
Principal's Newsletter

9 November 2018

Dear Parents,

A week of Remembrance is also a week to remember.

It all began with the [Festival of Remembrance](#) at Mossley Hill Church. Our [staff and pupils](#) provided their sculptural poppies which graced the north face of the Church, as well as a play and song.

Mr Ridley takes assembly today on the theme of Remembrance. In the Prep School, we read on a huge display about the Chavasse family, affected, destroyed and distorted, as so many families were, by the utterly senseless carnage of the war to end all wars. Sunday, we will gather for the CCF Parade and Service. Saturday, our CCF is providing the Colour Guard as the old Collegiate School remembers the old boys it lost in the war. It is an incredible fact. 1/3 of British men between the age of 18-22 in 1914 did not survive the Great War. It was a slaughter and it takes little imagination to think how a city, town or a school would be devastated by this pattern of loss and grief. It puts our current troubles in perspective. It also reminds us how the political leadership of the world can sleepwalk its collective way into Armageddon. There is a lesson for all of us in remembering, and schools are the best place for lessons.

Spare a thought for St Anthony of Padua, our neighbouring school. This is an excellent school with an amiable headmaster and an enrolment of about 200 pupils. Daily their parents and pupils face some of our parents and pupils invading their car park, performing extraordinarily dangerous feats of parking, three point turns, and other inconsiderate behaviours.

Mr Metcalf, the headteacher and I, are going to work together to improve this situation with the help of the city and the residents affected. Our current ideas for discussion include developing the so called squiggly line and double yellow system all the way down Queens Drive, finding ways to provide parking on the College campus, and increased enforcement. Yet no system devised by man can enforce common sense, civility, decency. As one father told me as we watched someone block the entrance to their school: Why does that person

believe that the convenience of their child is more important than the safety of mine. My mind raced to an answer touching on St Augustine, the nature of sin, and the inherent selfishness of the human person, but I could only mumble in my shame and embarrassment: I do not know. We can do better and must do better. Is it necessary for any College parent to park at St Anthony's? I would posit to you the answer is no. To park illegally at a bus stop or on double yellow lines, or to double park? No. No. and no again.

The PTA and its new committee as well as other volunteers met this week. They are gearing up for yet more important events. The funds they raise are so desperately needed in this era of straitened school funding. This evening, the PTA have organised a Reception family fun night at Jungle Fun for our new pupils, they have sold 70 plus tickets so it should be fun!

An update about uniform. Please be reminded of the PTA nearly new uniform sale, an opportunity to stock up at very little expense on all the items you need - Wednesday 14 November in the Sutton Timmins Hall from 2.30-4pm.

Also a reminder about coats. Our uniform policy states that pupils below Year 10 should be wearing the College outdoor waterproof coat while pupils in Years 10 and 11 should wear a plain black coat.

At parental request, the Governing Body have reviewed the uniform policy with particular regard to cost and their responsibility to ensure our uniform policy is consistent with equality policies.

They have identified the current cost of the Primary Phase summer dress as being unsustainably high. We will consult with parents about a new dress with the aim of slashing the cost in half at least. The current summer dresses will always be permitted to be worn even after the introduction of a new summer dress.

Governors, staff, parents and pupils all agree on the importance of a smart and practical uniform in promoting cohesion and engendering a sense of identity and pride in the school. We do not want to proliferate uniforms, ending up with something that is not practical, cohesive or enforceable.

There are no changes or additions to uniform items, but the Governors have decided that uniform will not be listed as boys and girls uniforms but instead under two uniform options referred to as [uniform L](#) and [uniform C](#). Pupils are able to wear either uniform L or uniform C but they cannot wear a mix of the two uniforms.

Our standards and expectations regarding personal appearance and uniform presentation remain unchanged and we will continue to enforce our policy.

While I write, about 35 boys and 4 staff have disembarked on a windswept Isle of Man. They are playing their annual fixtures on the island and participating in full school uniform at the remembrance services of King William's College. Say it quietly, but our 1st XV are on a roll.

They play good stuff and defeated St Edwards 55-0. This weekend we are also playing rugby against Ripley St Thomas. Pupil and parent commitment to these fixtures have been exemplary. In our ever expanding sport programme, this Saturday morning sees the return of boys hockey with a practice for invitees at 9am.

The Year 11 parents' evening was well attended. Mr Griffith reports that the vast majority of the year are engaging with the support sessions before and after school. It is usually around the time of our first sixth form open evening of the year (coming up on 14 November at 4pm) that the dramatic realization arises in the consciousness of the Year 11 pupil: this stuff really matters. The ability of a pupil to ideate a possible future is a strong indication of their likely progress in school. For this reason, I was greatly encouraged by the enthusiasm on display at the Prep School careers fair. Parent volunteers from a variety of professional backgrounds answered questions and told the story of their careers. The pupils love it, as nothing is more inspiring than the pure potential of our own future. The sooner pupils link their learning in school to their future dreams, the better.

The Music Department is looking for families of girl pupils in Years 7 – 9 to host visiting pupils from a French School in Barcelona from Wednesday 27 March – Monday 1 April 2019. Please contact Mr Bishop (dbishop@liverpoolcollege.org.uk) if you are willing to host one or two of their pupils. Thank you.

If you visit a local Tesco stores from now until the end of the year, you will be able to cast a vote to help Mrs Styles and our Inclusion Team secure funding to set up two Wellbeing Libraries to support the good mental health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff.

Mrs Styles' put in a successful application to the Tesco Bags of Help Grant Scheme and the project has now been put forward to a customer vote along with two other projects. To vote, you will need to make a purchase within store of any value. You will then receive one token per transaction (it's not necessary to purchase a carrier bag in order to receive a token) which you can assign to the project of your choice.

My school days consist of the accidental discoveries of pupil talents. Ruby M in Year 11 (School) was one of the performers at an informal GCSE and A Level music concert in the MV Hall last night. She played with brio and a purity of passion. Until that moment, I did not know she could play the piano, let alone play it as an instrument of expression.

The dancing of pupils in Mr Atkinson's Year 1 class is also a form of expression. Research suggests that some cardio-boogieing does wonders for pupil learning. This class seemed used to dancing to Ray Parker's excellent Ghostbusters; a song that makes even my old legs move with a salutatory twitch. They threw themselves with abandon into the coordinated dance moves just before lunch, peeling off when asked to go to the toilet and re-joining the dancing when they returned. As they trooped off in a quiet line to their repast, it occurred to me that I had received conclusive evidence that World War 1 would never have happened if all the children of Europe had learned to dance to Ghostbusters in primary school.

May I wish you and your family a happy and restful weekend.

Yours sincerely,

Hans van Mourik Broekman
Principal