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## Principal's Newsletter

11 September 2020

Dear Parents,

*Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*: this French expression roughly translates into "everything is different, but everything is the same". The sounds of learning and laughter emanate from the hallways. Pupils troop off to the playing field, or run frantically around in their designated play area. Staff inspire pupils. A walk through the campus is a tour of teaching talent, as our staff are able to focus the minds of their charges on amazing topics from the definition of literature to the laws of physics, from how to write a good sentence, to how to use shading in a painting.

Kudos to Mrs Hall for her charitable work on behalf of [KIND](#), a local charity that helps children and families across Liverpool and Merseyside cope with the effects of poverty and disadvantage. Mrs Hall took part in Mr Hammersley's Factor of Ten challenge in June, and raised almost £1200 in sponsorship thanks to the support of colleagues, staff at Taskers and friends and family. These are very challenging times for the charitable sector and her donation was put to immediate good use in helping to fund KIND's 6-Week Summer Out of School programme.

Normally pupils attend chapel. Currently that is not possible, but Mr Hammersley is becoming a little bit of a YouTube star, recording his chapel talks for viewing in the classroom. This allows one to walk through the Prep School and view Mr Hammersley appearing amazingly in every classroom simultaneously. A somewhat surreal experience as he is "broadcasting" from an empty chapel 150 ft away.

Omar, Gabriel and Kate in Y9 visited me this week and pointed out that if I wanted to have a whole school assembly their "production company" could put it together for me. So like Mr Hammersley, I have become a recorder of messages, staring into a tiny camera rather than hearing the head boy or head girl cry "all stand" in front of 1000 pupils. These pupils are quicker to understand the opportunities of technology in this situation than I am.

Speaking of some technology in education, the Imagination in Education podcast this week is a conversation with Professor Katie Atkinson, a College parent and University of Liverpool governor, about schools, education and artificial intelligence. Very topical, very interesting. You can listen to the podcast [here](#).

We have some impressive rates of participation in sport practices. It was thrilling to see our Year 7 and 9 go through their paces. Autumn is only autumn when there is Saturday sport at the College: rugby, hockey and girls football this week. Year 8 are due this Saturday plus the Y9 and Y10 rugby teams. The schedule is included below. It is an opportunity not to be missed and we expect perfect attendance for this programme. If you have any questions about arrangements please contact Mr Cook (Director of Sport) [jcook@liverpoolcollege.org.uk](mailto:jcook@liverpoolcollege.org.uk).

- 8.30am-10.00am – Butler's-Selwyn's-Howards
- 10.30am-12.00pm – Howson's-School-Brook's
- 8.30am-10.00am - Y9 - Rugby Squad Training
- 10.30am-12.00pm - Y10 - Rugby Squad Training

A reminder to parents that school blazers should have the house strip attached to the top of the blazer pocket. If you have bought a new blazer, you will need to attach the house strip which has been given to your child or is available from house administrators and school offices.

Mrs Duffy has asked me to highlight some important **e-safety advice and resources** for parents:

*We are very aware that our children are spending more and more time online on a variety of different devices such as phones, tablets and PCs. We recognise that the pace of change in the world of social media is hard for parents to keep up with and it is often quite difficult to be sure that we are doing all we can to keep our children safe online. As a school we want to support parents and we are here to offer help and advice to our school community and also to families and pupils on an individual basis. One issue that often comes up is that parents are not sure what the risks are when children are using different apps and it is true that some apps are riskier than others. The NSPCC and the phone network O2 have teamed up to produce a fantastic website that helps parents make decision about what Apps their children install on their phones. You can find the website at this link: <https://www.net-aware.org.uk/>*

*You will see that many of these Apps have published age limits - for example Tik Tok should not be used by children under the age of 13. The age limits are different for many of the apps so it is important that you are aware of this information and take steps to protect your children from inappropriate content for their age.*

*From time to time, we are made aware of particularly upsetting content that becomes viral and it is certainly difficult to stop our children viewing this sort of material when it is shared millions of times across the world. We also know that when schools send out blanket email alerts to parents it can result in an increase of traffic to the offending material. If your child does view something online that they find upsetting they can seek support from staff in school and it can also be reported by following this link: <https://reportharmfulcontent.com/>*

Please [click here](#) to read an **important update from Mr Bishop (Director of Music)** on how rehearsals for music groups will be organised to allow them to take place safely and in line with protective measures. The update also has details on how you and your child can download the school App to receive notifications of rehearsal schedules.

Would your child like to learn an instrument or take singing lessons? Please read the information in the booklet [here](#) for further details.

Some more new staff introductions:

- **Miss Crossley** is a new member of the Prep teaching staff. Miss Crossley knows the College well having completed her teacher training last year through our School Direct programme.
- **Miss Finnegan** has also joined the Prep School as a teacher. Miss Finnegan completed her BA in Primary Education at Liverpool John Moores University.

Mrs Cassidy has asked me to highlight an important clarification of public health guidance regarding households and Covid-19:

- If a person in a household is displaying Covid related [symptoms](#) ALL household members should isolate straight away. The symptomatic person will need to be [tested](#). All household members should presume the symptomatic person is Covid positive, and remain in isolation, until the result of the test is known. If the result is positive the symptomatic person should remain isolated for 10 days (from the onset of symptoms) and other household members for 14 days (a negative test by other members of the household does not exempt the 14 days self-isolation rule).
- If a symptomatic person tests negative, they and their household members, can return to normal less, UNLESS the person is still symptomatic, in this case the person must be retested.

Further information and guidance is available at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

It is becoming a weekly lament, but must be repeated. Too many people park illegally on Queens Drive. This parking causes very dangerous situations for children and adults and even this week we got calls from very irate delivery drivers (one assumes they are on hands-free sets) vituperating against the name of Liverpool College and all it stands for. They describe harrowing near misses, and lucky escapes.

My own experience of talking to parents about their parking is perhaps instructive of the underlying reality. Most parents say: "Sorry, I will not do that again" and indeed they are never spotted on a yellow line again. Some others tell me in aggressive manner to mind my own business. One even suggested that I enjoyed as a sort of sadomasochistic pleasure this rather forlorn duty of speaking to her about parking. Particularly troubling is that many of these people seem to believe I am a member of the public assailing them out of some

deeply judgmental psychological pathology rather than a Principal trying to keep children safe. I must raise my profile I think, so that at the very least I do not have to explain to parents who I am: "I am the principal of your child's school, could you please not park illegally". I enclose my picture so you recognize me next time.



My university education gave me some insight in to the problem of illegal parking. As part of a series of articles in a magazine my friends and I started we interviewed the traffic wardens of the small Scottish town where the university was located. Our question was simple; why do people park illegally. A traffic warden has a unique perspective on this. I would say their answers were sophisticated psychologically and theologically. They believed that people could not resist breaking the law, almost for their pleasure. In addition, they said they felt that many repeat offenders were nevertheless certain they would never be caught, a strange view to hold when you have been ticketed. Finally, convenience not curiosity killed the proverbial cat. The traffic wardens were certain that human nature itself would always mean there would be illegal parking. They were theological realists. I hope to develop this same patient understanding of the professional parking enforcer over time. Until then, I hope you will view my interventions as well intentioned.

Our new buildings are done. Mr Calvey and his crews are vacating the boarding house, leaving a transformed Beechlands. Next year, we will begin boarding from Year 7 and pupils will be able to board from ages 11-18. You can read more about boarding [here](#).

The Prep School annexe, yet to be given a glorious name, is a hive of activity and light-filled teaching. Congratulations to Mr Flynn and all the estates team for another productive summer.

I am to be away from school for a few weeks. I am enjoying some hip replacement surgery next Thursday. After years of pain, I look forward to the surgery as a relief and hope it will enable me to assist Mr Cook in coaching sport as a middle-aged man who can actually move around the pitch!

I am so blessed in my deputies Ms Haynes and Ms Cassidy who will alternate on a weekly basis the leadership of the school. I anticipate that my brief absence will have the positive impact of the fall of Italian governments on that country: more efficiency, more communication, more progress.

My return, so my doctor assures me, is a matter of weeks not months. I shall then be able to cover more ground in my traffic warden duties. Watch out!

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

**Yours sincerely,**

**Mr H van Mourik Broekman**  
**Principal**