



Christ Church Cathedral School

Friday 22nd September 2023

Dear Parents,

On Wednesday night this week, Mrs Fairhurst and I spoke to a number of parents about future schools. Ironically, given that I was talking about other schools, it caused me to start thinking about the nature of our school. At heart, we are a school that takes into consideration each pupil's particular needs and the whole future schools process is based upon this premise. In terms of future schools, as I said in my talk, there is no best school but there is a best school for your son and our role is to help you find that school. The process begins with a meeting between a boy's parents and me to discuss which schools would suit their son.

We are increasingly rare in being a stand-alone prep school. Over the course of the past few years, many prep schools have been absorbed by senior schools so will send the vast majority of their pupils to that school. In contrast, we enjoy happy relationships with a very large number of schools and therefore can direct boys towards the schools that best suit them, and where they will thrive, following their time at CCCS.

Much of this relationship is forged through the conversations that I have with the Heads and Registrars of senior schools about individual boys, something I am able to do, given that I know our pupils well. I am also very fortunate in being able to teach all the boys who come through Forms 5 and 6. Our relationships with senior schools are fundamental to us and those increasing numbers of you who attend Cathedral Assembly will know that we have speakers from many of our senior schools. Indeed this term we will be visited by the Headmaster of Harrow, the Headmaster of Bedford School, the Undermaster (Deputy Head) of Westminster, and the Sub Warden (Deputy Head) of St Edward's. Please take the opportunity to come and hear what they have to say and to meet them afterwards for coffee. Dates of when they are coming are in the calendar we emailed to you earlier this term.

This week I went up to London to attend a meeting of the Committee of the Choir Schools Association. We met in the Chapter House of St Paul's Cathedral, a beautiful panelled room, the walls of which are adorned with portraits of former Deans of the Cathedral including the great poet, John Donne, who wrote so movingly that "No man is an island entire unto itself", reminding us about our mutual dependence upon one another. It was a great pleasure and privilege to spend time with other Heads of choir schools and to reflect upon the many benefits that choristership brings, not only to those individuals who have the privilege of being choristers, but to the schools in which they are educated. The excellence which they attain is a very powerful force in a school, setting an example to all those around them – this is evident almost every day. In a world where excellence seems an increasingly rare commodity, it is wonderful to witness it here every week.

We celebrated a very moving Eucharist in the Cathedral this morning. Our Chaplain asked the boys to define a staple food. My favourite response was, "Food that can be fitted into a stapler." I will remember that next time I'm eating my new potato!

I have always found pupils of prep school age to be brutally honest. Many of the nuances of adult conversation have not yet been fully grasped, so one is frequently exposed to unmediated opinion. This is particularly the case with our Pre-Prep. I found myself sitting next to a couple of Pre-Prep boys for lunch earlier this week. No sooner than I had sat down when one of the boys turned to me and asked "How old are you?" I have been teaching for many years but sometimes one does not always benefit from experience – this was one of those occasions. "How old do you think I am?" I asked, naively. "71!" was the reply. Clearly something about my response was clear enough for one of the other boys to jump in. "No, don't worry, Mr Murray, you're not that old. You can't be older than 64!" Clearly a glutton for punishment, I forged on "Why do you think I'm 71?" The response is seared on my mind - "I can see lots of grey hair!" Ultimately, teaching is a profession which reminds one that one cannot pull the wool over anyone's eyes!

Mr Murray
Headmaster

Michaelmas 2023

Monday 25th September - Sunday 1st October 2023

MONDAY 25	
3.30 - 4.30	After School Chess Club (Form 2)
4.10 - 5.00	After School Football Club (Forms 3 - 8)
4.30 - 5.30	Ancient Greek Club Begins (Forms 7 & 8)
TUESDAY 26	
	Languages Day
2.30	Forms 3 & 4 Rugby v Ashfold (Away)
2.30	Form 4 Rugby v Ashfold (Home)
4.10 - 5.00	After School Rugby Club (Forms 3 - 8)
WEDNESDAY 27	
	Forms 3 & 4 Swimming
9.30 - 2.30	Form 2 Trip to Cogges Manor Farm
10.30	Oxford City Centre Neighbourhood Policing Team visiting Pre-Prep (WWH)
2.30	Forms 7 & 8 Rugby v Cokethorpe (Home)
2.30	Forms 5 & 6 Rugby v MCS (Home)
3.55 - 4.45	After School Chess Club (Forms 3 & 4)
4.10 - 5.00	After School Mandarin Club (Forms 7 & 8)
THURSDAY 28	
All Day	Form 8 Team building trip to Go Ape
4.10 - 5.00	After School Multi Skills (Sports) Club (Form 2)
FRIDAY 29	
	<i>Michael and All Angels</i>
	Intermediate House Cross Country (Forms 5 & 6)
8.30	Cathedral Assembly, including Nursery and Pre-Prep, Speaker The Headmaster
4.10 - 5.00	After School Rugby Club (Reception - Form 2)
	GRADES CC: OUT
SATURDAY 30	
SUNDAY 1	<i>The Seventeenth SUNDAY After Trinity</i>

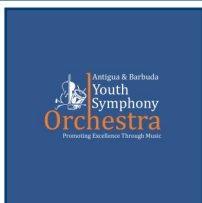
CCCS New Website Reviews

Following the successful launch of our new website, we are looking to enhance the position of our school on Google ranking.

We at CCCS would be very grateful if you would write a school review on Google here:

<https://g.page/r/Cb1lXrU0yqfGEB0/review>

Thank you. LC



ABYSO Concert, 16th October: Save the Date!



In school, we are preparing for an extremely exciting concert coming up next month. The Antigua and Barbuda Youth Symphony Orchestra (ABYSO) will be performing in the Cathedral alongside a choir drawn from boys in the Prep School. Established five years ago under the guidance of the Kanneh-Mason family, the ABYSO has opened up exciting new opportunities for orchestral playing in Antigua, and it's intended that it will become a hub for classical music across the Caribbean. Some parents may remember my work for this scheme last year, and I am very moved that CCCS musicians will be able to share a performance with the ABYSO during its very first trip abroad.

The concert will take place in the Cathedral at **12.00 noon on 16th October**, and will last just under an hour. Parents are very welcome to attend, and I hope that this will prove a fantastic event for all involved. The programme includes a jazz waltz by Shostakovich, a selection of songs popular in Antigua, and an innovative version of *Winter*, from Vivaldi's 'Four Seasons' arranged for orchestra and steel pan.

You can get a sneak preview of what's in store by watching this recording of the ABYSO performing an excerpt from *Winter*: <https://youtu.be/9WKup1tRXps>

We would be very grateful if you could let Mrs Kemp know if you wish to attend, so that we can plan seating. Please do join us if you can! SB



Music News

This has been a very busy week all round, as the CCCS Music department cranks itself up to full steam. Our senior instrumentalists attended a masterclass given by Sarah Baldock, Director of Music at Winchester College. Rather like a kind of open lesson, this gave boys the opportunity to present their playing and for everyone to listen to the feedback. Miss Baldock worked on issues of stagecraft, expression and technique, and even managed to get everybody marching around the Walton Hall to triplet and semiquaver rhythms! It was excellent to hear tips for scholarship auditions and a little about musical life at Winchester too.

Mrs Green kindly gave a saxophone demonstration to Form 3, demystifying this fascinating instrument and showing off its many different timbres (as well as explaining why it's part of the woodwind family). Last but by no means least, it has been wonderful to hear the Worcester Choristers rehearsing this week with their new Director, Caius Lee. Mr Lee joins Worcester fresh from his work on the National Schools Singing Programme in Leeds, having previously been an organ scholar at Cambridge. He is full of exciting plans for the Worcester Choir, so it's excellent to see this superb team back at work. Bravo everyone! SB



Reading Museum and Silchester - Form 7

Yesterday, Form 7, Mr Farmer and Mr Richards, ably driven by Mirko, visited Reading Museum, in particular the Silchester Gallery. Here are displayed many of the artefacts found in the Roman town of Silchester – Calleva Atrebatum as it was known to Roman Britons - a once flourishing Roman town, that after the end of Roman rule was never built over and now sits in happy obscurity in the wooded Hampshire countryside.



This was the third time we have visited the gallery, and we were fortunate to have the same member of the museum staff, Guja Bandini, who energetically explained the museum's detailed model of the town; she then let us handle artefacts, including high quality Samian Ware, pieces of mortar, a strigil, and one of the million oyster shells found in the town, whose emptied shells were used to make lime mortar. We had exclusive use of the gallery and could take a leisurely look at the artefacts such as Silchester horse and the eagle which inspired Rosemary Sutcliffe's *The Eagle of the Ninth*, as well as play Roman board games and dress up in tunics and togas.

Then to Silchester, where we walked the northern half of the one-and-a-half-mile circuit of walls, built in the late 3rd Century, and the most substantial Roman walls in Britain – which makes all the more striking the hundred-acre emptiness of the interior, where sheep safely graze, unaware of the Roman business below the pleasant green. Outside the walls is the elliptical amphitheatre, where once 7000-odd watched animal hunts and gladiatorial fights - we mimed a few farcical and thankfully bloodless fights in the gentle rain. NR



'Making the Most of Oxford' Clubs

'Making the Most of Oxford' Tuesday Club made a trip to the glasshouses at the Botanic Gardens and were impressed by the water lilies and intrigued by the carnivorous plants. KS AEW

'Making the Most of Oxford' Thursday Club visited 'Alphabets Alive!' at the Weston Library and saw some beautiful and unusual lettering formed from a whole variety of objects, including animals and the human body. KS AEW



Form 1 News

Another week, another learning adventure for our Form 1 boys. In our Computing lesson we spent some time talking about coding and programming robots with stepped instructions and directions. The boys had lots of fun designing routes and sequences of movements for Botley the Robot. The boys worked in pairs and were able to clearly demonstrate their teamwork and technical skills. Next week in Computing, we will be learning how to use creative software to make our own musical compositions, using different sequences of instruments and voices. We very much look forward to hearing the results! TR

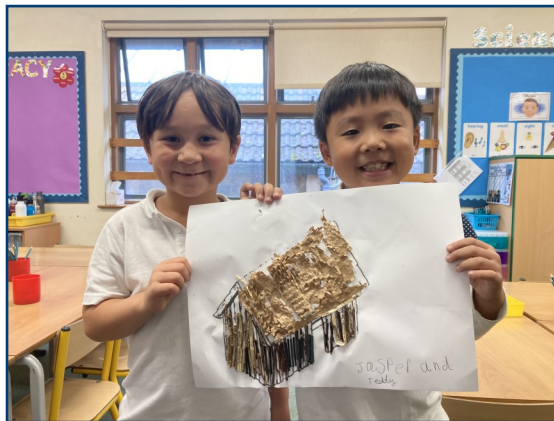


Form 2 News

Form 2 have been learning about Anglo-Saxon times and how they lived.

We looked at the materials used to build houses then, comparing the differences in how houses look now. The boys then went on to design their own Anglo-Saxon houses, using materials such as straw and sticks from outside.

Don't they look fabulous?! MHW



Lost Property



Jireh Olisa-Ashar, Form 5, has lost his new school blazer.

Jireh's name is marked on the stitched-in label on the inside front of the blazer. LK



D.T. Corner

Sunken City, by

George Orlov

and

Gordon Somovidis

Meet and Greet: Molly Hopkinson-Woolley - Form 2 Teacher

What did you want to be when you grew up and what are you doing now? I always wanted to be a teacher, an author or an actress growing up. As a teacher, I think I do a bit of each of them every day!

If you could travel anywhere in the world tomorrow, where would you go and why? I would go to Japan because it's been on my 'bucket list' for over ten years.

Who is your idol? I wouldn't say I have a singular idol, but there are many people I look up to in my life, including the staff at Christ Church.

Favourite city or town and in which season? Oxford in winter because I love the Christmas lights.

One thing you would change in the world if you could? Give every single child an education.

Is there a family trait/habit that you have? We say "Goodnight" every time we say goodbye, it started out as a joke and it stuck!

Favourite Book? *'What Katy Did'* trilogy by Susan Coolidge.

If you could start something new (hobby/interest or sport) and were not limited with time/age/money, what would it be? Make/alter my own clothes.

Any advice on to relax at the weekend? A long walk and a Sunday Roast.

The Christmas lights will be here before we know it! We had a great light show at school last year at the end of Michaelmas Term, so that will be something to look forward to again and get involved in. Making your own clothes is such a talent, and altering them must be great for the seasonal weight gain, allowing yourself a few more inches in the seam, and then tailoring again once the over-indulging has ceased. Teaching is such an admirable profession and it's good to know that wanting to be a teacher was a dream to pursue. We have been blessed with inspirational teachers at Christ Church who have, and are, paving the way for future generations. I am keen to know if you have a Sunday Roast outfit, as Sunday Roast generally means there is a little bit of over indulging, a second serving etc. I make sure the clothing is loose and ready for lounging post-pudding. Welcome Molly, enjoy your weekend.

Kathryn



CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL SCHOOL
Boys' Prep School with Co-ed Nursery



OPEN MORNING
Saturday 14th October 9.30 am – 12.30 pm

To register, email: registrar@cccs.org.uk www.cccs.org.uk 01865 242561