
Principal's Newsletter

8 November 2019

Dear Parents,

No amount of half term rest can prepare a person for the accelerations of which the College is capable.

In medias res - straight into the middle of things, that wonderful Latin expression captures in some way the immediate translation of all school matters to high levels of intensity.

Half term seems a year ago. When we returned to school we rejoiced in the accounts we received of the Rome trip. Our students, pupils and staff had tasted of the Eternal City and returned safely to rainy Liverpool.

Also received was an excellent BTEC report detailing the view that our BTECs are well administered. Such letters from distant offices are a welcome balm. It is impossible to emphasize sufficiently to parents the compliance fears and anxieties which mar the life of teachers and principals. Perhaps you also work in a job where you are constantly worrying whether you can "evidence" something to someone you have never met. Our last Ofsted inspection was a small triumph and our reward is that they will come back again soon. We will let you know when we receive the call which helpfully we must prepare for in the window between now and May 2020. Thankfully, our staff and pupils know how to make the most of each day, Ofsted or not.

We have agreed to participate in a long-term study funded by the Templeton Foundation and conducted by researchers at Liverpool Hope University. The study will engage with pupils about how they develop character. You can read about it [here](#) and you can contact the lead of the study, David Lundie (Senior Lecturer in Education) on lundied@hope.ac.uk if you have questions or concerns.

Our Houses and their representatives in the Parliament of Houses are in full flow. Enormous sums are being raised for charities like the Mersey Forest Trust. The report presented on House improvements makes for very impressive reading. You can learn about some of the things the pupils themselves are doing to improve the school and their community [here](#).

Now that the sun has been allowed to shine for a few minutes, thoughts turn to the annual

Remembrance Day parade and service by our CCF this Sunday. The cadets certainly experienced an apocalyptic meteorological vision when they rehearsed their drill on Tuesday and Thursday. A brief description and tribute from our Contingent Commander Major Ridley:

Once again, I find myself compelled to write with my praise for your children who make up our CCF. It seems that however high our expectations and whatever we ask of them, they deliver. You will certainly be aware by now that they have rehearsed for our Remembrance Sunday parade in cold and torrential rain, in what may prove to be a more impressive tribute of respect than the actual parade this Sunday. A lot of what we do in the CCF involves pushing pupils out of their comfort zones and my own soaked uniform is confirmation that today [Thursday] was most uncomfortable. Despite this, pupils maintained their good humour and perseverance throughout and marched with more laughter than complaint. I cannot imagine there are many schools in this country with as much of a right to be proud of their pupils as we are; nor parents and carers who should, quite deservedly, be immensely proud of their courage and resilience. In particular, I must mention the newly formed Corps of Drums who, having kept impressive timing for the afternoon's practice (despite numbing fingers!), were then transported to the Anglican Cathedral to rehearse for their part in the performance of Karl Jenkins' 'The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace'. My thanks to Lt Cdr Rigby, WO2 Newton, and Mr Pope for supporting that very high-profile endeavour. If you would like more information on or tickets to the performance of 'The Armed Man' they can be found on the Anglican Cathedral's website.

The CCF Colour Party will also be assisting at the remembrance service conducted by the Collegiate Old Boys on Monday in the original school building on Shaw Street.

All this while our 1st XV is in the Isle of Man having taken the 07.20 flight. They will play two matches, one against King William's, our longest standing fixture. They will be back just in time for the enormously popular fireworks display on school grounds on Saturday evening. All tickets for that are sold out (please note that entry is strictly by ticket only) and I look forward to donning the wellies and watching the controlled explosions above the playing fields.

Congratulations to the U14 rugby team on their win over Ormskirk propelling them into a Lancashire plate semi final and a trip on the coach to Lytham St Annes. I was particularly delighted to hear of the contributions some of our newest pupils made to the team. These young men had never touched a ball with such a funny shape until about 8 weeks ago. Now they are scoring tries for fun!

We also have a double world champion in the Prep School! Mark L (Year 5) has returned from the WMO world championship as Kickboxing U12 world champion in points and U12 world champion in continuous and also picked up a bronze medal in Kumite. Many congratulations to Mark.

A visit today from one of our great friends Mr Stephen Twigg MP who has decided not to stand for Parliament again in the upcoming election. Mr Twigg has been hugely supportive of our school, giving freely of his time to give talks to pupils, supporting a programme to improve Oxbridge applications, and working behind the scenes to get education in our city moving forward. We wish him all the best in his future endeavours.

Next week we will open the Rushworth Centre for Music with Mr and Mrs Rushworth and other members of his family in attendance. Works in Godwyn House are now complete and the building is full of music making. Of course our development efforts never stop. Next up is the refurbishment of Beechlands into a boarding house and the expansion of our Prep School with four new classrooms. If all goes well and it stops raining a few minutes, all these projects will be ready for occupation in September.

The Prep School art show is a highlight. The creativity of pupils is a miracle made visible. One looks agog at the scale and ambition of the projects on display and their engagement with themes historical, current, and imaginative.

As I highlighted in my last newsletter, Ms Gimeno is organising a Spanish Language exchange for pupils in Year 9 and 10. This is an ideal opportunity for pupils to experience the language, customs and culture of Spain. At the end of March 2020 we will be hosting 20 pupils from Instituto Máximo Trueba in Boadilla del Monte, Madrid, and we will be returning their visit mid-April. If you would like to find out more about the programme, Ms Gimeno is holding an information evening on Monday 11 November at 5pm in the former Drama Room (Upper School site).

A small update on the app, that wonderful bit of technology that is still not working properly leading to impediments to our smooth communication with you. The developers are confident the problem will be fixed soon. Indeed it may be done as I write. You will notice the app is working when new news stories appear on it. Remember, we are still using the app to send you app messages. Please bear with us. In the meantime, please make sure you use the website calendar to check on events and also that you have the SIMS parent app loaded as well. In the future you will be able to read reports, and track sanctions and reward points through this instrument.

Some weekend reading for you. A small group of sixth formers write a delightful journal called the *College Chronicle*. The writing is strong, the insights worthy of more noble publications and increased attention. You can find it [here](#).

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

Yours sincerely,

Mr H van Mourik Broekman
Principal