



# Christ Church Cathedral School

Friday 28th April 2023

Dear Parents,

This Wednesday was an important day. Until this week, we must have been one of the only schools in the country to have played Real Tennis but not Lawn Tennis. On Wednesday this changed, as boys from the School played in our first Tennis match for a very long time – indeed, I cannot remember when the last Tennis match occurred. Mr Harrison, Head of Sport, has decided that Lawn Tennis should be back on the curriculum – so now we play both games. The remarkable news is that we won our match convincingly, an extraordinary feat given that we have not yet had any practices. What will we be like once those begin! Having said that, it was the legendary singing duo, Flanders and Swann (both of whom, incidentally were undergraduates at Christ Church) who wrote in an ironic song about English attitudes to other countries' sports:

“And all the world over, each nation's the same  
They've simply no notion of playing the game  
They argue with umpires, they cheer when they've won  
And they practice beforehand, which ruins the fun!”

Times have changed, you will be relieved to hear, and that practice is part of our approach to all things, including sport. In fact practice is something we are taking very seriously at the moment in terms of our preparation for Senior School Pre-Tests. Mrs Fairhurst, our Academic Deputy, is now beginning this preparation in Form 4 and we are ensuring that mock ISEB Pre-Tests, which are now demanded by most senior schools, are part of the assessment schedule. We will be writing to you about the details of this in the near future.

If you look down the passage by the side of No 3, Brewer Street during the school day, you will see a large number of bikes leaned up against the wall. This week, both sides of the path have been chockablock with bicycles, partly because we have been running a Bikeability course. The course is designed to ensure that young people can cycle safely. This is an immensely useful course given how many people are using their bikes to get to school. Every term the percentage of people coming into school by bike increases. One of the advantages to being right in the centre of town is that we are relatively close to everywhere in Oxford, and near to the station, so, cycling is a realistic option for so many.

We have so many pupils who are avid readers and yet we do not have a dedicated room to house our many books, other than the main English classroom. The time has come for us to have a library and we are about to convert the old changing room, a beautiful large airy room, which we no longer use, into a library. Our hope is that it should be a place of magical journeys, a place where boys can lay down habits of reading which will never leave them. I look forward to sharing details about this exciting project with you very soon.

One of my favourite times of the week is when I do duty in the playground on Thursday mornings. It allows me to have 20 minutes with the pupils when I have no purpose other than to be with them. I stand outside by the snack trolley waiting to see who will open the conversation. One of the boys comes up to me fairly quickly. “Can you help me with my banana; the yellow bit doesn't seem to be coming off and I can't eat it like this.” Fortunately, after years of banana consumption, I know exactly what to do and the boy leaves, happily eating his skinned banana. It's always good to be of help. Shortly afterwards another boy appears, this time clutching a piece of paper in his left hand and, in his right, a white feather. He looks at me with a certain degree of pride “I'm composing a symphony, Sir. Can I show you the opening movement?” He passes me a manuscript with carefully written notes. “It's in D Minor.” Another boy then appears, pushing the composer aside, “Sir, watch what I can do.” He is holding a hoop which, with a ferocious flick of the wrist, he casts into the air. It lands on the ground and then shoots back towards the boy who plucks it up again. “A boomerang hoop!” he exclaims. “Now your turn, Sir.” I really am in a place of life-long education, I think – there are always new skills to acquire. And then the boy who likes conundra appears, waiting with anticipation. “Right,” I begin, “A man lives on the top floor of a skyscraper.....” And so it goes on. I have to pinch myself so often at CCCS – are the boys really this engaging? Everyone seems to flourish here and pupils' enthusiasm is palpable. It is a great privilege to work here.

Mr Murray  
Headmaster

**Trinity 2023**  
**Monday 1st - Sunday 7th May**

MONDAY 1	<i>Philip and James, Apostles</i> <b>Bank Holiday, School Closed</b> 6.00 <b>CC/CP: Return</b>
TUESDAY 2	4.00 - 5.00 After School Tennis Club (Reception - Form 2) (VWH) 4.30 - 6.30 <b>Form 3 Tutor Meetings (SchoolCloud)</b> 4.45 - 6.30 <b>Form 8 Parents' Meetings (SchoolCloud)</b>
WEDNESDAY 3	9.30 - 11.30 Radley Athletics (Forms 3 & 4) 3.30 - 4.30 After School Chess Club (Form 2) 4.00 - 5.00 After School Cricket Club (Forms 3 - 6) (Merton Field)
THURSDAY 4	12.30 - 2.30 Form 1 Trip to Museum of Natural History 1.35 - 3.35 Form 8 French final mock speaking exam 4.00 - 5.00 After School Football Club (Forms 3 - 6) (Merton Field)
FRIDAY 5	8.00 CC/CP: Full Choir Rehearsal 8.30 Cathedral Assembly, speaker the Headmaster 1.00 - 3.00 <b>Picnic in the Park.</b> Parking available on the Broad Walk from 1.00 pm <b>No After School Clubs or Prep</b> CC: OUT
SATURDAY 6	<b>The Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III</b>
SUNDAY 7	<i>The Fourth Sunday after Easter</i> <i>University Third Week</i> CC: Home after Evensong

**Parent Survey**

Mr Murray and the Senior Management Team are keen to find out parents' opinions about our school, so we can plan for the future. Therefore, we would be really grateful if you would answer the following questions: 1. What do you value most about Christ Church Cathedral School? 2. How would you like to see the school develop over the next five years?

We have deliberately kept the questions open rather than doing a tick-box questionnaire because we would like to listen to your full thoughts rather than forcing you to answer specific questions. Of course, if you have something you would like to tell us which is not covered by these two questions, please feel free to include it. AF

You can respond either by email to me: [fairhurst.a@cccs.org.uk](mailto:fairhurst.a@cccs.org.uk) or anonymously using the survey link:  
<https://freeonlinesurveys.com/s/EjWp7ijA>.



Merton Field gate open from 1.00 pm.  
Parking available on the Broad Walk



### Music Programme

Brass Ensemble: *A Toye, His Rest and The New Sa-hoo* by Farnaby (from *Fancies Toyes and Dreams*, arr. Elgar Howarth).

Senior Orchestra: *La Réjouissance and Minuet* by Handel (from *Music for the Royal Fireworks*, arr. Spike Wilson).

Musical performances will conclude with the National Anthem. All are invited to join in.



The children of Nursery and Pre-Prep have been designing and making their own crowns in school. During the afternoon, they will parade their crowns on the centre stage.



Children with parents at the picnic will be able to sit together after the short concert.

We ask that parents closely supervise their children so that the afternoon is enjoyable for all. At the end of the afternoon, your children are free to leave with you.



## PICNIC ON CHRIST CHURCH MEADOW

**FRIDAY 5TH MAY**

**WE INVITE PARENTS AND  
CHILDREN TO WEAR  
RED WHITE AND BLUE**

**1.00 pm:**

Whole school arrives at Merton Field to collect their picnic lunches. Parents arrive with their picnics and gather on Merton Field near the large white marquees.

**1.30 pm:**

Welcome and introduction to the afternoon.

**1.35 pm:**

Music performances.

**2:15 pm:**

Royal Coronation Crown Parade, by Nursery and Pre-Prep.

**3.00 pm:**

Goodbye and end of picnic.



We hope you have a wonderful afternoon with us celebrating the Coronation of King Charles III.

## Music News



Over Easter I travelled to Antigua to work with 'Playing to Inspire', an extraordinary musical project led by the Kanneh-Mason family (7 virtuoso siblings who play keyboard and string instruments, aged 13 to 25). The Kanneh-Masons hail from Nottingham but have Antiguan roots, and they are in their fifth year of bringing orchestral music to this beautiful corner of the Caribbean. Also on this year's team was BBC presenter and saxophonist Jess Gillam, and conductor Tom Featherstonhaugh of the BSO.

I coached chamber groups, conducted the Junior Symphony Orchestra, rehearsed the Youth Choir, played in the Youth Symphony Orchestra and accompanied soloists. We performed twice for the Prime Minister and twice for the Governor General, in large venues and at fundraising recitals. In some ways it was very much like being at CCCS, although most of the rehearsals were at a sweltering cricket stadium quite unlike Brewer Street! The young musicians are brimming with talent, and the local tutors do excellent work even though some are still only in their early 20s.

Prime Minister Gaston Browne spoke movingly of how access to high quality music has a profound effect on young people. It was impossible to escape comparisons with the UK's hesitant approach to arts funding, and to wish for a similar approach back at home. He also described music as an exportable product, and aims to make Antigua the chief hub for musical excellence in the Caribbean. This is already becoming reality, as this Easter the ABRSM sponsored three music students from the Dominican Republic (population 10 million) to attend Playing to Inspire in Antigua (population 90,000!).

This is my second visit to work with orchestras on the island, and in 2018 CCCS hosted a return visit by the National Youth Choir of Antigua. Some parents may also remember a 2017 fund-raising concert in the presence of Antigua's High Commissioner H.E. Karen-Mae Hill OBE, after a hurricane hit Barbuda. I hope that CCCS can sustain this unique connection, and that we can find more ways to support the tremendous musicians of Playing to Inspire.

In the meantime, if you have an orchestral instrument sitting unused at home, and if you would consider donating it, please let me know. It will be welcomed with open arms in Antigua...! SB

## Chorister News

During Holy Week, our Cathedral Choristers returned for their usual commitment of Easter Services. At the start of the week (Palm Sunday) the boys are always eager to see the Donkey process through Tom Quad. The donkey's etiquette is always a matter of great interest to the boys and I am pleased to report that there were no embarrassments - from either choristers or donkey!

The boys were in fine voice throughout the week, rounding out Easter Sunday Eucharist with Vierne's Messe Solenne, a remarkable work scored for choir and two organs. Vierne originally intended to score the Mass for Orchestra and Choir but was convinced to accompany the work with Organs for practical reasons by his teacher, Widor. How fitting it was therefore that the choir were played out by Professor Grahl playing Widor's famous Toccata. JR





## House Music Competition 2023

I have been speaking to boys about this term's big musical project: the House Music Competition. Instrumental auditions will begin next week and are open to any boys in Forms 3 to 8.

I hope that boys might have started choosing and preparing their audition pieces, with the following guidelines in mind:

**Juniors (Forms 3 - 4) - instrumental piece no longer than 3 minutes**

**Intermediates (Forms 5 - 6) - instrumental piece no longer than 4 minutes**

**Seniors (Forms 7 - 8) - instrumental piece no longer than 5 minutes**

There will also be House songs to learn from April onwards, and parents are warmly invited to the Final in the Cathedral at 1.30 pm on Friday 19th May. It's always an exciting event, so it would be excellent to see lots of you there. If you can't join us in the afternoon, the competition will be professionally live-streamed and available to watch afterwards too.

Please encourage your sons to start practising. SB



### Little Dengineers!

On Tuesday, Reception and Form I made the most of the Spring sunshine at the Woodland School. The wood has changed so much in the space of a month, and the children spotted lots of signs that Spring has truly sprung, including green leaves, bird nests, insects, and an array of flowers such as daffodils, dandelions, daisies, and bluebells.

Given the fact we will be spending more and more time learning outside in the coming months, the children decided that we should make some fabulous dens to play in. Everyone went busily to work, collecting sticks, logs and foliage for camouflage.

The children demonstrated great teamwork, and threw themselves enthusiastically into designing and constructing their dens using natural materials from the wood, as well as rope, mallets, and canvas to provide covering. The children were rightfully proud of their dens and we can't wait to get back out there to add more creative flourishes to them in the coming weeks. Well done Christ Church Dengineers! TR





## Sports News



On Wednesday, our U9 & U11 Football teams travelled to Kingham Hill School for the annual Windrush Valley six-a-side Football tournament. Although it is now officially our Cricket season, the weather is playing its part in making it feel like a Football season!

Our U11s won all four of their group games, comfortably, against Sibford B, Kitebrook, Rendcomb and the hosts, Windrush Valley. Stand-out performances, as always, from Troy and Henry allowed the whole team to play a great style of impressive Football from every boy. The

final saw us play Sibford A - last year's winners and the side we narrowly beat in the Bruern Abbey Final. This time it was a one-sided affair and our boys ran out 5-1 winners.

Our U9s also played some great Football, winning three games against Windrush Valley and Cokethorpe A and C teams, eventually coming second in their group to the overall winners, Rendcomb. Ted and Raphael were standout performers - but it was a real team effort. NH



This week saw the School's first ever Tennis fixture. Twelve boys from Forms 7 & 8 travelled to Cranford House School, near Wallingford. The boys played a series of matches and showed a huge amount of skill and determination, winning the fixture. Overall, we won ten out of the eighteen matches played, with three more ending in a draw.

A fantastic achievement and well done to all those boys involved. NH

## Oxford Town and Gown

To raise money for Muscular Dystrophy and to sponsor the Christ Church Cathedral school runners (Miss Farmer Mrs Green, Madame Loyer and Mrs Merriman) please visit:

[SportsGiving - Sponsor Christ Church Cathedral School in Oxford Town and Gown 2023](#)

## Bikeability



As more pupils are cycling to and from school, we are delighted to say that nine of our boys have now passed their Bikeability Level 3. The boys were taken out in small groups of three and onto very busy, hence tricky, local roads (The Plain and Headington Hill for example!) to make sure they developed the necessary cycling skills to remain as safe as possible while cycling in Oxford.

Congratulations to Archie, Troy, Carl, Splendour, Thomas P, Isaac, Kaspar, Martin, and Felix.

We would like to take this opportunity to remind parents that we expect every child cycling to and from school to wear a helmet and a Hi Vis jacket. Thank you. SL



## Meet and Greet - Josh Herbert, CCCS Teaching Assistant

**What did you want to be when you grew up and what are you doing now?** When I was younger, I wanted to be a footballer and play for Liverpool. I am now currently a sports coach and teaching assistant here at Christ Church.

**If you could travel anywhere in the world tomorrow, where would you go and why?** I would probably say somewhere in South America, possibly Argentina. I'm very interested in the culture of South America and I hope to be able to visit soon.

**Who is your idol?** My idol growing up was Liverpool captain, Steven Gerrard. I even named one of my family cats, Stevie, after him.

**Favourite city or town and in which season?** Newquay, in the summer, around the time of Boardmasters Festival. I spent many summers there growing up, watching the skateboarding and surfing, whilst struggling to surf myself. I have some lovely memories of that place.

**One thing you would change in the world if you could?** The disparity between the top percentiles of wealth and the rest of the world population. With the help of the richest people in the world, we could make great progress in tackling world hunger and homelessness.

**Is there a family trait/habit that you have?** My family trait is losing/misplacing everyday important items. For example, my sister has dyspraxia, which is a valid reason for this trait, whereas I do not. It is a regular occurrence that I'll spend 20 minutes searching for my wallet before leaving the house.

**Favourite Book?** *American Dirt* by Jeanine Cummings.

**If you could start something new (hobby/interest or sport) and were not limited with time/age/money, what would it be?** I've been attempting to learn guitar and learn to speak Spanish recently and my progress has been rather slow for both. I would love to be able to do either, or both, of these and having more time would be very useful.

**Any advice on how you relax at the weekend?** For me, catching up on sleep is a must. I also have struck up a routine of taking my book to a coffee shop and enjoying a vanilla iced latte, alongside it.

Finding time to learn anything new is always admirable, and I can already picture you in a bustling cafe in Buenos Aires, strumming away on your Spanish guitar. I would, however add Tango lessons to your list as I hear that Tango is a great way to communicate, especially if you haven't nailed the language. You'll be in luck as Football is the most popular sport, gaining this reputation by having the ability to break down barriers between class and race. Having recently become a convert to this particular sport, it is hard not to like a game that diffuses the importance of hierarchy. If beach surfing isn't your forte, you could always concentrate on crowd surfing - less competition - although not for the faint hearted; you may need to make the vanilla latte a double to give you some extra mettle. Buena suerte in your exciting future ahead. Thank you, Mr Herbert!

Have a great weekend,  
Kathryn