
Principal's Newsletter

17 December 2021

Dear Parents,

Firstly, a reminder that the Lent term begins for all pupils on Wednesday 5 January. For pupils in the secondary phase it will be Week B. Mrs Cassidy has written separately to all secondary phase parents to outline the staggered start times for secondary pupils on the 5th January. You can download a copy of Mrs Cassidy's letter [here](#).

Liverpool's Director of Public Health and Director of Children's Services have also written to parents with important public health advice for the holiday period and the return to school in January. You can access a copy of their letter [here](#).

We got to the finish line. We have completed the race.

Most things that can happen, have happened. This was perhaps emphasized by the power outage which brought Prep and Pre Prep parents scrambling back to school to collect delighted pupils. Here was an early holiday, a kind of pre-Christmas. Scottish Power set up a traffic light and began to dig. The power and heat are all back on, but the digging continues.

We also had our first parent struck by a car driving on the verge of Queens Drive. Apparently, a pram was in the vicinity, although mercifully its occupants and driver were not incommoded. This is the sort of drama we do not need. A call to seriousness and safety.

This week has seen house competitions, fundraising days, goofy jumpers, Santa grottoes, dance competitions, house quizzes. We do not slow down, we do not parallel park our school. It is a screeching handbrake stop we are after. The Chapter 7 and 8 dance competition and battle of the bands is such an eruption of youthful energy that one pupil commented to Ms Hall: This is the best day of my life. It is of anthropological interest to note that at our school boys are not embarrassed to dance. One colleague hypothesized that the competitive instinct of some of the boys was so great that they were prepared to dance or sing, AS LONG AS THEY WOULD WIN. The amount of creativity and teaching nous which goes into the creation of some of these performances is staggering to behold.

The boarders' generosity at Christmas goes to the Dogs Trust. Their ice-skating expedition, followed by Mrs Pease's reward trip to the same rink, led to moments of jollity as some

glided across the ice in serene sophistication whilst others clung on the hoardings for dear life. We enjoyed a delicious Christmas dinner with the boarders on Tuesday and wished them a merry Christmas whether with their families in Liverpool, Wales, Spain, or Romania.

The 1st XV season ended with a great match. In a mud bath the team played some of their best rugby of the year to draw with Oswestry, 10-10. Watching them and reflecting on the beginning of the season, I saw in their development a metaphor for the work that teachers and pupils have done this term. In the first match, after covid, they were an out-of-shape, unfit collection of individuals with little confidence, little motivation, little desire, and little discipline. Now they were a team. Working and living together, being coached, enduring defeats, had awakened them to the standard required, the mark to which we must all step in our collective and personal lives if we are to achieve anything. Such a thing cannot be discovered on-line. It is a product of a community experience. Educational standards are best pursued and achieved face to face.

The Chapter 7 and 8 teams had great seasons. Mr Cook intends to seize our forward momentum in rugby and continue offering fixtures and opportunities. The girls' hockey teams were also successful against Oswestry and they continue to win their city league netball matches. They, and others, will be delighted that a major project of refurbishment is under way in the sports hall as I write. New floor, with extra grip, is replacing the original sport hall floor. We will also have a removable partition. Sport will benefit.

Mrs Shackell reports from Forest School:

This week our Forest School has hosted the big guy, Father Christmas, from Wednesday to Friday. Every class in Pre Prep and Prep was able to meet Father Christmas, chat with him, explain their needs and receive a gift. From Reception and Y1, the pure innocence of meeting this magnificent figure to Y6 having a chat with him about "stuff", was truly amazing to witness.

The presence of some of our Y7, 8 and 9 pupils was a welcome bonus! Seeing the older children working alongside the younger is magnificent. They reluctantly had their photo taken with Father Christmas, audibly complaining....but they secretly loved it!

Regardless of their age, the want to believe in something is palpable. The fun to be had in a natural grotto and the energy that fizzles and bombs between the trees is electric!!

Father Christmas was, as expected, a wonderful guest. I am so grateful he took the time out from his busy schedule to visit us.

The children made some Christmas wreaths from the foliage in their own spaces and their delight at decorating our woodland was excellent!!

Thank you so much to all who have donated towards the Grotto. What a wonderful week and here's to the cold and frosty days of January down in the woods!!

Congratulations to Aleksandra S who has won a prestigious Arkwright Engineering Scholarship. Mr Jones writes:

Y12 Product Design student Aleksandra S has been awarded one of the prestigious national Arkwright Engineering Scholarships. She successfully navigated her way through the online selection process which consisted of a series of applications, a portfolio of high quality design work produced during Aleksandra's GCSE in Design and Technology, and culminated in an online interview with the Arkwright selection panel. Aleksandra was selected from 1500 students nationally and has since been successfully placed with the manufacturer, Haribo. This link will help develop her knowledge of industrial processes and awareness of careers in the design sector. She will be sponsored throughout her A level studies through a bursary to help develop her knowledge and understanding of Design.

Liverpool College has received additional STEM funding from Arkwright thanks to Aleksandra's scholarship. This funding has been invested into the Design and Technology department through the purchase of new 3D printing facilities that will help develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of CAD/CAM across the key stages. The Design and Technology department congratulates Aleksandra on this outstanding achievement and will continue to support her on this exciting journey.

Congratulations also to Khan O (Y10) who has been selected as a finalist for the Student Inspiration Award at the Liverpool City Region Culture & Creativity Awards 2021, for his outstanding work to his community and creation of Mulgrave Street Action Group CIC.

The chaplaincy charity group managed to inspire serious gifts to the Whitechapel Centre, the homeless charity. Many parents responded brilliantly with thoughtful and practical donations which were delivered and gratefully received by the charity.

Today is the last working day before the retirement of Mr Flynn, our director of finance. Mr Flynn is one of these people who is seldom seen, part of the army of people who actually make the College possible. Since his arrival, he has shepherded our resources brilliantly and coaxed, and steered a beautiful course of financial discipline and probity resulting in us making the transition to academy status in solvent and strong shape. He has been a great manager, a wise counsellor, a rock upon which we have relied. All of us wish him, after working in school finance for 44 years, a happy and care-free retirement with his partner Pat.

We do not know what the future holds. As omicron circles like a vulture to feast on our weariness and fear, Christmas teaches us that hope is the gift we need, and the one we did and do not dare to ask for. God saw fit to give Himself, totally and irrevocably, and in the experience of this certainty, our fears and worries become reminders of our confidence in the triumph of life, of good, of truth, of beauty.

May I wish you and yours a hopeful and peaceful Christmas.

Yours sincerely,

Mr H van Mourik Broekman
Principal