
Principal's Newsletter

28 June 2019

Dear Parents,

From time to time, pupil journalists are dispatched to my office to interview me. They are often much better prepared for these interviews than I am.

Yesterday their questions included one in which I was asked to name my highlight of the year in school. Agonisingly, the mind blanks on such occasions. Known for excessive loquacity and prolix delivery, I found myself unable to do much except keep schtum in the face of this earnest request.

The difficulty of course is that from my perspective the highlights are not public moments of sporting triumphs, artistic excellence, or even pupil achievement. Yesterday for example, a highlight for me was Pre Prep Chapel. My pedagogical techniques with this age group lack the sophistication of the learning support assistants and teachers who watch me manfully struggle to get my message across to the assembled five and six year olds. On this occasion, we discussed bravery and specifically the bravery of the young shepherd boy David in facing the monstrous foe Goliath. Pupils gave examples of their own bravery. These ranged from riding a bike for the first time to subjecting oneself to various medical treatments, one girl even helpfully showing the congregation a rather large plaster which had had to be put over a scrape on her leg, a process which she claimed had caused her great anxiety which she had bravely overcome.

But I became conscious that for one pupil, leaving the classroom to walk to the Chapel had already been an act of bravery. As he was walking into the Chapel he earnestly and insistently pressed me on a matter that clearly concerned him deeply: Were there any wolves on campus? He had been learning about wolves, I surmised, and was now concerned that he might be confronted by a beast of this kind while walking down the steps to Chapel. I was able to give him every reassurance. Whilst we are keen to improve the environment at school, a wolf repopulation scheme is not in our plans.

A conversation like that with a Year 1 pupil is juxtaposed in the course of the week with the conversation our Year 13 have at their Leavers' Dinner. The mood at this year's dinner, an annual feast at the Racquet Club, was one of comity and friendship. This excellent group of students were certainly not afraid of any wolves, indeed they appeared to have no fears at all as they volubly shared memories, laughter, friendship and appreciation for their time at

the school. In a school such as ours, it is a special privilege to accompany a person on their journey from a fear of wolves on campus to a confident application to medical school or degree apprenticeship. We have the enormous privilege of watching children develop into confident and happy young adults. One of the markers along that journey is the UCAS evening held yesterday for Year 12 pupils and parents. Another is the scorching Gold DofE expedition which sets off this Sunday.

The mid way point on the journey is Year 6 transition. Our Prep School leavers have now all had some taster lessons to help their transition into Year 7. Today, they are making an illustration, inspired by Sean W Y11, who is a published author and professional illustrator. Ms Hardisty tells me they have been doing a great job. This afternoon they will be out on the playing fields taking part in their final sun-drenched Prep School Sports Day.

We also hosted our new staff for next year this week.

Some were appointed many moons ago and it was great to see them again. We continue to attract strong fields for every position in the school and I am confident these new additions will make a positive mark on the school. I shall introduce you to them in newsletters next term.

A big week for Classics in the College. We were featured in the Big Issue as a school where amazingly Latin is thriving. We approved the plans for the creation of the Classics Library in Godwyn House, made possible by a generous donation from the comedian and TV producer Mr Jimmy Mulville. We hosted a meeting of state and independent schools who are forming the NW School Classics Network, an initiative supported by the charity Classics for All, which will bundle teacher training, primary classics teaching, expansion of classics into new schools, and special events for pupils and teachers. As if to complete it all, the text book I will be using to teach some ancient Greek next year in Prep School arrived.

We have introduced some improvements to our already extensive activity programme, with secondary pupils now applying to join certain activities.

Next week is the penultimate week of term and it will be as full of events and celebrations as this week was. Our external Year 7 pupils will visit on Wednesday as will the new Reception pupils, it will also be the Middle School Diploma award ceremony beginning at 15.45 in the MV Hall. On Thursday, at 14.00 we will hold the Speech Day and Awards Ceremony of the Prep School in the Sports Hall. Friday 5th of July is our senior school sports day. On that same afternoon, we will host the last meeting of the Old Huytonian Guild, an alumnae association of Huyton College which merged with Liverpool College in the 90s. The Old Huytonians have shared some of their archival materials with us and we have been able to display these in Godwyn House. We are also preparing next week for the first ever Pride march celebrating equality and diversity in our school. This march will take place during the last activity period on July 9. It has been impressive to see pupils help to organise this event which celebrates inclusivity and the great strides LGBT+ people have fought for and have achieved.

You will have received an app notification from the PTA confirming that the Car Boot Sale scheduled for Sunday 30 June has been cancelled. A reminder also that the **PTA Nearly New Uniform Sale** is taking place on Wednesday 3 July between 2-4pm in the Sutton Timmis Hall. Any donations of uniform, particularly school coats, would be gratefully received - donations can be left at any of the school offices.

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

Yours sincerely,

Mr H van Mourik Broekman
Principal