
Principal's Newsletter

29 March 2019

Dear Parents,

The morning after the night before. The festivities began at 14.30 with the formal opening of the Peach Centre for Business and Economics. Mr Peach, whose generous donation made the refurbishment possible, was accompanied by governors, academy trustees, members of the Foundation and other guests as he cut the proverbial ribbon. Sixth Formers then led tours through the maze that is Godwyn House.

Then the tribe gathered in the Cathedral. We heard a wonderful Latin oration, an inspired Chopin performance from Sam C and a performance of a *Phantom of the Opera* medley of Wagnerian intensity.

The highlight for me was the inclusion in the orchestra of Leilani B from Year 3. In seated position, her feet did not touch the ground but she handled an enormous pink saxophone with great aplomb, assisted by brother Indiana on the seat next over. The power of an all-through school reflected in the woodwind section.

Our speaker Lucy Pearson gave an inspirational talk, inviting us to seize opportunities and practice the mindfulness of experiencing every moment. It was obvious to all that the fortunes of the FA were bound for glory with Ms Pearson involved.

A breathless conclusion to a busy week. And there is still more to come. Our debaters are in Durham this weekend competing in the University's school debating competition, our hockey and football players are playing in the final matches of the term. Football is confident after convincing wins over Stonyhurst, hockey is basking in last Saturday's convincing wins over Merchant Taylor's at every age group.

Earlier in the day, we had cause to hang our head in shame as we learned that our neighbours at St Anthony's had chosen to close their car park in order to prevent the frequent incursion of our parents and students. Seemingly, the people who live and work at the parish are no longer willing to tolerate the "gobby" responses they receive when they ask parents and students to park elsewhere. We should all be embarrassed.

It seems weeks ago that Group Captain Dole of the RAF performed the annual inspection of the CCF. He and our visiting dignitaries commented on the improvement of all aspects of the CCF this year. The corps of drums were heard across the campus and provided the martial rhythms of forward progress for the day. Senior NCOs were teaching younger pupils activities. Major Ridley and all the CCF staff should take great pride in the success of the day. Congratulations to Mrs Ridley, who after running around our campus in support of the inspection efforts, very efficiently gave birth to a new addition to the family, Robin, the next day! A true week of excitement.

Last Friday, our artists visited the Deborah Butler Gallery, learning more about art criticism, the work of artists, and the business of art. You can read more about their visit on the College website [here](#).

Our rugby players meanwhile were in Rosslyn Park. Injuries struck a blow when we were cruising through our group. We ended up with two wins and two losses and are now looking forward to the celebration of our rugby season on Thursday evening.

The Hebrew Bible relates the story of Samson who derived supernatural powers through the possession of long hair. Our Year 8 netball team braided their manes in coordinated style as a symbolic reflection of team effort and to invoke the supernatural powers to win the city championship which they did. It was a triumph of progress, as the team was much less successful in Year 7. Through great coaching and teamwork, they achieved their goal.

President Trump as a candidate famously told his devoted supporters that they would win so much that they would be tired of winning. This week we kept winning.

In the British Physics Olympiad AS Challenge organised by the University of Oxford, our pupils did remarkably well with Liam McN and Arel A receiving silver medals. In the CICERO classics competition, an international competition of classics knowledge for sixth formers for which we are the regional hosts, we won the classical civilization sections, answering questions like "Name the 17 most significant characters of the Iliad" or "list the 5 most common deponent verbs and their meaning".

On Thursday, I had an opportunity to listen to the presentation by our Year 9 Wilton Scholars team which had won the Unilever Bright Future Competition with their start-up company Glow Up. As I reported last week, our pupils had ingeniously proposed to the executives of Unilever that cork could be used to solve the environmental and sustainability challenges created by plastic. By all accounts, the executives had not thought of this before and whispered and murmured in quiet excitement to each other about the ingenuity of this idea. I do hope that when our products are packaged in cork, Amelia Y, Amelia R, Emily C, Seif Y and Aqsith R will get their just reward. This presentation was then followed by an inspirational talk from a company called Sea Straws which is saving the oceans by an entryist environmental campaign of replacing plastic straws with metal ones.

The choir is amazingly busy. After last night's exertions, today we welcomed Mr Sorrell and his choir from the French School in Barcelona, Spain. His choir and the College choir rehearsed together this morning and will be performing at noon in the Cathedral on Monday.

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

Yours sincerely,

Mr H van Mourik Broekman
Principal