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## Principal's Newsletter

27 April 2018

Dear Parents,

Earlier in the week, our boarders were sunbathing in Derby Old Court, sitting at their café tables and ruminating about the vernal scene before them. Today we are wearing coats, Pre Prep pupils are unhappy with their choice of shorts, and we are bunkered down to work again. The boarders can look forward to their walking trip in Wales this weekend, just to get away from the constant cycle of revision. Aber Falls is the destination, where a relatively easy walk takes them up to a spectacular waterfall at journey's end. A side trip to Conwy to see the castle and grab cake and a coffee and they can add another country that they've visited while at Liverpool College. Sunday sees them off to the Sefton Park Food and Drink Festival, sampling street food and drinking the vibrant atmosphere with plenty of background music to round off a busy weekend.

The boarders have also produced an excellent video about boarding and being a boarder which they hope to share with teachers and day pupils.

As the pressure builds towards our examination season, I received a fantastic email from a Year 11 pupil:

*I believe that all of us in year 11 have been revising for our upcoming GCSE's; the school has tried to help us by setting up some programmes to help us revise even better. This is fantastic but you're missing one crucial point. Out of all the programmes I've attended, no one has mentioned this yet. "Once you believe you're going to fail a subject, you've given up".*

*Not everyone acts like this but some do. The first thing you need to do before you start revising for an exam is to believe that you will pass it. I know this because this is not the first time that I am writing a national exam. The year 11's need to know that 'what lies before and behind them is not as great as what lies within them'. Exams are constructed by humans: this means that humans are capable of passing an exam. The difference between the smart and not too smart people is that, the smart people unconsciously believe that they will do well in their tests/ exams.*

The pupil has asked us to spread this message. I think it is both charitable and wise of him to seek to inspire and teach his classmates in this way.

Mrs Bygroves reports on our Prep School Pop Lacrosse success:

*The Year 6 Pop Lacrosse Team competed in the City Final on Monday. It was a very competitive tournament and every game was hugely exciting.*

*Firstly, we played 3 groups games. We won all three - LC vs Rudston 10-8, LC vs Lister 10-5 and LC vs Belvedere B 9-5. This meant that we got through to the semi-final where we played Belvedere A. After beating them last week, we were confident, but anything could happen! It was a slow start and Belvedere got a few early goals, but we battled on and Anna R and Jake W scored some fantastic goals to make the final score 8-4 to LC. We got through to the City Final where we played Bishop Eton.*

*We had heard a lot of things about this team and there were some key players to look out for. I was so confident in our team and we did not have one weak link at all - they all played excellently. I was very proud of our team as they played to the rules, didn't complain and just battled on. They deserved the win! The final score was 10-6 to Liverpool College. They were presented as City Champions and qualified for the Nationals in Sheffield on June 24. A huge well done to: Siya H, Anna R, Tahlia R, Ella D, Jake W, Oliver H and George W.*



The Lancashire Cup final for our U15 rugby players has been moved from Monday April 30 to Wednesday May 2 at Fylde Rugby (6pm KO). Parents and other supporters who wish to support the team should contact Mr Smith directly by Monday at [thecoachingclub@hotmail.com](mailto:thecoachingclub@hotmail.com) for collective travel arrangements, times and other information.

Last weekend saw the sun drenched D of E practice expedition, in this case for bronze. I want to thank the members of staff who give their weekends so freely to deliver these experiences for our pupils: Mr Ridley, Mrs Rigby, Ms Wynne, Ms Robbin and Ms McCartney.

Mya in Year 7, along with some of her friends organised a bake sale for charity. These banquets of charity are highly effective fundraisers, in this case providing help for the homeless. They raised £125.90 from their sale.

Classics continues to thrive at the College. We are awaiting the performance of the Bacchae, a Greek tragedy about the effects of the god Dionysus on otherwise sensible people, and our trip to Pompeii has 39 pupils signed up and ready to go, an impressive outing. Monday and Tuesday of next week our Year 3s will begin to practice for future trips with a short residential at Barnstondale on the Wirral. Here they will engage in the activities one associates with camp. In the following week, the Prep School is off on the annual cultural pilgrimage to York, seat of the coronation of the emperor Constantine, and surely the city in the country with the clearest archaeology of the civilisations which have shaped our country.

My visit to activities in the senior phase on Thursday always means a stop by the cooking festivities in the dining room where the Sixth Form were preparing various extremely healthy dishes and mixing a mean guacamole. Ms Miller's physiology group were reviewing their dissection of the eye and the respiratory system of a locust (the source of the sound we hear when we hear them). The science buzz was palpable and perhaps explains the 89 pupils in Year 9 and Year 10 who received either a medal or a commendation in the national biology challenge competition. Particular kudos to national gold medal winner Ruari in Year 10.

[This video](#) shows Mr Bishop to be the media star he surely is, and it explains the wonderful generosity of donors and our Foundation in making possible the full development of the Leslie Alexander Theatre.

Miss Clark has asked me to highlight the community Cressington Orchestras that meet on a Saturday morning in term time at St Austins Primary School. Open to those of all music abilities and all ages. For more information please look on their website [here](#).

Congratulations to Max in Year 12, the Merseyside cross country champion was invited to participate in the warmest London marathon on record, in this case the mini marathon. Max was 30th out of 200 in this select field. He is also being scouted for GB rowing. Top man.

Every day we peer fearlessly at the attendance records of the school. If you are not in school, you are not learning. Recently there have been some marvellous attendance feats. 99.6 % of the Prep School was in school on a particular day last week. 100 % of Year 9 were in one day this week. But there are still extraordinary explanations for absences which cannot be accepted. In some cases parents are fined for unauthorised holidays. In others explanations like "toe hurts" can lead to an entire day missed. We have got to keep working together. Behind the high overall rate of attendance is a worrying group of pupils who are missing essentially one day per week. Your employer would never accept such a rate of attendance based on a variety of seemingly one off reasons. Why should a school?

I have been enjoying reading a book called *Progressively Worse* by a Mr Peal, a jeremiad against all manner of education policies and innovations which have reduced and misdirected the mission of schools and moral compass of pupils and teachers. If you are interested in understanding the various follies which we are still seeking to overcome in British education, this would be a good place to start.

I am also looking forward to a meeting with a parent today about the school's communication strategy. We produce many pieces of communication to cater to many parents, but we want to make these various communications cohere better and understand what parents need.

One thing that is certain is the launch of a new website with a very clear calendar and what is happening today section so that there will be a one stop shop for those who need a quick update on any event in the school.

As part of our work on this, I would welcome your feedback about how communication can be improved.

I am reliably informed by parents that this newsletter is often deemed to be too long in this age of rushed tweets and real time information. I must therefore thank you for reading to its end and wish you a happy and glorious weekend with your family.

**Yours sincerely,**

**Hans van Mourik Broekman**  
**Principal**