

## Principal's Newsletter

19 March 2021

Dear Parents,

Pupils have created a small memorial to Sarah Everard. This young woman's violent death has inspired serious reflection and discussion, especially among sixth formers. We are proud of the way they discuss matters and challenge each other to change and respond. For every school, this is a so called "teachable moment" about violence against women and the way all of us, men and women, can play a role in improving the grim statistics and of any culture which permits or tolerates misogyny.



What is striking in a situation like this is that pupils themselves are acting, leading, and creating. In general, we do too little of this at school. An education should include active participation in the creation of community and culture, a preparation for "working on the world." Now that we are back in school, there is much thinking going on about the development of our curriculum. Particularly impressive has been the work done by Ms Gannon and Ms Pease to set out the primary phase's curricular response to the effects of the pandemic. We are enjoined never to use the words "catch up" in education. But we are seeing two seemingly contradictory phenomena now that we have returned to school. For most pupils, it is striking how little learning has been lost, how much progress they have made, and how happily and easily the transition back to the routines and demands of school has been achieved. For some, there are academic difficulties and we are developing mechanisms to support them. Frequently, the speed of "recovery" is higher than could be anticipated. Pupils learn quickly. In part this is because they have developed during the

lockdown period and are cognitively able to absorb information missed easily and readily. For some pupils, return to school has not been a happy time. We have become aware of their struggles and experiences during lockdown, and their anxieties about their return to school. Managing the right response and the right focus for each of these groups is our current challenge. Our next Parent Information Evening has been postponed frequently. I would like to give advance notice of our intention to hold one on Tuesday April 20. At that time, we will share what we have learned during the pandemic and what our plans are moving forward. It will be possible to receive a Teams invite to the meeting by emailing [sbamber@liverpoolcollege.org.uk](mailto:sbamber@liverpoolcollege.org.uk).

Social media, so a mental health expert explained to me yesterday, is the most obvious culprit in the deterioration of mental health of young people over the last decade. Statistics show that the mental health of young people had been stable for a long period of time and has only begun an accelerating deterioration since the arrival of social media. Psychologically, he explained, the constant viewing of other persons' "best sides and upbeat experiences" on social media, creates in young people's minds an implied unfavourable comparison to their own life. It then becomes possible to say: Other people are clever, happy, beautiful etc etc, while I am not. This was his explanation for the damage we see every day in school. I thought this was a message you as parents would want to hear. Screen time may be dangerous for your health.



Take a bow the testing team. This testing process has been a triumph of organization and team work and our thanks to all the volunteers who made it possible.

Parents in the secondary phase will have received a letter today from Mrs Cassidy about the provision of home testing kits for pupils. You can access a copy of the letter [here](#).

Thank you, Mr Diamond, OL and nuclear physicist. Mr Gunawardena writes:

*Last week an old Lerpopolitan, Mr Mike Diamond who is a nuclear physicist gave a talk via Zoom to our sixth form Physics students about the insight of the nuclear industry and in particular about the functioning of nuclear reactors and the uranium enrichment process.*

Mrs Crook (SENCO) has asked me to highlight that the Liverpool ASD Training Team are providing a series of virtual drop-in advisory sessions via zoom. They are for parent/carers wishing to talk in a private one to one setting about any questions or concerns they may have about their child. You can access details of the sessions [here](#).

Sport is in full swing, and there is much enthusiasm for the weekday and weekend sporting sessions organized by Mr Cook. This weekend we will once again be offering training to boys and girls in each secondary year group.

My residence in primary was delayed because of the second lockdown. Next week and after Easter, I will be based among our young heroes.

May I wish you and yours a happy weekend.

**Yours sincerely,**

**Mr H van Mourik Broekman**  
**Principal**