
Principal's Newsletter

24 March 2023

Dear Parents,

Ramadan Kareem. We wish all families who are celebrating a happy and blessed Ramadan.

This has been a very busy week on campus.

Our thanks to all the parents and pupils who made our Speech Night and Prizegiving a success. 160 pupils were involved in the musical performances, and 120 prize-winners strode across the stage. It is good at the end of a term to reflect on the amazing variety, quality and diversity of the talents which make up our school.

Our thanks also to those parents and pupils who attended our Parent Information Evening on Tuesday. This was the first time since 2019 that such an event was held in person. Topics discussed included reading and our plans to expand and improve it across the College, travel to and from school, and communication to parents about how they can specifically support their child's studies and progress. We gained a lot of insight from parents about the way they experience communication from the school and they also made some suggestions for improvements which we are taking up. It was especially gratifying to be able to be given a clear steer about items parents want to discuss and learn more about at the next parent information evening which will take place in the summer term.

The College sells theatre tickets like hot cakes. *Beauty and the Beast* sold out its run next week so comprehensively that an extra performance was laid on. There really is no let-up for musicians: first Speech Night now straight into the musical, the feast moves on.

This morning while bicycling to school, I could not help but notice our DofE expedition pupils hunched under their waterproofed backpacks. The season is upon us and into the hills they go. Hopefully, it will remain dry and somewhat warm for them.

Plenty of achievements to highlight this week across the College.

Congratulations to Beau R in Chapter 6. This week she found out that she is now ranked in the top 10 runners in Great Britain for her age! She will be representing Merseyside in the national primary schools race at Loughborough next week, after achieving team gold (and individual silver and bronze) in the Mid Lancs and Manchester cross country leagues.

The U12 Netball team are Merseyside Champions! They were crowned winners in the Merseyside league on Monday after beating Belvedere 4-3 in the final. On the way to the final they beat Bellerive 10-0, Blue Coat 7-4, Rainhill 3-0 and St. Julie's 5-2. Well done to all the players involved: Orla D (Captain), Isabella M, Evelyn R, Alexa C, Rajna R, Anya S, Eva B, Maro O, and particular congratulations to the players of the tournament: Maro, Anya and Eva.

Congratulations also to the GCSE PE boys who played Handball against St Edwards on Monday. Mr Muscatelli reports that the game was played at an impressive standard, was highly intense throughout, with our pupils finishing 21-20 victors. Players of the game were Kayde G and Gabe M.

Izzy H (Ch10) made her first team debut for Everton Women's Senior team on Saturday. She was the youngest player ever to achieve this.

Mr Cook reported an excellent afternoon of football on Wednesday for Chapter 7 who beat a spirited Childwall team 1-0 with Charlie W scoring the winning goal. He also praised the excellent sportsmanship displayed by members of the Chapter 9/10 football team at their Merseyside Cup match this week where the team unfortunately just missed out on progression in the competition on penalties.

Well done to all the secondary pupils who took part in the Cross Country competition this week with a particular mention to Seb W in Chapter 7 who finished second in his race.

Mr Cook is looking forward to the rugby festival tomorrow morning. We had a visit from Nye Thomas who left school two years ago and is now an England U 20 professional rugby international. He left us a signed shirt. It will be worth much in the years to come.

Good luck to the debating team this weekend as they travel to the North East to take part in the Durham University Schools Debating Competition, the most prestigious competition in the country. A particular mention for two members of the team Zaenab R and Jameela S in Chapter 11 following their impressive performance at the Cambridge Union national debating final last week. This is the first time we have managed to reach this stage in the senior competition and Mr Barnicoat described how our pupils were unbowed against 270 sixth form students from some of the world's most prestigious educational establishments.

This week's artists of the week are Skye W and Arvo C both in Chapter 8. They have been exploring the Mexican Day of the Dead as inspiration to create their own clay sugar skulls inspired by the Fiesta.



This week has seen the Secondary Phase celebrate 'British Science Week' not only in science lessons but also through the PD programme, as Mrs Ormrod (Head of Science) reports:

The theme this year is Connections, with strong links between the function of the human body and careers in science. Pupils have had the opportunity to explore the senses of the human body including learning why they have a blind spot in their vision, and how the dilation of both eyes in the presence of light in only one eye is used as a diagnostic tool for brain injury. We hope that pupils have become more aware of the numerous and varying career opportunities there are available in the medical field in addition to the more obvious front facing roles such as doctor or nurse. We are sure we have many budding audiologists, clinical photographers and medical technologists in our midst.

Also as part of British Science Week, almost 80 of our A level Biology students took part in the British Biology Olympiad. This international competition saw over 13,000 students from 800 schools worldwide take part this year. Congratulations to Artem G (Ch13) and Ruth M (Ch12) who achieved a Gold medal as well as our Silver medal winners: Amelia Y, Jason C, Emily C, Matteo S and Ruby A, and Bronze medal winners Amelia R, Matthew L, Louise B, Ciara H, Henry K and Celine S.

On Tuesday, six Sixth Form students and Mrs Lines visited Auschwitz-Birkenau on a trip organised by the Holocaust Educational Trust. Matthew D-H (Ch12) has written this moving account of his visit:

Like most people, I had seen various documentaries about Auschwitz-Birkenau, but none of it came close to being there in person. The sheer scale of the complex was harrowing, something that I am still struggling to comprehend now. I have heard that the birds do not sing in Birkenau, and this is correct. It is virtually silent apart from the distant conversations of visitors. The camp maintained horrific order. Walking through the pathways I was struck with the reality of being there, of seeing buildings once filled with hundreds of prisoners, and seeing endless piles of worn discarded shoes. Every person confined and executed there were normal people, with hopes and dreams, fears and aspirations, and above all else a rare humanity that can only be experienced by being there.

In a corridor in one of the blocks there are rows of photos, each containing a name and date of death, or in some cases no known fate. There were nuns, shoemakers, builders, people from all walks of life. And while some maintain a mellow expression of unknowing, some bore fear. There was a small room in one of the blocks that contained photos and short details of the children of the camp. There, I saw a boy who died on my birthday in 1942. He was 16 years old. Across the camp there are countless stories, each telling the tale of a normal person who was thrown into an industrial machine with the sole purpose of extermination.

The visit to Auschwitz-Birkenau was nothing short of exceptional. I have been nowhere else that could have ever made me feel the same. The effort to remember the holocaust for generations to come is one of the most valuable initiatives in the world. That we have the opportunity to see this camp in its terrifying entirety is not only important to me, but keeps the flame of remembrance burning for another generation.

The maths challenges for the week:

Q1. Consider the differential equation $y''''+15y'''+85y''+225y'+274y+120y = 0$. One possible solution is the sum of five exponentials in the form $e^{(-kx)}$ with distinct k . Can you find the sum of all five k ?

Q2. Can you name all five platonic solids?

Answers to last week's challenges:

Q1. 6	Q2. Equilateral triangle, Square, Regular hexagon
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May I wish you and yours a dry and pleasant weekend.

Yours sincerely,

Mr H van Mourik Broekman
Principal