
Principal's Newsletter

29 January 2021

Dear Parents,

One of our children's favourite books when they were very young was a Richard Scarry's picture book with the appealing and intriguing title: [What Do People Do all Day](#). This tome was indeed well worn. From the kitchen of our house, our kids were able to see in Scarry's engaging artwork a world of diverse and endlessly exciting extramural activity. The world, in these books, was a hive of productive activity.

It would be interesting if Scarry were still alive and he could create this book for covid times. It is a strange fact in school at the moment that activity mostly takes place outside of the public sphere. In teachers' houses the computers are humming, the Teams rooms are full, it is massively busy. For this reason, the physical presence on campus of about 30% of primary pupils and a cohort of secondary pupils becomes a reminder of what is going on. They are accessing on site what is provided in the cyberworlds.

But there are exceptions. I wanted this week to give you some actual physical, real world examples of the very reality of education on site. An example is Mrs Boyle's project to make Owl sandwiches with her Reception pupils after they read *Owl Babies* in their literacy input, a result of which I attach below. I think you would agree this is an appealing presentation of a sandwich with a carrot.



My own soul is always stirred on campus when I meet Elsie, our fantastic Prep School dog. Yes, she spends most of her time lying in wonderful repose and supine leisure inside Ms Pease's office. But her presence does no end of good. Here is a short update about her professional progress as school dog:

Elsie is nearly 18 months old and is now beginning to make an impact on some of our pupils' school life. She will not be fully trained until 3 years old but is now working with individuals and very small groups of children from Year 2 to Year 9. When she is not working, Elsie remains in my office and sleeps a fair amount. She is very good at helping calm our children and is beginning to learn how to listen to children read.



There has been much food making and baking, and sharing. Here is Mrs Gannon, who has devoted some of her free time in lockdown to developing ever more complex confectionery and cake-baking skills. I believe this cake was made in honour of Lewis Carroll's birthday.



Ms Scott informs me that next week is Children's Mental Health week and she wanted to share with parents some helpful links to guide and support conversations with your child. The theme this year for Children's Mental Health week is 'express yourself'. Ms Scott has already forwarded some great resources across the school to be used in PSHE and form time in the forthcoming week, to help children, staff and parents start the mental health conversation. As we find ourselves amid another lockdown, it's more important than ever to share how we're feeling with others and welcome these conversations with our young people:

- [You're never too young to talk mental health: tips for parents and carers – Anna Freud Centre](#) - This leaflet provides simple advice and guidance to parents and

carers about how to make conversations about their child's feelings part of everyday conversation

- [Talking to my child – MindEd](#) Tips, videos, and suggestions for parents about encouraging their child to open up about their feelings, on a simple interactive website.
- [Time to talk parent leaflet](#) – Time to Change This leaflet, created for Time to Talk Day that falls on 6 February, during Children's Mental Health Week

There is no clear pattern in the way young people respond to learning in lockdown. I was briefed by an Oxford professor on the results of her national survey into this question. About 1/3 of pupils prefer on-line home learning, 1/3 have no preference and 1/3 miss school and are very fed up. The exception to this pattern is Year 13 where students nationally are heartily fed up with the whole thing. I sympathize. Our focus, as I am sure yours is, is on those pupils who are struggling in these straightened times.

A report from Mrs Doran is never short of events and amazing variety. It is remarkable to read of the opportunities she manages to provide our pupils and students even in these circumstances:

In the senior school, talks were arranged on Construction, Architecture, Apprenticeships and Management. As a direct result of this talk, 5 pupils were able to arrange work experience opportunities with the North West Contractors Training group. Our sincere thanks to Julie Lawrenson for coordinating these superb opportunities for our pupils.

Wilton Scholars in Year 7, 8 and 9 have participated in a series of virtual after school clubs this half term. Mrs Doran and Mrs Hoare, the CEO of North West Gifted and Talented, led some sessions developing pupils' problem solving, lateral thinking and debating skills. Some Year 9 pupils have subsequently been invited to participate in a superb competition designing a new product with industry giant Unilever. This involved participating in a series of Zoom calls with experts in product development, manufacturing and advertising.

Professional artist workshops were arranged for every class in the Prep school, with workshops carefully linked to their planned curriculum topics. Year 3, who are studying Lowry, had a superb live workshop on perspective drawing, delivered by an extremely accomplished artist from the Lowry Arts Centre - Mr Paul Pickford. Live art lessons were also arranged with artists teaching Cityscapes for Y5, graffiti art in Y6 and William Morris floral designs for Y5. This ensured pupils were able to continue the planned curriculum, but enriched by professional expertise. Next week, every class will also have a masterclass with a professional author to help support English lessons and promote reading.

All KS2 students were given the extraordinary opportunity of participating in a live workshop with world experts in special effects, from George Lucas' special effects company ILM. A concept artist and computer modeler joined the pupils to demonstrate their expertise – with a 'creature design specialist' showing how to use computer modelling software to create a Jurassic Park dinosaur – live!

In KS2 and KS3, a design competition was launched where pupils were asked to design a predatory creature living in a futuristic world made entirely of water. All entries need to be submitted to Mrs Doran by Sunday 7 February.

For those wishing to advance their computing skills, Mrs Doran offered workshops in computer modelling with Zbrushcore mini to pupils in KS2 and KS3, to allow 3D models of their sea creature designs to be brought to life. A computer modelling competition was then launched, which will be judged by professional computer modelling experts from ILM.

On Friday, all KS2 pupils were encouraged to care about nature by participating in the world's largest wildlife survey. The national event, organised by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), is an event called the Big Garden Birdwatch. This is designed to survey trends in populations and support wildlife protection.

Finally, pupils in KS4, interested in specific careers in STEM, were able to participate in a virtual careers' day with the BBC on Thursday.

It has been an immensely busy, proactive and engaging week, filled with opportunity. Just wait for next week...

Year 12 students listened to a hard-hitting and powerful talk on addiction during their NSI lesson this week. Ms Drew reports that the speaker, Katie, who works for the Amy Winehouse Foundation, gave a very honest and frank talk, sharing her own experiences with alcohol and drug addiction and recovery.

Seth S's (Y7) fundraising efforts for the NSPCC that I mentioned in last week's newsletter raised an incredible £315. Mr Cook reports that since the start of the pandemic pupils have fundraised £1075 to support children's charities through several sporting challenges.

You can join our Prep School pupils in getting involved in the RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch, which takes place this weekend. Ms Whittell reports:

The Eco-Committee and RSPB invite you all to take part in this year's Big Garden Birdwatch! And to add a bit of extra sparkle to the event, we're also inviting you to send us your photos/videos or even artwork - post on our Insta @livcolleco and/or email to us at hello@livcolleco.org.uk - there will be prizes for the best ones! A fantastic opportunity to spend quality time with your family or simply to enjoy some mindful moments with nature, whilst collecting valuable data that will help RSPB with their important work.

For more info, please follow the link [here](#).

Let your Birdwatch adventure begin!

Now that the PM has mentioned March 8 as the target date for school return, various armies of volunteers are being recruited and will eventually be trained to help with our testing programme. We are grateful to the PTA's response to the call for volunteers.

There is a letter for parents from Mr Reddy (Liverpool's Director of Children's Services) and Mr Ashton (Director of Public Health) that we have been asked to circulate - you can access the letter [here](#).

Sad news from The Lerpoolians, the organization of past pupils, friends, past parents and supporters of Liverpool College. Alan Ashcroft, long time art teacher, housemaster, British and Irish Lions Rugby player, and College rugby coach has sadly passed away aged 90. There is a tribute to this remarkable influential teacher on the Lerpoolians website [here](#).

I need to mention another day to you. Monday 22 February is an INSET day. All schooling on site will be closed that day, as per our calendar, so we as a staff can gather virtually and receive training.

A final reminder that our consultation on our admissions policy for September 2022 finishes on 31 January. You can find more information on our website [here](#) and responses to the consultation can be sent to consultation@liverpoolcollege.org.uk.

May I wish you and yours a pleasant, dry and productive weekend

Yours sincerely,

Hans van Mourik Broekman
Principal