old Huytonians, the fantastic music, the procession of the House Captains from Pre Prep, Prep and Sixth Form, the inspired preaching from the Dean, it all combines to remind us of the solemn duty we all have to continue to improve Liverpool College and make it even more worthy of its glorious history. The sight of 1300 pupils and their parents and grandparents descending the hill into the hostelryes of our city in a re-enactment of the great invasions of human history stirs the spirit. It has been as ever, a joyful day.

I have just one date for your calendar. A red letter day. Saturday November 9th is Firework Night. This extravaganza of autumnal illumination last took place in 2015. It was one of the most memorable evenings on campus. There are stalls, snacks, BBQ, drinks, games and of course a professional fireworks display, on the main school field. The gates open at 5.30pm and the firework display will be at 8pm. The PTA have done a wonderful job organising this event and I would encourage you to join in the outpouring of community goodwill this event engenders. Family tickets will be available in advance only from the school offices and will be £10 for 2 adults and up to 4 children. Adult tickets are £5 and children's tickets are £3. All tickets will be on sale on Monday from the school offices or by emailing pta@liverpoolcollege.org.uk.

One of the best aspects of the new Ofsted inspection framework or regime is the movement away from an overreliance on data.

Data by itself can never tell the story of a school, or completely reflect its culture or life.

Having made this disclaimer, the statistics or data about the audition schedule for the Prep/Middle School production of *Popstars* do tell a story.

173 pupils auditioned for a part in the production. Auditions lasted 7.5 hours or 450 minutes. Credit to Ms Clark and the entire team for conducting this operation. It is very encouraging to see such passion for participation in a musical.

This year has featured an increase in the variety and number of house activities, competitions, and charitable events. Ms McCone is putting the finishing touches on the Brook's House Run next Monday, a fundraiser led by Ella M (Selwyn's) under the tutelage of Mr Heeley, is about to launch a raffle among pupils to raise funds to provide food parcels to the homeless. Each House, across the entire College, has adopted charities. Most Fridays, Mr Farnan conducts a quiz on specialist or general subjects. The House prefects are strategizing how they improve aspects of the school. Some are focused on the decoration of interior spaces, others on cultural and artistic activities, some combine several projects at once. This week Ms Diamond and School House pupils took chapel. They did a fantastic job.

Our aim is to move from the "consumption" model of education. In this model, teachers do everything, the child sits rather like a laptop waiting to record information. All our learning is an active response to information, to other people, and even to the promptings of our own curiosity. The more active our pupils become in the creation of the learning environment they want to see, the better it will be. The more they are agents and participants in their learning, the deeper that learning will be. This is perhaps particularly true of the LC+ curriculum, intended as it is to develop habits and dispositions of action rather than just habits of thinking. These house initiatives are providing these opportunities to pupils to shape the school the way they want it to be.

This week was dyslexia awareness week. Our new SENCO Mrs Crook writes:

In order to begin a conversation between pupils and offer greater insight into the challenges people with dyslexia face, I am speaking at 6 house assemblies over the next two weeks. These will include recognising the strengths and weaknesses of people with dyslexia, hearing from those who are Experts by Experience and discovering famous people who have successfully learned how to manage their own challenges with dyslexia.

The Boarders were at Breakout last weekend, and are planning to go to Farmageddon this weekend. Next Tuesday, I am looking forward to the boarders' annual Founders' Day dinner when they invite day pupils and members of staff to celebrate Founders' Day with them. Tonight I will be attending the OL Dinner with Chinedum and Olivia, head boy and girl. We are honoured to have Jake Berry OL and minister of HM Government as our guest speaker. Last night, I had a foretaste of the gathering of the tribe when I attended the OL Golf Day. Our school team, captained by the Head of School House, Mr Scott, lost nobly to the excellent OL team, stacked as it is with scratch golfers who seem to take peculiar delight in defeating their old school.

Tomorrow we will host 1400 pupils who are sitting the banding and music aptitude tests at Liverpool College. We will be playing rugby against Cheadle Hulme at the same time, so please consider the possible traffic difficulties which will arise and drop your child off at the Penny Lane gates.

The highlight of the week for me was my assembly in Pre Prep. Inspired by the College pupils' eco committee under the enthusiastic guidance of Ms Whittell, I proposed to enlighten our young Lerpooians about rubbish. My first slide was a photograph of rubbish on our campus. Unfortunately, it is relatively easy to take such a picture. It showed a school bench with various bits of litter strewn on the ground. I then asked the Pre Prep "what has gone wrong here? What is wrong with this picture?", hoping to elicit a rounded condemnation of the habits of their school mates.

You did not focus your camera properly. The picture is fuzzy, came the reply.

A courageous and also accurate response.

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

Yours sincerely,

Mr H van Mourik Broekman
Principal