



# Christ Church Cathedral School

Friday 9th February 2024

Dear Parents,

It's been a spectacular day today.

We began the day in the Cathedral when the Headmaster of Kingham Hill School came to visit us. Mr Last spoke with real conviction and energy. He started by asking the pupils if any of them felt weary, given that it was the day before half term. Oddly, considering all the energy which was to be expended later in the day, almost all of them put up their hands. It was then that Mr Last reminded us of the passage from Isaiah which he had chosen for the reading:

Even youths grow tired and weary,  
and young men stumble and fall;  
<sup>31</sup> but those who hope in the LORD  
will renew their strength.  
They will soar on wings like eagles;  
they will run and not grow weary,  
they will walk and not be faint.

Mr Last told us that he had taken part in a half marathon, which had taken him over two and a half hours to complete – by the end, he too had been weary. But those who hope in the Lord, he reminded us, would “soar on wings like eagles.” What an inspiring message to leave us at the beginning of half term.

We moved later in the morning to the William Walton Hall where Mr Richards had set up an inter-house general knowledge quiz. It is remarkable what our pupils know. We had questions ranging from old chestnuts like capital cities of the world, to time signatures, from historical events to current affairs. Here is one that was answered in a trice – what comes next in the following sequence?

**A 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 J Q**

Do let me know if you can work it out! At times, so ferocious was the desperation to answer the questions, that pupils were almost exploding with suppressed excitement. After an hour and a half of general knowledge downloading, Wolsey and Sayers were first equal. Mr Richards resisted the temptation to ask some decider questions and called it a tie!

After lunch, we returned to the same hall, for our annual poetry recitation. The judge was the real life writer James Carter, who is a much published and well-known children's poet. Before the event began, Mr Carter advised the reciters to speak slowly and not to be dominated by their nerves. With a mixture of chant and repetition and music played upon an eccentric mouth organ, the Poet conveyed a sense of calm which ensured that the performers, to a boy, expressed themselves beautifully. For the first time, we had boys from Pre-Prep taking part and it was lovely to see the tiny figures dominate the stage with such power and delight. We were all captivated. Learning poetry by heart is such a powerful process. I still believe that people are changed by internalising poetry – by making it one's own. And one will never forget poetry learned while young.

Mr Carter, who claimed to have visited 1,501 schools in his career, said that he rarely came across a school which exuded such a sense of enthusiasm and delight, both amongst the pupils and the teachers. I have to say that I felt as if I were 'soaring on wings' when I heard that.

Our pupils are ever thoughtful. My time of arrival at Brewer Street in the morning is supposed to be 7.45. A few days ago I rounded the corner with my watch saying 7.47. I was clearly looking a bit flustered because one of the boys waiting looked at me and said: “It's OK Sir. You have arrived three minutes early according to Oxford Time.” How lucky we are that Christ Church still keeps the old time, and even luckier that our pupils sometimes remember that! I suppose it could work to their advantage sometimes...

Have a lovely half term and Happy New Year to those who will be celebrating it tomorrow.

Mr Murray  
Headmaster

**Hilary 2024**  
**Monday 19th - Sunday 25th February**

MONDAY 19	
8.25	Second Half Begins CC: Rehearsals Resume
3.30 - 4.30	After School Chess Club (Form 2)
4.10 - 5.00	After School Football Skills Club (Forms 3 - 5) (WWH)
4.10 - 5.00	After School Ancient Greek Club (Forms 7 & 8)
TUESDAY 20	
	CC: Services Resume
4.10 - 5.00	After School Touch Rugby Club (Forms 3 - 8)
1.40 - 2.15	Forms 3 - 8 French Play
WEDNESDAY 21	
	Forms 3 & 4 Swimming
2.30	Forms 5 & 6 Football v The Dragon (Home)
2.30	Forms 7 & 8 Football v The Dragon (Away)
3.55 - 4.45	After School Chess Club (Forms 3 & 4)
4.10 - 5.00	After School Mandarin Club (Forms 7 & 8)
THURSDAY 22	
A.M.	Form 8 HPV (Main Session)
9.15 - 12.25	Forms 5 - 8 Play Rehearsal
4.10 - 5.00	After School Football Club (Reception - Form 2)
FRIDAY 23	
8.30	Cathedral Assembly, speaker The Revd Anthony Buckley, Chaplain, Hertford College, Oxford
10.25 - 12.45	House French Spelling Bee
4.10 - 5.00	After School Multi Sports Club (Reception - Form 2)
SATURDAY 24	
SUNDAY 25	<i>The Second Sunday of Lent</i> <i>University Seventh Week</i>

**Upcoming Concerts**

Forms 3 and 4 Concert (2.30 pm on Tuesday 27th February)

Pre-Prep Concert (2.30 pm on Thursday 29th February)

Any boy in these classes who plays an instrument is invited to play a piece, and there will be plenty of singing that involves everyone too. The emphasis is on providing a relaxed and enjoyable occasion for pupils to build their confidence, and both events will be held in the Walton Hall.

Please do join us if you can! SB

## French News

We are delighted to be launching our 2024 French Matching & Spelling Bee:

Reception - Colours Matching Bee on Thursday 22nd February

Forms 1 & 2 - Colours, Numbers and Animals Matching Bee on Friday 23rd February

Boys in Forms 3 - 8 will compete for their Houses on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> February:

Lesson 3 - **Forms 3 & 4**, 35 words. Lesson 4 - **Forms 5 & 6**, 65 words. Lesson 5 - **Forms 7 & 8**, 95 words

## Nursery News

Nursery children, accompanied by many of their parents, were treated to a master class of dumpling making, courtesy of Yasmin's nanny and mum. The children learnt the sequence of how to make the dumplings, pressing, rolling, turning, rolling and then filling the dumplings, ready for cooking. What a fabulous introduction to Chinese New Year celebrations in Nursery. HB



## Form 4 News

On 6th February 2024 we went to Oxford Castle, built by the Normans. First, we had to draw stages of Empress Matilda's escape from the castle. Her servants dressed in white because it was snowing so it was the best camouflage. Her servants distracted the guards while Matilda walked backwards to look like she was walking towards the castle. Then she got some skates made out of horse bones! She skated for 9 miles! After a long time, they arrived in Abingdon. Then we dressed up to represent the stages of the escape. Raphael

As the clock struck 11 o'clock, we had a delicious lunch. After that, we went up a famous high hill and up there, there were creepy, dark stairs that led you to healthy water. In the afternoon we went on a tour - what amazing sights there were, but sadly most of them were quite sad, such as gross prisons, people locked in pillories and their enemies throwing rats at their faces. As our enjoyable trip came to an end, we started to leave. As I got to school, I kept on thinking of me imprisoned and what would happen... Richard





## Form 2 News

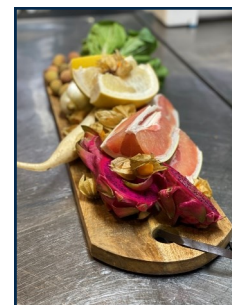
This week in Form 2, we enjoyed a Chinese New Year Celebration. Our classroom was decorated head to toe in lanterns, banners, window pictures and more. We began the day by learning a Dragon Dance. These dances are very popular in Asia around this time of year and are believed to chase away evil spirits and set the tone at happy occasions. We then performed the Dragon Dance, whilst wearing Dragon masks that we designed, in front of the whole of Pre-Prep at Assembly.

After Assembly, Form 1 joined us to create some collaged lanterns. The lanterns can symbolize the people letting go of their past selves and getting new ones, which they will let go of the following year. The Lanterns are also said to be lucky charms that frighten away the Nian monster, which, according to legend, is a fierce beast with sharp teeth and horns that would eat both animals and people. We ended up with every lantern looking wonderfully unique and colourful.

For lunch, our wonderful Chef made us a delicious Chinese inspired lunch. We had sweet and sour chicken, egg fried rice, spring rolls, pork with noodles and prawn crackers. We finished everything off with Fortune Cookies and Lycée Cake. Yum!

In the afternoon, we wrote our own Lunar cards to wish our friends and family a Happy New Year. We chose whether to write our own message, or a traditional message to say "Happy New Year"; "xin nian kuai le" (Mandarin) or "san nin fai lok" (Cantonese).

We ended our day with some Chinese snacks. We had oranges (their golden colour represents wealth), prawn crackers (a common snack food in South East Asian cuisine), Fortune Cookies, and biscuits with animals of the Chinese Zodiac printed onto them. We also played some games, as children stay up late on Chinese New Years Eve to do the same. Some of the games included playing dominoes, which were invented by the Chinese back in the 12<sup>th</sup> Century. What a busy and fun-filled day! MH-W



## Reception News

Children in Reception have been busy celebrating Chinese New Year. We have enjoyed learning about the story of The Great Race and we made dragons to mark this year.

We have been very creative, using the colour red, as it brings good luck. We were set a tricky challenge of writing our names in Chinese.

We watched our friends in Form 2 perform a fantastic Dragon Dance and we ate a delicious Chinese lunch, complete with Fortune Cookies. KS



## Form 1 News

It has been an extremely fun final week of half-term in Pre-Prep, with lots of enrichment activities to enhance the children's learning and to allow them to express themselves creatively. Our Form 1 boys were absolutely delighted to receive an invitation to join their Form 2 friends' Chinese New Year Celebrations. We were treated to a traditional Dragon Dance, a lantern making workshop, and a wonderful Chinese meal, expertly assembled by Mr Kilby and his incredible team in the kitchen.

On Wednesday, it was Form 1's Pirates' Theme Day and everyone threw themselves into it, with tremendous effort put into costumes, not least by Mrs Balu (aka Mad Master Silver) who spent time weaving her hair into authentic piratic dreadlocks, especially for the day. In Art, the boys made pirate finger puppets, pirate telescopes, pirate portraits, and even designed their own pots of pirate stew.

We learnt all about the most famous English pirate from history, Black Beard, and the Form 1 crew regaled us with lots of facts about his life sailing the seven seas. Whilst not quite as famous as Black Beard, Christ Church's very own 'Captain Robeard' made an appearance and thanked the boys profusely for their letters in a bottle, which reached him on his desert island and gave him a plan to escape. In the afternoon, the boys were enlisted in Captain Robeard's 'Pirate Bootcamp' and I am pleased to say that they all passed with flying colours! The day came to a close with a raucous rendition of our class sea shanty, delivered wholeheartedly to the pounding beat of a pirate drum. Mr Murray, who had come to watch, was frightened to the point that he would rather walk the plank than spend any more time with such a terrifying crew. Please do not worry Mr Murray, they are very nice really - and have promised to save you some of their pirate stew! TR



## Forms 3 and 4 News



Forms 3 and 4 were visited by Japanese students from Hertford College on Thursday. The students had planned a fun range of activities for our boys, including flash cards to teach the Japanese language, origami and a crazy mixture of rock-paper-scissors and the Conga Dance. All the boys (and their teachers!) had a marvellous time.

Thank you very much to the Hertford College students and we hope you come again. AF

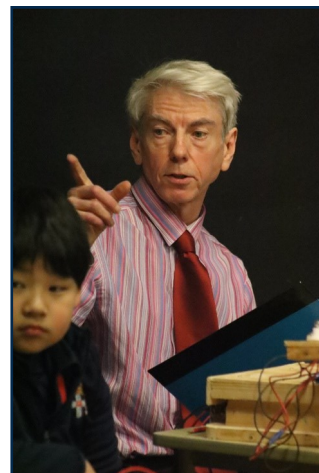
## D.T. Corner





## CCCS House Quiz

For the first time in its eight-year history, there was a tie. Sayers and Wolsey shared the laurels.



## CCCS Poetry Recital

