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## Principal's Newsletter

23 October 2020

Dear Parents,

I would like to express my thanks to you for your excellent cooperation this half term as we keep the school going in the middle of the pandemic. Your support of difficult decisions and your willingness to prioritize the safety of others are much appreciated. Our school has, like almost all others in the region, been hit by the pandemic. We have had terrible bereavements and serious illness with all their sadness and stress. My thoughts are constantly turned to those families who are struggling in one way or another with the present reality.

When I look out of my study window and see the Year 8s eagerly looking for sticks in the bushes to chase each other with, I am struck (after shouting at them to put the sticks back in the bushes) with the way each person experiences these new realities differently. For all my worries, many pupils across the campus are simply loving being with their friends, their teachers, and eagerly doing their best in their learning.

There is a tremendous spirit among our pupils from Reception to Year 13. No whining, no moaning, no silliness (stick seeking excluded). Indeed, there is a palpable air of focus and engagement with everything we are able to do rather than a focus on the things we are not able to do.

The fact is that we head into a well-deserved half-term with little certainty about the contours or structure of the path forward in school because it is not entirely possible to predict how any one year group will be affected on any one day. We know that through the innovative approaches adopted and developed by staff, which reached their summit in my view in excellent Teams lessons for Year 3 (surely a unique occurrence in Liverpool) we have maintained forward momentum. My own period of convalescence has allowed me to reflect a little on the way we have to get through this reality we are living. It is not only or primarily about academic progress, it is also about the way we as individuals experience what is happening. I discussed this with our Inclusion Mentor Ms Scott, and our conversation can be found among the Imagination in Education podcasts [here](#) (this podcast also includes a song written by Mr Bishop during lockdown entitled 'We'll come through'). An important theme of our conversation is developing and focusing on our relationships and our capacity for companionship as we face this reality together. As a school community, we have to support every person in dealing with the challenges they face. This is not something that can be

done from an office or by a small or designated team of people. All of us have to make this creation of companionship in the journey through this period a priority in school.

Ms Scott has also written a very helpful piece about the resources we as parents may find helpful for ourselves and for our parenting of our children at this time. Her contribution can be found [here](#).

While we are away keeping safe, various projects on campus will continue. Workmen will be putting finishing touches on our new boarding house Beechlands. Our maintenance team will be here every day, repainting the many beautiful old walls across our campus, and repairing and maintaining the miles of paths which connect us to each other. A major project is under way in the Prep School. The windows which were put into the building after a bombing raid in WWII are being replaced, finally. That work will also be continuing on campus. Mr Bishop and Miss Clark will also be on site to hold the second 'round' of the musical aptitude assessment for Year 7 music places.

A reminder to secondary phase pupils that it will be **Week B** (again) when we return to school on Wednesday 4 November.

Liverpool local authority has asked us to remind parents that if you travel abroad during half term and return from a country that is not in the travel corridor, you must observe the 14-day quarantine rules and isolate at home. Pupils must not attend school if they are isolating. The list of countries requiring isolation for 14 days is constantly changing so please regularly check the latest version [here](#).

Congratulations to our very own SSI, Mr Robert Newton, formerly warrant officer in the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment, now at work in our school supporting and developing the CCF, Duke of Edinburgh, behaviour mentoring and health and safety procedures. I received a letter from an inspecting officer thanking Mr Newton for the excellent state of our shooting range which had recently been inspected. I marvel both at all the things that happen in this school flawlessly without me knowing about it and the fact that the MOD has kept inspecting school shooting ranges in the middle of a pandemic! Keep calm and carry on.

We have had already a very strong and large set of applications for medicine and Oxbridge places this year. Our Year 13 have produced double digit numbers of applications for medicine and for Oxbridge despite all the obstacles put in their way.

Mr Bishop has confirmed that in December, we will hold our annual Battle of the Bands competition. As we can't hold the final in front of an audience, we would encourage each band to create a music video which will act as the band's audition. The top bands will be featured in a remote assembly at the end of term. Please email Mr Bishop for full details ([dbishop@liverpoolcollege.org.uk](mailto:dbishop@liverpoolcollege.org.uk)). This year, each band must come from one year or class bubble.

Mrs Doran reports that we have winners in every category from every part of the school in the 'If you were an Engineer' competition (Merseyside and Cheshire region). A tremendous achievement! You can read more details about the competition [here](#). Congratulations to the prize winners:

- Pre Prep - Jacob T, Rowan C
- Prep - Lucas D, Miranda H
- KS3 - Alicia E
- KS4 - Emily T and George H

As well as receiving medals and prizes, their work will be displayed through the Merseyside and Cheshire Gallery, which will be going live on Tuesday 27 October.

As always, it's been a busy week in the Prep School: from a [book reading and live talk](#) with award winning author AJ Hartley, to [tuning into a live broadcast from NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center](#) plus the launch of a poetry writing competition in addition to pupils creating videos describing their experiences in the Year 2020 and their predictions for the Year 2050 to go inside a time capsule that will be buried on the school ground next half term.

Year 12 Economics students enjoyed a KPMG workshop this week as Ms Drew reports:

*On Monday we welcomed back to school the Talent Foundry who delivered the KPMG WorkReady programme to our Year 12 Economics class. The programme is designed to help students develop their core employability skills by challenging them to think about how to use the latest emerging and innovative technologies to solve real life KPMG client briefs. The workshop provides the students with an important insight into the world of work, and the impact that technology is having on the workplace by engaging with employers and exploring the different applications of innovative technologies.*

*After an engaging presentation, the students split into their teams to design a new product using technology ranging from drones to AI, that would be used to help one of the emergency services. The students worked well in their teams and every student took part in the presentations. It was a close-run competition, but the Navy team won with their self-propelled box that could be sent out to people in distress in the ocean, where it then opens out into a life raft with the capability of monitoring their vital signs. Well done to the Navy team!*

The boarders meanwhile enjoyed their first weekend team building sports competition with an energetic and competitive [Sunday evening of handball](#). Mrs Latham (Head of Boarding) and Mr Cook have plenty more events planned for next half term.

Mr Cook has also announced this half term's House Sports Leaderboard:

- 1st - School (1088 points)
- 2nd – Selwyn's (983 points)

- 3rd – Butler’s (878 points)
- 4th – Howson’s (846 points)
- 5th – Howard’s (659 points)
- 6th – Brook’s (626 points)

Congratulations to School House and also to the pupils with the greatest number of individual house sports points:

- Chloe H (Selwyn’s) - 16 points
- Summer T (School) - 16 points
- Isla L (Butler’s) - 14 point
- Ellie C (School) - 14 points
- Harry Q (School) - 14 points
- George W (School) - 12 points

Yesterday, a journalist from a national newspaper called me to “sound me out about schools and Covid”. This conversation made clear to me that I am not as informed as many other people about the myriad news stories about the development of tiers, rotas, and other plans which may never see the light of day. The policy of the government seems to be reactive and protean, perhaps unsurprisingly when confronted by the constant stream of new facts which the situation produces. The policy of this College is clearly unaltered by circumstance. We will keep focusing on the education of all the children and young people who attend and live here and do our very best to ensure that the pandemic is a fruitful time for them educationally, personally, and emotionally.

May I wish you and yours a restful, peaceful and safe half-term.

**Yours sincerely,**

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