
Principal's Newsletter

4 September 2020

Dear Parents,

Rarely have we experienced a start of term like this one. Enthusiasm for the life of school is palpable among staff and pupils. There was so much energy, passion, and drive on our campus which has been empty and forlorn during the lockdown and summer. Now, the initial day of amazement, the novelty and exhilaration of seeing pupils in uniform and in suits pouring through the gates again after almost six months has been replaced by the need to get back to every aspect of school life safely and with purpose.

Ms Cassidy and other leaders have done a great job creating bubbles, and Covid-safe ways to work and learn together on campus. Pupils are responding well to these measures.

It is vital that parents participate actively and considerately in the project to keep us all safe. In the first instance, I would remind any parents and pupils who have returned from a country that is not in the travel corridor and subject to quarantine rules that they must indeed self-isolate for the prescribed period of 14 days and must not come to school in that period. Also no one should attend the school site if they or someone in their household has coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms. Secondly, outside the Prep and Pre Prep we have sought to indicate the space required to safely distance in a queue by drawing lines on the pavement. All the work to create bubbles and ensure safety can be undone by parents mingling at the school gate and not socially distancing. I understand that this is awkward but it is essential. I must ask you to consider these measures and would repeat the guidance to use a face covering when it is not possible to distance from others. Without wishing to be nominated with the pupil expression "a Debbie Downer", I saw no masks and little social distancing in queues. We must do our bit to keep the infection away from our school and all the families and limit its spread. The fact is that we must do better.

Of course, the greatest risk to public health at our school remains the parking of parents. It strikes me as sadly inevitable that eventually someone will be hurt by the habit of some parents who park on the opposite side of the road from the Pre Prep and Prep and then undertake a treacherous crossing of the road, usually clutching a small child or two and carrying some bags while the blood pressure and road rage of other road users increases exponentially. Now is the time to stop this before the days grow shorter and visibility declines.

Notice of some events cancelled due to the virus. We will not hold our Founders' Day Service in the Cathedral, as Covid safety measures will not allow that. That day will be a regular school day and we will find a way to mark our 180th anniversary here together on campus.

The banding test for Year 7 entry will not take place. Applications should be made to the home local authority using the Preference Form (Common Application Form). You can read more about the Year 7 admissions procedure, including details of the music aptitude test [here](#).

Open Day cannot take place. Instead our pupils made a video introducing prospective pupils to our school. I think they did brilliantly and it is a great watch. You can see the video [here](#).

Congratulations to the Hammersley family. Our Chaplain calmly preached at INSET before rushing home to support his wife in the birth of their third child, Angus Hammersley. Mother and baby are thriving.

The campus is quite altered. The four new Prep School classrooms are in use. They are bright, well-lit and the verandah or porch alludes to American cabin architecture which I enjoy. There are huge windows and lots of light. When we finish the landscaping around it, this sylvan idyll will be a charming place to learn and play. Thank you to our donors and the Liverpool College Foundation for providing the substantial funds needed to undertake this project.

Our boarders are finally on campus. Despite Covid delays, the contractor allowed us to welcome boarders. It is a thrill to finally have boarders on campus living in a beautiful completely refurbished boarding house. One of our aims for this term is to try to begin the Day Boarding Programme within the context of the Covid safety measures. More on that later.

Over the next few newsletters, I will introduce you to some of our nine new staff across the College:

- **Mrs Latham** is the new Head of Boarding, replacing Mrs Nolan who retired at the end of last term. Mrs Latham has been involved in our boarding programme since 2013.
- **Mr McBride** has joined us as Head of Mathematics. Mr McBride was previously head of maths at Wirral Grammar School for Girls and we have also forgiven him a stint at Blue Coat.
- **Miss McGee** is teaching Chemistry in the Secondary Phase. She completed part of her teacher training with us last year.

One of the exciting developments in our school is the growth of our teaching training course. This year 22 young people are training to become teachers with us. There are some extraordinary implications from this development. The first is the rapid growth of the College as the place where teachers are trained to teach Classics. No less than six future Classics teachers are training with us. We are coordinating their education with schools as far afield as Shrewsbury and Durham. The fact is that Liverpool College is THE place north of the Watford Gap where people can train to become Classics teachers. Another encouraging development is the number of OLs who train with us, thereby keeping the tradition and continuity of our school alive and embodied in our school. Ms Brooke in the Prep was the first OL to train this way and join our staff. Miss Evans, who trained with us last year, has joined as a Spanish teacher and hockey coach. Peter Convery and Alex Pye, who one feels just left the school, are back, armed with top degrees, and ready to join the teaching profession. Very exciting.

Lockdown did at least get people to pay attention to the dysfunction and strange assumptions which underpin so much of our education system. We have been rebelling against the algorithm for some time. You can read about it in some blog posts, listen to it in some podcasts at www.lcpres.org.uk

It is time to return to some sport. The first Saturday sessions will take place tomorrow, involving many pupils in activities which have been endorsed as Covid-safe by the sporting authorities. The return of a proper autumn hockey or rugby match will eventually signal a return to normality.

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

Yours sincerely,

Mr H van Mourik Broekman
Principal