
Principal's Newsletter

10 May 2019

Dear Parents,

Next Wednesday 15 May is an INSET afternoon for all College staff, and school will finish at 1pm that day (12.45pm in Pre Prep). There are no afternoon lessons in any part of the school that day and no after school provision.

Next Monday (13 May) at 1.10pm we will hold our annual transition service for Year 11. Parents are invited to attend. I am looking forward to the annual Springtime Soiree next Thursday evening, this year taking place in Mossley Hill Church. The event is completely sold out which will make for a wonderful atmosphere for our performers. On Friday, we hold our Y13 Leavers' Service at 11am.

Our intrepid explorers are going out into the drizzle and the falling mercury to practice for their Bronze DofE expedition.

It feels like the morning of D-Day. Next week the fury of the GCSE exams and SATS will be upon us. Even A levels are beginning earlier and earlier and our Classical Civilization students will be in action. We are ready and hope that all exam candidates will prepare sensibly and calmly throughout the weekend.

If one were to design a system to cause maximum stress to pupils, the English education system would be it. We insist on very few assessments with very high stakes, preferring the drama of last gasp heroic pressure cooker performances on the night - we certainly have seen some examples of those this past week- to the holistic, frequent and low stakes assessments employed in some other educational systems.

It is impossible to know whether this high pressure, high stakes regime is one of the reasons why about half the articles in the Times Educational Supplement are about the mental health crisis facing schools, including the crisis of teacher mental health. The other half are about the lack of funding for schools. It is certainly true that sitting the 24 or so Year 11 exams is in and of itself an achievement for all pupils, and we should, as parents and teachers, praise young people for their strength in undertaking them and doing their best in them.

Last Friday's performance of *Iphigenia in Aulis* seems an age away. The play was brilliantly produced and performed. Greek tragedy is difficult to "update" in some respects but this was a riveting, fast paced and accessible production. Cedar PC's superimposed tweets, a brilliant device, kept us all understanding the context of the story, while the concept of making the chorus a sort of fan club solved the riddle which every modern production of an ancient Greek play must solve: what to do with the chorus. But it was Mercedes and Sama, mother and daughter, who stole the show as they expressed with some very powerful acting the nobility and also the fury behind the play.

Once again, Charles McG the ubiquitous Year 8 was sitting in the technical box running the stage management, lighting and sound of the show. I think we may have to provide him with a hammock so he can sleep in his work room!

It is a sign of the health of Classics in our school that such a production is able to be staged. Now comes the happy news that a celebrity donor is funding the creation of a Classics library in our Sixth Form building and that the Liverpool Classics Hub which we helped to establish is becoming a regional organisation, harnessing all the excitement around Classics emanating from our campus.

On Saturday, some of us gathered with Mrs Doran and her friends and family to celebrate Star Wars Day in honour of her late husband Steve Doran. It was inspiring to see children and adults mingling and playing to remember Steve in a way he would have appreciated and to raise money for Cancer Research. It is not too late to make a donation [here](#).

Ramadan in the summer months means a long day's fasting for many of our Muslim pupils. We follow the advice of the Muslim Council in this instance in continuing the education of pupils but making accommodations where necessary. For example, instead of running a mile in the sun in a games lesson, pupils may take a walk with their teacher instead. It is however necessary that all pupils continue to bring all kit and all equipment for all lessons during the month.

The woes with our app continue. We have now heard from the developer who claims that the entire code has to be rewritten and that this will take "a while". The good news is that the messaging function of the app continues to work, but until further notice you should seek calendar and news information on our website www.liverpoolcollege.org.uk

The summer term is meant to be one of glorious sunshine and ever rising temperatures. The weather gods did not get this message yet. Our cricket and rounders matches have been mostly cancelled. It is helping the plants to grow however, and it is exciting to see Ms Lewis and the gardening project take hold next to the Pre Prep.

Summer term is also a time when we as a school make a number of appointments, review and reflect on the year, and plan further improvements. I am pleased to announce that we have appointed Mr Paul Stamper as Curriculum Leader for the LC+ curriculum across the primary phase. In this new position Mr Stamper will develop all those curricular elements

which are focused on the holistic development of our pupils across the primary phase from Reception to Year 6. Even though Ofsted praised us for having an extraordinary programme of personal development and activities in the school, we have ambitions to do more and certainly to do better. We have also appointed Mr Graham Devine as Curriculum Leader for the LCA curriculum across the primary phase (Reception to Year 6). Mr Devine will bundle the excellent work that is already taking place in sharpening the intent and implementation of our primary curriculum, ensuring that we cohere across all the part of the primary phase of our school and continue to challenge ourselves to improve the curriculum of the College.

We have further plans to expand the scope of activities and Houses across the College and we are working with pupils to make sure they take ownership of this part of their education.

May I wish you and yours a pleasant weekend.

Yours sincerely,

Mr H van Mourik Broekman
Principal