
Principal's Newsletter

15 February 2019

Dear Parents,

We need a break! And we are getting one. This beautiful Friday is beckoning us all towards some well-earned rest.

The staff and pupils on the Prep School ski trip to Austria however may not get to enjoy much rest. Miss Clark, Mr Bishop and Mrs Doran along with 27 very excited children set off on their mammoth coach journey this morning.



Some pupils are attending the climate change march or meeting. Ms McWatt has had the inspired idea of making climate and climate change a theme of our collective efforts in the arts. My understanding is that some of our sixth formers have been intimately involved in the planning of this march in Liverpool. My discussion with them about ideals, action, responsibility, and education have coalesced around this very practical question of whether or not the march should take place, what it should be like, how it might be improved. Such discussion is in and of itself valuable. Our challenge to our pupils must always be to actually make a difference, in the words of the Archbishop of York award: to become the change you want to see, which does not only mean gathering on a school day in the sunshine in town, although this can be part of a successful campaign to raise awareness and change communities. Our challenge to pupils is to identify what they and we can do right now, right here which will make a difference. The conversation continues.

As part of the climate change discussion, [Year 10 artists](#) attended a special lecture and creative workshop in the Palm House this week with Patrick McDowell, an international designer who specialises in developing sustainable fashion.

The Year 11 emerged mid-week into the sunshine having sat another battery of mock examinations. It is hugely impressive to see the steps teachers are taking to prepare and support their pupils and to provide every opportunity for those pupils to master material. Mr Daly for example is spending a day of his half term explaining the mechanics A level paper and providing a half day workshop. Impressive and hopefully well attended.

The end of the half term is also the moment of tallying up the house scores. Weekly quizzes, many brilliantly organized by Mr Farnan, with topics ranging from music to sport, as well as sport competitions, attendance, PPC points and other competitive events combine in Prep and Secondary to create a massive points total and assign a ranking 1-6. You need a degree in mathematics to do it and understand, fortunately Mrs Lines does. Congratulations to Butler's House who are this half term's College house winners.

The boarders will head home this afternoon. Last week they went [bowling together](#). Boarders experience half term very differently from most of us who may have a day out. For them it is chance to reconnect with their families.

Some of our Year 9 expressive arts pupils attended the Mash Up performance event at the Unity Theatre last night. Ms McWatt reports that the pupils were a credit to the school and that Lucy C (Selwyn's) wowed the crowd as she took part in the open mic section, performing *Shallow* from *A Star is Born* in front of 160 people with no rehearsal or preparation!

Beth G (Brook's) in Year 13 led chapel this week and spoke on random acts of kindness. By all accounts, her chapel talk was excellent. In the not too distant future, the Chaplaincy will have more space. There will be a prayer room for pupils who wish to pray, and a Chaplaincy centre within Gladstone. There are further plans for half term in preparing classrooms vacated by the move into Godwyn House.

There is still a mass of midweek sport into this last week. We played football against Stockport Grammar, won an indoor cricket competition, defeated Oswestry in rugby. The whole thing with its endless fixtures just hums along.

A reminder that pupils return after half-term on Tuesday 26 February, when it will be week B in the Secondary Phase.

May I wish you and yours a restful and restorative half term break.

Yours sincerely,

Mr H van Mourik Broekman
Principal