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## Principal's Newsletter

18 January 2019

Dear Parents,

The term is gathering pace. Mr Brady, his colleagues and his Sixth Formers can be seen carrying various items of domestic cosiness into Godwyn House where Mr Lyons and the estates team have been labouring to get ready for the big day, unpacking furniture, encouraging the contractor, lining up the classrooms. IT technicians and electricians, landscapers and cleaners, they are all toing and froing to get ready to make the move date. By the time we open the facility officially late in the term, this will be a new and deserved home for our Sixth Form. It is all very exciting.

The Year 11 mock results day went well. It is sobering to receive a piece of paper with real grades on it. There is much work to be done, but we know how to do it, and we hope that this controlled explosion of reality will provide a spur to focus, revise, and own the process of taking the GCSEs for all our pupils.

The school bell is now a song from The Wedding Singer. It is a very catchy tune and we are all looking forward to the performances on Thursday 24 and Friday 25 January at 7pm. Tickets are selling very quickly, and a successful musical usually sells out- so get them while you can.

Mr Barnicoat tells me of the agonizing frustration of our debate team which powered to a judger's victory in the Oxford Union debating heat according to the judges. What our teams had not been told is that the judges' scoring would not be the final arbiter of final places but rather that the organizing committee would choose the teams. This arbitrary selection process is in keeping with many Oxbridge experiences.

A visit from the police, this time from the excellent Lee Bowness [lee.j.bowness@merseyside.pnn.police.uk](mailto:lee.j.bowness@merseyside.pnn.police.uk). Mr Bowness is trying to persuade our parents and grandparents not to park at bus stops and not to obstruct the bus routes. I feel that we should give him our support although he tells me he regularly meets with aggressive retorts when explaining to drivers that you should not park at a bus stop. I think we can do better.

At our parent information evening we discussed reports, facilities, and also our increased concern about parental usage of social media. We have no interest in invading your social

media space but we hope to build a consensus among all our parents that it is not appropriate to discuss children other than your own in a WhatsApp or snapchat group. Your children are taught about this, and we believe we can set a good example for them. The school needs to make sure that every child is what I call "aggressively" safeguarded and our view is that a discussion, particularly a negative one, naming children who are not your own is out of bounds.

In my Ofsted excitement, I had neglected to inform all of you that the excellent Mrs Bygroves has given birth to a healthy son, Reuben. His birthday, Christmas 2018, is surely a propitious omen.

We are working to develop Year 8-11 work experiences within the College itself. Ms Cassidy is exploring best practice in this area, and we believe that every pupil should experience a work day, in work clothes. Our bustling College with everything from chefs, groundskeepers to teachers, principals, accountants, IT technicians and administrators should provide plenty of glimpses of the life of work.

It was very pleasing to see us field four senior sports teams on one Wednesday afternoon. Two teams travelled to Ellesmere College for the round ball matches, two travelled to Bolton School for the oblong kind. We also await the outcome of the U15 county hockey championship, and look forward to the fixtures this Saturday: football versus QEGS and netball at Birkenhead.

There is an important Prep School sports award evening coming up on February 1. Get your tickets, all information is on the app or contact Mr Cook for more details ([jcook@liverpoolcollege.org.uk](mailto:jcook@liverpoolcollege.org.uk)).

There are a number of Prep School sporting clubs taking place this term. On Tuesday evenings between 4.00pm-5.00pm, there is a Y5-Y6 Netball Club with Miss McLindon and on Wednesday evenings there is Y5-Y6 Rugby Club which takes place between 3.30pm-4.30pm with rugby coach Alessandra Lewis. If there are any families wishing their child to attend, please could you email Mr Cook – [jcook@liverpoolcollege.org.uk](mailto:jcook@liverpoolcollege.org.uk). There will be a small fee involved. Also if any Y5-Y6 pupils are interested in Girls Rugby – please could you email Mr Cook with an expression of interest.

Congratulations to our Prep School pupils for raising the tremendous sum of £1631.83 through their Rudolph Run in December. The funds raised have gone to support the work of St Luke's Hospice in Cheshire.

This week the new Ofsted framework was opened to consultation. It is a document of such eminent good sense and inspirational direction that I find myself asking the question: Is this really Ofsted? Everything about it resonates with our mission and ethos, and recognizes that schools are living and breathing communities of mission and purpose, which advance human flourishing for all pupils, not just exam results for a few.

Its description of teaching makes sense to. This is essentially a conversational art where teachers use questioning to guide and lead pupils to deeper challenge and understanding. This technique is referred to as dialogic teaching, and whilst I never thought I would live to see the day it was part of an Ofsted framework, it does have some intellectual pedigree. Socrates, the first teacher of Western intellectual tradition used it highly successfully in 5<sup>th</sup> century BC Athens, about 2500 years ago.

We have daily proof of the validity of the Adam Smith's assertion in the Wealth of Nations that market incentives can be part of moral improvement. A group of Year 7 girls collect the water bottles which pupils discard all over our campus. Since introducing a 20p recycling deposit on the bottles, they earn about £12 per day on this errand. They hope to donate the money to a great charity. A perfect combination of entrepreneurial flair and consideration of the common good.

A reminder that the next meeting of the PTA is on Tuesday 22 January at 7pm in the Dining Hall.

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

**Yours sincerely,**

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