



Christ Church Cathedral School

Friday 8th December 2023

Dear Parents,

I was speaking to an English Tutor at one of the Oxford Colleges recently who said that applicants for English Literature had declined over the past few years. Even more strikingly though, she said that over the past ten years, the number of boys applying to read English had collapsed and that almost all applicants for the subject were now girls. Being able to read and appreciate literature has always been something of the profoundest importance for the mind and the soul and, at CCCS, we will continue to ensure that our boys are nourished with the fruits of literature. This is particularly important in England where literature has been the dominant artistic force since mediaeval times. In 1904 Oscar Schmitz, a German commentator, called England the "Land ohne musik" i.e. the country without music, very different indeed from his native Germany which is so rightly feted for its composers. Instead, England was a land of books and words. For a generation of boys to turn its face against such wealth seems to me to be tragic.

At CCCS, of course, nothing could be further from the truth. Boys are reading with great enthusiasm and indeed, suggestions for good Christmas reads, made by the boys, are now festooned over the walls of the Walton Centre. Ms Skipwith has organised the challenge and I hope that you will all support her and the School in encouraging reading over the holidays when the dark and cold nights will provide time to settle down by the fire or a radiator and travel into the world of a book.

My lunchtimes this week have been particularly intense. I began discussing the virtues of various political systems with a group of boys, and this seems to have gone on throughout the week. We have discussed all manner of political systems and their merits and weaknesses, and the interest with which this process has been engaged in has been very exciting. It is thrilling to be working in an environment where boys genuinely care about such matters – after all they are the future. Today it was about the Oxford Green Belt and the cost of local housing. Just wait until this lot can become MPs!

On Wednesday morning, I went to see our Nursery and Reception Nativity Play. It was tremendous – the boys and girls fully entering into the world of the stable. The focus was intense and the songs that were sung as an accompaniment to the miraculous events were very touching. I am always struck by the way in which young children learn the art of commanding attention on a stage if properly encouraged and nurtured, and it was clearly the case in this instance.

Form 8 performed their French Play this morning after having rehearsed it for a total of ten hours. The Play was based on Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*, that favourite of West End musicals. The difference was that this one was in French. Our pupils spoke so fluently and with such convincing accents. I was swept up into the world of 19th Century France and even found myself wishing I could taste the brilliantly described cassoulet! Quel triomphe!

Both Worcester and Pembroke Choirs have had very successful terms, as I mentioned recently, and we will be delighted to hear them sing at the Carol Service next Saturday morning. In the meantime, the Cathedral Choir, far from winding down, enters its most busy phase. On Monday, the Choristers sang in St Mary's Church, Great Milton, to a large crowd who were the guests of famous chef Raymond Blanc, who had invited them to his world-famous restaurant, Le Manoir. Between courses, the whole party decamped to the candlelit church and listened to a concert of carols sung by the Choir, and to readings partly read by M Blanc himself, full of Gallic passion and warm Christmas spirit. It was, according to Mr Robson, an intoxicating experience despite the fact that at times the lighting was so atmospheric that the Choir had to sing in near darkness. Fortunately they knew the music well enough to handle such a yuletide emergency. The Choir will be singing at a number of services over the Christmas period, including, at 11.00 am on Christmas Day. Do try to attend one of the services if you are around in Oxford. Details can be found here: <https://www.chch.ox.ac.uk/cathedral/worship-music/services?page=1>

This letter will have been written before our Christmas Light Show. I will have to report on this in my next letter. Nonetheless, it has been a day of intense preparation. Christmas trees are being covered in wonderful handmade decorations and I suspect that the whole show will be a delight. "I'm very excited," said a boy at lunch. "It's the Light Show this afternoon. Are you excited?" I had to confess I was.

Mr Murray
Headmaster

Michaelmas 2023
Monday 11th - Sunday 17th December

MONDAY 11	
3.30 - 4.30	After School Chess Club (Form 2)
4.10 - 5.00	Ancient Greek Club (Forms 7 & 8)
4.10 - 5.00	Forms 3 - 5 Football Skills Club (WWH)
7.00	CC: Concert (Messiah) with Oxford Philharmonic
TUESDAY 12	
10.00	Pre-Prep Nativity Play (WWH) Parking on the Broad Walk
2.00	Pre-Prep Nativity Play (WWH) Parking on the Broad Walk
WEDNESDAY 13	
10.45 - 12.45	Forms 3 & 4 Swimming
4.10 - 5.00	After School Chess Club (Forms 3 & 4)
5.40	After School Mandarin Club (Forms 7 & 8)
8.00	CC: Music at Oxford Christmas Concert
THURSDAY 14	
	Christmas Jumper Day
	Christmas Lunch
	Nursery and Reception Christmas Adventure
7.00 - 8.00	LAMDA Recital (WWH) Refreshments Served at 6.30 pm
FRIDAY 15	
8.30	Cathedral Assembly, speaker The Chaplain
3.30	Final Assembly
4.10 - 5.00	Multi Sports Club (Rec - Form 2)
8.00	CC: Music at Oxford Christmas Concert
	CC: IN
SATURDAY 16	
10.30	Carol Service (Parking on the Broad Walk)
	End of Term (Return 10.01.2024)
	CC: Home after Carol Service
SUNDAY 17	<i>The Third Sunday in Advent</i>

LAMDA

The LAMDA Recital will be on
Thursday 14th December.

The Recital will run from 7.00 pm to 8.00 pm
in the Walton Hall and there will be
refreshments served from 6.30 pm. JF

LAMDA

Lost Property



Please may I remind you to ask your children to take a look in the large Lost Property Box outside the Walton Hall for any belongings they may be missing.

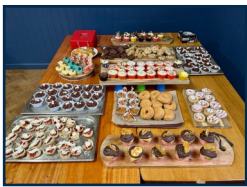
We have a selection of small items in the School Office, namely, a set of three keys, two pairs of glasses, a Fitbit watch, a set of Oboe reeds, some headphones and a flexible ruler.

Thank you. LK

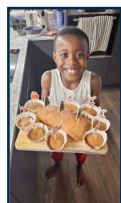
Boarding House News



On Monday, the Cathedral Choir travelled to St Mary's Church (Le Manoir, Great Milton) to perform a Carol Concert. The event was hosted by Raymond Blanc who gave Christmas readings along with some colourful anecdotes about his establishment, Le Manoir, in 1983. The boys performed a range of traditional Christmas music in the flickering candlelight of this majestic 12th Century Norman Church. JR





The boys are currently engaged in a project to raise funds for a PS5 for the Boarding House and the first of their initiatives took place in school on Monday. The boys spent the weekend baking a huge array of cakes, scones, brownies and biscuits to sell at morning break. Such was the quantity of items produced, they effectively fed the whole of the Prep school, raising £140.00 towards their PS5. It was a hugely successful effort! There will be more events coming up very soon! JR



On Wednesday night, as the full Cathedral Choristers attended their traditional Christmas party at Christ Church, the probationers and flexi-boarders left in school had a celebration of their own. Boys shared a lavish Chinese feast - augmented by sushi kindly made by Edward's family - before settling down to watch Kung Fu Panda. A very enjoyable evening all round, with the benefit of recent 'Matron's Manners' sessions on display! SB




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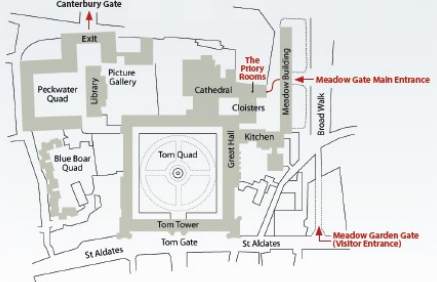
You're never too young - or old - to wonder

At a Wonderlings session you will find friendly faces and warm hearts ready to greet, support and encourage you and your little ones through the joys and challenges of the pre-school years.

What to expect:



-  Gathering time with free play – settle your feathers and make yourself at home.
-  Circle time with Bible-themed activities – singing, dancing and playing instruments.
-  Story time with thought for the day – board books and journalling
-  Refreshment time with a cuppa – food for body, mind and soul to send you on your way.

Come to Christ Church through Meadow Gate and follow the curved path.
 The door into the Priory Rooms is first on the right through the arch.



Wonderlings is a new initiative to encourage young families to engage with Christ Church Cathedral and its community, enabling them to benefit from all it has to offer as a distinctive and sacred place. The road of church-based, child-centred parent and toddler sessions and services is well-trodden; Wonderlings takes a different approach with guided content to support and refresh the adults as well as nurture the children.

We took our inspiration from one of our stained glass windows in the Latin Chapel, depicting the infant Jesus in the arms of Mary. In his left hand he cradles an orb containing images of a church, a tree and a river thought to have resonances with Frideswide and the church at Binsey. With a little leap of the imagination, we saw a snow-globe. Who hasn't shaken a snow-globe and wondered as its world transforms through swirls of colour, shape and movement? Time twirls, the mind a bubble of contentment; spirits spiral with joy. So it is when we engage in creativity. The experience changes us, and the tingle lives on even after the dance has ended. We are all born with the capacity to wonder, but as we grow older it so often gets lost, buried under heaps of busy-ness, responsibility and emotional baggage. We hope that a Wonderlings session will awaken a sense of curiosity and awe in everyone, whatever their age and stage.


Linguascope


We would like to bring to your attention that we have recently renewed our subscription to the award-winning platform, Linguascope: <https://www.linguascope.com>, a website offering interactive resources in French, Spanish, German, Italian, Portuguese, Mandarin Chinese, Arabic, Russian, Polish, Welsh, Scottish Gaelic, Maori, and English.

To login to the platform, boys need **username: cccschool** and **password: Monet24**. The interactive activities are also tablet-friendly, with iPad and Android apps that pupils can install on their mobile devices: ([https:// www.linguascope.com/apps](https://www.linguascope.com/apps))

We encourage all boys to log in to Linguascope as often as they can over the Christmas holiday.

Practising little and often is key to rapid progress. SL and AE-W

Sports News

A Team: We headed for New College on a wet and blustery afternoon, ready and prepared, after a few weeks of training, for our first Football fixture of the season. Knowing that New College were coming to the end of their season, meant that we were in for a tough match. The first half was hard-fought with CCCS showing great organisation and determination to get a foothold in the game. Périclès, Ted and Patrick were proving a solid defensive unit, not allowing the hosts any clear chances. Further forward Ntiamoah, Diar and Raffie were chasing down everything and not allowing New College one second on the ball. Half time came without any goals, but the message was to keep doing more of the same and to move the ball slightly quicker. Ten minutes into the second half and CCCS were ahead. Constantin chased down a goal kick, pressurising the defender into a mistake, and he finished into the bottom corner for 1-0. At that point, CCCS really stepped up the pressure and wave after wave of attacks led to goal number 2 - Jaden slotting home after some nice footwork on the edge of the box. With a couple of minutes remaining Ntiamoah made the game safe with a low shot, beating the keeper at his near post. 3-0 to CCCS! The most pleasing aspect of the afternoon was to see the boys really trying to implement what we have been doing in training, on the pitch, which led to a fantastic victory in our first match. A great all-round team effort. **Man of the Match** - Périclès for showing calmness on the ball and playing out from the back with ease and confidence.

B Team: This mighty CCCS squad came up against a well-prepared New College outfit on Tuesday. The team went into the match fiery, knowing they had to make up for their lack of subs, with 40 minutes of pure effort. With a screamer from Barnaby within the first five minutes the boys' confidence heightened, eager to score more. After a fleeting solo run from Andy, it was 2-0 up within ten minutes, and then after 15 minutes, 3-0, courtesy of Andy once again. The boys went into the second half with a new mind-set: to settle the ball down and play 'Beautiful Football'. That they did. After a flurry of ten or more passes around the field, Harry placed a perfect shot into the bottom corner, evidence of his hard work in training. Now resembling prime Barcelona, CCCS was awarded a penalty which led to a well-placed rebound by Hugo. I cannot praise the effort and performance of these boys enough. They are truly a force to be reckoned with. **Man of the Match** - Andy for two goals and a brilliant all round performance.

Development Team 1: Our boys had a tough game against a well-drilled and talented New College team on Wednesday. The first half of the game was slow-paced with CCCS playing on the defensive for majority of the half. Although brave efforts by Thomas and Daniel, in defence, as well as some classy keeping by Edwin, meant the boys managed to hold New College to just 1-0 before the end of the first half. After some wise words of encouragement from the coach and boots being re-tied it was time for the second half. Striking back quickly in the first few minutes with a magnificent rebound goal from Isaac, we were back in it. However, after a few heavy minutes of defending, New College snuck another goal in through our tight defensive line. Unfortunately, New College managed to score another two goals leaving the final score 4-1. The boys should be incredibly proud of how they played and the effort and enthusiasm they showed against a very strong New College team. **Man of the Match** - Isaac.

Development Team 2: In one of our final fixtures of this year, CCCS Development Team 2 faced New College. For their debut Football game. Our boys exhibited commendable progress and a keen learning attitude. The defensive line put up a solid fight, but New College managed to capitalize on opportunities. Though the scoreboard didn't swing in our favour, the match served as a valuable learning experience for all of the boys involved. **Man of the Match** - Sergey for his non-stop effort throughout the match. DP





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Form 8 by the old doors of Balliol



doors, charred by the burnings; and we also visited the chapel, designed by William Butterfield, architect of Keble. NR

Year 8: History on Location

In this term's rapid journey through the History of Oxford, Form 8 has reached the Oxford Martyrs; and yesterday we visited Broad Street where on October 16th 1555 Bishops Latimer and Ridley were burned at the stake, watched by former Thomas Cranmer – who was himself similarly martyred on March 21st of the following year. These were three of the most famous of the 280-plus Protestants burned during Mary Tudor's merciless assertion of Catholicism. We were allowed into Balliol to see the old

Les Misérables

Encore! Form 8 boys were truly amazing this week. They embraced a fully immersive experience and a real challenge - putting on a play in French in less than 4 days! And not just any play, but a key scene from *Les Misérables* (Victor Hugo). Needless to say, the music and singing was also excellent.

Under the direction of our Drama Coach, Mr Murchie, and the help of Mme Loyer and Mme Williams, the boys presented their version of 'Les Mis' to the Prep school on today. We were so proud of their French accents and linguistic fluency, and the audience wanted to see more! Bravo, et merci les garçons! SL and A E-W

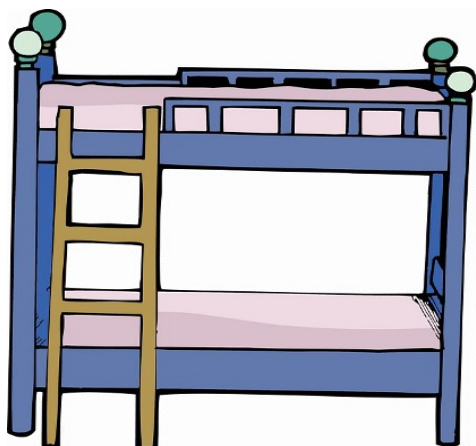


Flexi-Boarding

We offer flexi-boarding for £63.00 per night.

If any of our parents would like to use this facility, please contact Mrs Kemp:

registrar@cccs.org.uk.



D.T. Corner



The Dean's Christmas Party for our Choristers



Nursery Christmas Celebration

