
Principal's Newsletter

3 December 2021

Dear Parents,

There is spirit of energetic celebration in the Pre Prep and Prep this morning. It's difficult to pinpoint all the factors that may have induced this jollity but silly sock day is certainly one factor. Pupils raised a trouser leg or pointed vigorously at the motley socks, headgear and other items which were on display. Year 2 was in a particular state of anticipation as they are going on a school trip. In the Prep School assembly, I marvel at the reasons for headteacher's awards: acts of kindness, gold standard division using a multitude of measurement, improved handwriting and spelling, energetic efforts to improve and excel. I particularly like awards handed to pupils who "had a difficult week last week but had a great week this week" It is all very inspiring to witness.

Watching it all was Elsie, our school dog, pictured below at her latest training session with colleague school dogs from across Liverpool. She is an effective cause of calm for children and works closely with some. She gazes at the assembly award winners, and I anthropomorphise her pride in their achievements.



But another reason is the anticipation of next week. There will be the Carol Service for secondary in the Cathedral on Monday, the Christingle services on Tuesday and Thursday, the Reception nativity. It is full on Christmas.

May I ask you to consider supporting the Chaplaincy's Charity Action Group collection for the Whitechapel Centre Christmas Appeal. This charity provides support to rough sleepers, people at risk of homelessness and homeless men, women and families. They particularly need items of practical use, so easy to donate or pick up at the supermarket next time you are there. Drop off points for donations are: House administrators and the Chaplaincy room and the last collection day is Wednesday 15 December. Please [click](#)

[here](#) to download the poster designed by Habiba in Y11 which has more details on the items that the charity are particularly hoping to collect. Mr Cook has also arranged an extra collection point at Saturday sports events – donations can be dropped off at the Sports Pavilion on Saturday 4 December and Saturday 11 December between 9am and 11.30am.

On Saturday 11 December, Mr Harvey will be performing his annual virtual Festive Organ Recital entitled Carols of the Organ. As the subtitle suggests, Mr Harvey will be playing a variety of traditional carols including his arrangement on Ding Dong! Merrily on High. The recital is performed from the school Chapel organ. Please contact Mr Harvey for the link to the recital and digital programme: iharvey@liverpoolcollege.org.uk.

Omicron stalks the world. Masks are back on. Teachers ordered to strictly socially distance from each other so as to avoid mass self-isolation. There are of course the usual confusing and contradictory utterances from politicians and scientists. Concern we are told does not mean no mince pies. This new variant and its possibilities allow us all to reflect again on what school lockdowns have already wrought. Everyday we see the effects of the previous lockdowns still blighting the educational progress, human development, and opportunities of our pupils. Year 11s ask if they will ever be able to join the CCF. Pupils prepare for nativity plays which they have never been able to perform. Maths teachers scratch their heads: how do we get these gaps in skills, in knowledge filled. Some pupils find it extremely difficult just to get back into the rhythm and expectations of school life, its busyness, its noisiness, and its pressure. Staff are similarly affected. It is clear to me that wherever and whenever possible within public health guidance we must carry on doing what we know is important, and that includes nativities, carol concerts, and, yes, Christmas joy like silly sock day, something which could never be experienced on-line.

Mrs Cassidy will write to you to obtain your permission for the back to school testing now being planned for secondary pupils in January. It remains policy and guidance to wear masks when picking up and dropping off at school. I want to thank the many parents who have religiously continued a twice weekly home base programme of lateral flow testing. These tests have led to the identification of cases and have prevented the spread of the virus at school. We must all do our bit to keep school safe and open.

Our thanks to superstar Mrs Harper who conducted our Prep School choir at St George's Hall as a stand in for Ms Clark who was, to her utter frustration, unwell. We were terribly fortunate she had the talent to stand in and even more excited that she will be joining our staff from January.

Mr Stamper reports on more success for our Prep School cross country runners:

A huge congratulations to Beau R and Charlie W, who are both regional and national cross-country champions! On Saturday, at a freezing Sefton Park, Charlie and Beau, along with Seb W and Marina V-M, competed in the cross challenge event, representing Liverpool schools. Children from all over the region, and the country, took part, and it was very much the best of the best; the standard was incredibly high. All of our competitors did remarkably well,

especially given the conditions, but Charlie and Beau proved their elite status as athletes by taking home the gold medals for both the regional competition, and the national cross challenge event. Marina and Seb also took home gold medals for being part of the victorious Liverpool team. What an achievement!

It was good to see some snow on the ground at the beginning of the week. A boarder whose family live in Mexico was beyond excited sprinting into the darkness of a snow draped Beechlands field. Now it is all mud, and the boarders are preparing for their Christmas formal dinner when they invite their day pupil friends for a special meal. They are also engaged in the Great Boarding Bake Off and the decoration of their boarding house with the Christmas tree of anticipation.

Day Boarding has grown throughout this term. It is possible to sign up for day boarding for next term – please [click here](#) for more information.

Mrs Drew reports on a new charity initiative for Chapter 7 and 8:

On Tuesday 30 November, Chapter 8 attended a talk given by Stephen Yip from KIND. The pupils heard about the charity work that KIND do in our city region and about their Christmas hamper appeal. Some very generous pupils and their families donated new toys for the appeal and Chapter 7 and 8 pupils will be taking part in a Santa Dash in school next week to help raise funds for KIND. Stephen was very grateful for the opportunity to speak to the pupils and even rang me again to comment on how well behaved and polite the pupils all were.



Our parent information evening on Thursday covered issues as varied as covid, uniform, mock examinations and reports, and the personal development diploma which Mr Ridley has developed for use across the College. The aim of the diploma is to recognise character, service, love of learning and personal development. What I particularly love about this framework is the way it acknowledges, recognizes and promotes that attainment of an

academic kind is not the only progress we make in school. If lockdown and covid have taught us anything, it is that school is a place of human development, and that this development includes but is not limited to academic attainment. I look forward to being able to award the diploma to pupils at the diploma ceremonies which are being planned. When reading the descriptors, I am struck by what an achievement it is for so many students and pupils to engage in so many aspects of what school requires in such a positive way.

The sports hall has been the scene of mocks which may count towards grades. It is a serious place with a serious atmosphere and all credit to Ms Lines and all the staff who have created this culture of proper assessment. The Y11 still have a week of mock examinations ahead of them. The sports hall will be busy over the Christmas holidays as it will receive a new floor, replacing the original now more than 20 years old.

We have had some mid-week sports victories. This afternoon Chapter 8 have a house football match. Girls' and boys' teams in that chapter are winning a lot, indeed are undefeated. Tomorrow we play again. Birkenhead School is the rugby block fixture.

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

Yours sincerely,

Mr H van Mourik Broekman
Principal