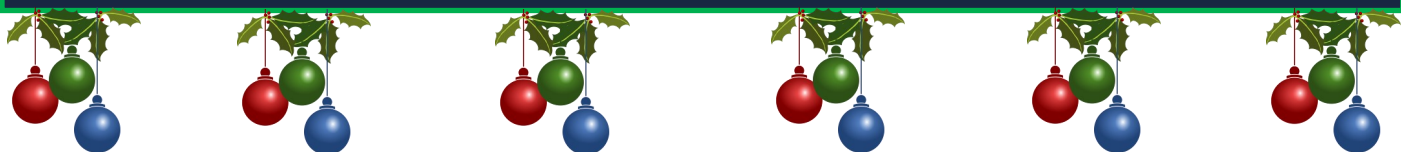




Christ Church Cathedral School

Friday 16th December 2022



Dear Parents,

Schools are communities and we will be reminded of this very strongly tomorrow when we meet as one in the Cathedral for our annual Carol Service. We will hear from all our many choirs and from some of our instrumental groups. All of these rely upon people working together as teams. But, of course, all communities, choirs and groups are made up of individuals. I have just finished writing the Headmaster's comments on the reports. I very much enjoy writing my reports as it allows me to spend time thinking, in turn, about every single pupil in the School. I enjoy reading about what they have achieved and the progress they have made. From the detailed comments written by the teachers, I get a colourful portrait of the individual in question. At the heart of effective teaching is the relationship between a teacher and pupil and our reports symbolically reflect this fact.

This week has been a whirlwind. On Monday our Form 8s went with Mr Richards and Mr Harrison to Westminster for a trip around the Houses of Parliament. The boys visited both the House of Lords in all its sumptuous Victorian decoration and the much starker House of Commons. They were shown round by guides who remarked at the end of the tour, to the teachers, that our boys had asked more interesting questions and had better knowledge than the party of Sixth Formers they had shown round the day before. I have to say I am constantly amazed by what our pupils do know. As I have often mentioned, some of the highlights of my days are my conversations with pupils at lunchtime. At the moment, the dining room is festooned with the flags of all the nations who have been playing in the World Cup. I was sitting next to a boy who asked me which of the flags I knew. I pride myself in flag knowledge so reeled off a decent number. He shook his head – "Not very good Sir. Watch me!" And of course he was able to correctly identify each one!

We also had the Pre-Prep and Nursery Nativity, this year in front of the High Altar of the Cathedral. The Headmaster of Our Lady's School in Abingdon, Mr Gibbons, had come over for the afternoon and so accompanied me to the production. As the tableau was assembled, the kings and shepherds, the Holy Family, and the angels, crowded in front of the gold painted Altar, he looked at me and said, "I don't think I have ever seen such a wonderful setting for a Nativity!" Indeed, it was rather more elaborate than the original stable but I did think what a privilege it is for us to have a Cathedral as our School Chapel. I had seen the dress rehearsal the day before and there had been a few missed lines and slightly quiet voices. But for the performance itself, things were completely different. The boys and girls performed with the confidence of actors in a Hollywood epic, their voices ringing around the building. It was not surprising that they were greeted with thunderous applause at the end. May I thank all the Pre Prep and Nursery staff for what they achieved, and in particular I wish to thank Ms Biddell and Miss Farmer for masterminding the performance.

I cannot remember it being so cold since I was an undergraduate in the 1980s at Durham. Every year, as happens in the North East, we had thick snow and the cold was often intense. Laurie Lee, in one of the finest chapters of *Cider with Rosie*, talks about the "metallic throb" of serious cold. This week, while waiting on Brewer Street in the morning, I knew exactly what he meant. My black shoes were no match for the fearsome cold. I very much enjoyed seeing the boys and girls arriving, clad in various forms of thick clothing. Hats of all types, some with reindeer ears, others with huge flamboyant bobbles. Others were wearing coats and one person arrived with three jumpers on. Resourcefulness in extremity is a useful characteristic!

I have to confess it – I was beginning to flag yesterday as we moved towards the end of a very long term. But all was not lost. A boy came up to me and said, smiling broadly - his face etched with sincerity, "Sir! You don't look a day over forty!" Just imagine how young I'm going to be looking after a Christmas holiday. Happy Christmas to you all!

Mr Murray
Headmaster

Hilary 2023

Monday 9th - Sunday 15th January

MONDAY 9	
9.00	School Office Opens
TUESDAY 10	
	INSET
6.00	CC/CP return
6.00	CC/CP: Parents' Meeting (WWH)
WEDNESDAY 11	
8.25	Term Begins, day pupils return
7.55	CC: Rehearsals begin
	Forms 3 and 4 Swimming
4.00 - 5.00	After School Chess Club (Form 2)
THURSDAY 12	
FRIDAY 13	
8.30	Cathedral Assembly, speaker tbc
	CC: IN
SATURDAY 14	
SUNDAY 15	

WORCESTER AND PEMBROKE CHORISTERS VOICE TRIALS 2023



We are very much looking forward to recruiting new choristers for our Worcester and Pembroke chapel choirs in 2023. The next voice trials will take place on **Tuesday 17th January**, and I am delighted that we can offer this exciting opportunity to boys from Form 3 upwards. Being a chorister offers unrivalled musical training as well as the chance to develop team-work, grow in confidence, make friends, go on tour, record CDs, win music awards at Senior School and much, much more!

Some information about both choirs will be emailed out before the end of term, although please do contact me at biddell.s@cccs.org.uk if you have any further questions. At voice trial, boys will be asked to sing a short, simple piece (something learnt in class, or a favourite hymn will do) and undertake simple aural tests. Everything will be done to ensure boys feel at ease... it really isn't scary at all.

Please do get in touch if you would like your son to have a voice trial in January. SB

Pre-Prep Christmas News

Pre-Prep have had a busy week counting down the days to Christmas. The week began with a lovely dress rehearsal of their Nativity in the WWH, performed to the boys in the Prep school. Every year more and more of the older boys want to share in the delights of the Nativity. For some, it brings back the memories of when they were in Pre-Prep, taking on the roles of shepherds, angels and the three kings. So it was no surprise when almost the whole of the Prep school gathered to watch.

On Tuesday, Pre-Prep (and especially our leads from Form 2) performed *'The Jigsaw Christmas Story'* brilliantly in the Cathedral. It was especially fitting that we performed in front of the High Alter in the Sanctuary.

Christmas crafts, gingerbread icing, lantern making and rehearsals for the Carol Service on Saturday filled the last few days. However, on Thursday we had a very special visitor - Father Christmas himself visited with Mrs Claus to read a story and bring some early Christmas gifts.

Along with the children and staff of Pre-Prep and Nursery I would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Joyous New Year! RF



Cathedral Choir News

On Tuesday, the Cathedral Choristers travelled to St John Smith's Square (London) continuing their run of Carol Concerts in the run-up to Christmas - performing at St John's Smith Square is always a highlight for the boys.

This year was particularly special for us as it was Mr Sheen's final St John Smith's Square concert as Sub Organist and Mr Baker's first concert as Junior Organ Scholar. Mr Baker was a Form 8 Cathedral Chorister at CCCS in 2014 when I joined the School so the boys and I are particularly proud that an 'Old Boy' was accompanying them at the organ. JR



Westminster Ho!



Monday took Year 8 with Messrs Harrison and Richards to London to enjoy a tour of the Palace of Westminster. Fortunately, all trains bar one were running normally; unfortunately ours was the one cancelled. Nonetheless we emerged in good enough time to a wintry Trafalgar Square and followed Nelson's gaze down Whitehall past the Banqueting House - sole relic of Whitehall Palace this year celebrating its 400th birthday, and outside which Charles I lost his head. We saw the guards at Horse Guards Parade and the guns at Downing Street and threw snowballs around the Burghers of Calais in Victoria Tower Gardens. The refurbished Elizabeth Tower, now fully emerged from scaffolding, is resplendent with regilding, a dial of clean glass and Prussian Blue; and after months of silence of Ben and partners it was cheering to hear chimes (now in regular rhythm). There is so much to see in London that I trust boys pester you to return and explore the Banqueting House (closed for us) and Westminster Abbey, whose Hawksmoor Towers we admired and compared to his All Souls.



The Burghers of Calais,
Victoria Tower Gardens

There is a newish education centre at the Palace of Westminster. There we were given headphones that injected our American guide's voice eerily into our heads; and thence we set off on the regular tour of the Palace, up the stairs of the Victoria Tower which the monarchs mount to the Robing Room preparatory to address new parliaments. We admired the vast paintings of Trafalgar and Waterloo in the grand Royal Gallery and saw the peer Robert Winston of fertility fame bustling purposefully about in preparation for the afternoon's business in the Lords; and as the Houses were not sitting till the afternoon we were able to see both



chambers: the Lords, with the rich red seats and Woolsack, perch of the Lord Speaker, and the gaudy opulence of the Sovereign's Throne, and amongst the coats of arms of former Lord Chancellors the familiar achievement of our founder Wolsey; and the green-seated Commons, rebuilt after the bomb damage of the War and of much humbler aspect. The tour ended in the magnificent Westminster Hall, survival from Norman times with its astonishing hammer-beam roof, where Charles I and Guy Fawkes were tried and where the Queen recently lay in state. In the Members' Lobby we saw MPs' pigeon holes, including our own Anneliese Dodds' and the PM's.

Returning to the education rooms we talked about the way Commons and Lords play ping-pong with legislation; and we had our own debate on whether to make public transport free for juveniles. (Wise voices were raised on the exorbitant expense if this motion were passed.) And then home, with barely half an hour of rail delay. A worthwhile day. NR

Clubs News



On Thursday, Mrs Fairhurst and the Hand Bell Ringing club went out onto St Aldates and entertained passers-by with carols, beautifully rung in chords on the bells. The boys' favourite was Jingle Bells, although it was definitely the most difficult - what with all the different repeats!?

The boys have enjoyed learning how to ring together and the audience seemed to really enjoy it. We are looking forward to bell ringing again next Christmas.

Thank you to St Mary's Church, Charlbury, for very kindly lending all the very lovely (and very old!) bells. AF

Change of Contact Details

Please may I remind you to let us know as soon as possible if you have changed your home address, email address or telephone number so that I can amend our database.

Any changes of details can be emailed to Laura Kemp: registrar@cccs.org.uk

Many thanks. LK



Lost and Found



We hear of quite a few lost items of clothing and it is much easier for us to help find them (on whoever is wearing the wrong item) if clothes are clearly named.

Thank you. LK



Flexi-Boarding

We offer flexi-boarding for £58.00 per night. If any of our parents would like to use this facility, please contact Mrs Kemp: registrar@cccs.org.uk.

NATIONAL SCHOOLS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

NSSO courses are BACK THIS APRIL including the inaugural NSSO Big Band!

When? 1st - 8th April 2023
Where? Malvern College, UK
Who? Ages 8 - 17
What Standard? Three orchestras & Big Band
Grades 3 - Diploma +

A generous bursary scheme is available!

Join us for a week of exciting music making, inspiration, fun, games and sports in a magical venue.

Queries: hello@nssso.org
Applications: NSSO.org

Easter Music Courses

Sunday 2nd to Thursday 6th April 2023

Join our world-class staff at our Specialist Music School for a fun-filled course of music-making and activities

Composition

Ages 12-18
Some experience of composing music required



String

Ages 8-15
Grade 4+ with some experience of playing in ensembles required

£695 boarding / £565 day
Book by 6th January 2023 to save 10%!

<https://wells.cathedral.school/music-easter-schools>



CCCS Barber

To book appointments you can either message: 07748 105192 or email: andreachrisostomou@yahoo.com

Men's haircut £17.50, Students £15.00, Clipper cut £10, Beard trim £5, Over 65s £13.50, Under 16s £13.50

Meet and Greet

Richard Murray, Headmaster

What did you want to be when you grew up and what are you doing now? When I was really young what I wanted to be when I grew up changed on a daily basis. I decided therefore that I would devote one day a week to each of my different careers. On Monday I was to be a television presenter, on Tuesday an airline pilot, on Wednesday a comedian etc., etc. It was when I went to secondary school and was taught by some of the most inspiring people I had met, that I decided that I wished to be a teacher. That desire has never left me and following university I went straight into teaching which is what I do now, of course, as I expect you all know!

If you could travel anywhere in the world tomorrow, where would you go and why? I would go to my cottage in Cumbria where the snow will be on the tops of the hills and the wood fires will be burning. In this sort of weather the light plays off the snow white hilltops and the trees sparkle like confetti.

Who is your idol, and why? My parents, who believed that a loving family is the strongest foundation for a happy future.

Favourite city or town and in which season? Oxford, in any season. The Cotswold stone, taken from the quarries at Burford, is the loveliest stone on earth. It reflects the light more brilliantly than a cinema screen. The buildings of Oxford, surrounded as most of them are by beautiful gardens, must be the finest collection of architecture in a concentrated area in the world. For me the "City of Dreaming Spires" never loses its magic.

One thing you would change in the world if you could? The world would be a much better place if we all put ourselves in the shoes of others before we acted. So many problems would be solved whether military, environmental or social if everybody thought seriously about the consequences of their actions upon others.

Is there a family trait/habit that you have? Setting out on short walks which turn out to be long ones. Last Summer my brother and I and our families decided to have a nice evening stroll by the shoreline – it turned into a trek through dense woodland until 11 at night! We felt very well exercised and had developed excellent night vision.

Favourite Book? As someone with a degree in English Literature this is one of the most painful questions to have to answer. I am presuming, like the castaways on Radio 4's Desert Island Disks, that I can take for granted the Bible and the Complete works of Shakespeare. Beyond this though, it's an almost impossible choice. At this time of year, I'd have to go for Charles Dickens's *A Christmas Carol*. Of all English writers Dickens understood the power of generosity and love and his tale of a lost soul rescued through his decision to think about others at Christmas time, never fails to move me.

If you could start something new (hobby/interest or sport) and were not limited with time/age/money, what would it be? I would learn to play the organ. Having a whole orchestra at one's fingertips (and feet) seems to me to be the ultimate in fantasies. It's a very good way of making yourself heard! I also love the fact that every single organ is very different and is affected by the building in which it sits. The organ at St George's Chapel in Windsor, for instance, has two halves either side of the building. In summer the part on the south side heats up more than the half on the north side and so sounds slightly different, a dilemma for the organist. I love these quirks of personality.

Any advice on how you relax at the weekend? A walk in the country with family or friends, followed by supper and conversation!

Teachers are some of the few people that we do remember for years, decades to come. "A day wasted on others is not wasted on one's self." *A Tale of Two Cities*, Charles Dickens. I really admire teachers who talk the talk and walk the walk in order to shape the futures of others. We are a really lucky school. I did observe Richard, one morning, move with a pace that I had not seen before in your average pedestrian - I had only seen this in Olympic style speed walkers, it was impressive, even more so for the reason behind it, he was concerned about the whereabouts of some lost precious cargo, this immediately, gave me an insight into his ability to rush to the needs of our children on a daily basis and tend to their ways.

There's is nothing like pounding the pavements to dust off the days dilemmas. Apart from the exercise benefits, it really is just an invitation to overindulge more, this could be why you like it so much! For instance, one plain M&M would require you to walk the entire length of a football field. Apparently, chickens, pigeons, cranes, quails, and other birds bob their head when they walk. I haven't yet observed you obviously bobbing, but it does help with balance, provides depth, perception, and sharpens your vision, so maybe you are a subtle bobber, we can let you know.

I think you should make it your mission to start on the organ. We all know it now so there is really no stopping you. In Biology, an organ is a collection of tissues joined in a structural unit to serve a common function. So, they are alike! It is a centre and a core, and in a setting, it works the hardest to create an atmosphere and a beautiful sound, just like the heart does.

"Have a heart that never hardens, and a temper that never tires, and a touch that never hurts." said our mutual friend, Charles Dickens. Thank you Richard!

Have a lovely Christmas break and a happy New Year, thank you for all your help and support.

Kathryn
PA