

THE VIEW

Headmaster's Letter

13th December 2019

Dear Parents,

Writing any letter post-Election Day was going to be interesting. The room is split by the outcome and it's not my place to pass comment on the result. However, I sincerely wish that when we all return in 2020, we as a school, as a community, can focus on all the good we do each day for the benefit of your children without the distraction of who is leading our Country or when we're going to get Brexit actually 'done,' whatever that means.

We hosted our own Mock Election on Monday afternoon in assembly. It was an opportunity for our pupils to learn about the mechanics of an election from ballot papers to how an MP could become the PM. I was delighted that our four 'candidates' gave such interesting and engaging speeches at our hustings, and then all the pupils returned to their classrooms (the polling station) to register their vote. The result was close with the Conservatives edging it from Liberal Democrats by only 13 votes.

In our final assembly we said our last goodbyes to the gap students. We are always grateful to these young adults, who travel thousands of miles, to work in a foreign country. It's some challenge and some experience. We are most grateful to Issy Herring, Claudia McKenzie, Justin Schoon and Liam Yates for all they have given our community over the last year. We wish them safe journeys home to Australia and South Africa respectively and wish them luck in their future education and careers.

This time last year I had just announced the beginnings of Shaping My World (SMW) to the pupils so they knew what was coming. We launched the new culture based on the four 'US's at the end of the Trinity Term with six days of excitement, challenge and education. We have now reached the end of the first term where we have had a weekly lesson of SMW as part of the curriculum. The four US are based on encouraging and teaching the pupils the value of being **generous**, **adventurous**, **ingenious** and **curious**. Having seen the process in action over the last three months, I can firmly state that these behaviours and characteristics are now very much part of our culture.

Please encourage your children to pick up on these behaviours at home too. I fundamentally believe that the SMW attributes will help them be and become successful pupils at school and successful young adults in the workplace in due course. Over Christmas is an obvious time to embrace such tasks. Thank you letters will need to be written, tables will need to be laid, dishwashers emptied, beds changed and made, towels pickled up off the floor, rubbish placed in the appropriate bin and rooms left suitably tidy; these are all simple yet part of a positive process. Developing a greater awareness of others, how to cross a road safely and making sure they have firmly stored in their heads one key mobile number are further components of a successful life too.

The school is now soulless as the children have all gone. May I congratulate them all on their successes, however great or small during the last three months. Each and every one has done something to be proud of and their reports show this; there is always more to do and give, and it's our job as staff to give your children the wings to fly. Nonetheless, once the New Year comes, please encourage your children to reflect on the past term and set themselves one or two targets for 2020. Your children are a joy to work alongside bringing delight and smiles in classrooms and corridors throughout the College.

As you might have realised we have started a two-year affiliation with Chestnut Tree House. This means this excellent organisation will be the main focus of our fundraising at various charity events. We collected 202 donation bags, raising £6k for the hospice. We were blessed with fine weather for the recent Reindeer Run. There were some very keen runners who whipped round like greyhounds, but for those who took it more leisurely, the volunteers managed to get them with snowballs, and the snow machine. The final count came in at an impressive £1800. Next term our pupils will be asked to be their own entrepreneurs in order to raise money, and lots of preparation for a big fashion show is planned, where the theme will be 'Environment and Conservation', in the Trinity Term.

I have huge admiration for our hard-working, hugely supportive and dedicated academic and support staff likewise. As a group and individuals, they do a magnificent job for your children. As a team we look to get better and better all the time and the Surface Pro project is case in point; some of these lessons this term have been ground-breaking. I thank them for their energy and professionalism. SMW would not be possible without their engagement likewise. It is building on the Prep School vision of helping our children learn how to prepare themselves for anything rather than simply us preparing them for one thing only. That's all about independent children and that's what an Ardingly Prep School education is endeavouring to deliver.

I am delighted to announce that we have appointed Cathy Gross as a full-time member of staff, replacing Catherine Gardner who, as you know, is not returning after maternity leave. Kirsty Morley-Smith will be leaving for her maternity leave at some stage next term. We are fortunate to have appointed Justin Pugsley as Kirsty's replacement and he will be joining us from the start of next term. This will enable extra cover as well as a full handover prior to Kirsty's departure.

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We also have a number of exciting events in 2020. We have talks by Peter Rhys-Evans, Martha Clokie and Helena Merriman of Tunnel 29 fame. On March 7th, the comedy troupe, *The Noise Next Door*, will deliver an evening of hilarity via clever improvisation. More details for all these will follow next term.

Have a marvellous family Christmas wherever you are; many thanks to those of you who gave both me and the staff a whole medley of presents at the end of term. There was one card that made me smile most of all and this was from a girl in Year 4 which stated, *'thank you for being a funny headmaster.'* I trust she was referring to my sense of humour.

Merry Christmas



Yours sincerely,

Harry Hastings, BA (Hons), MEd (Oxon)

We do our best to reward our children on a weekly basis; please come to Celebration Assembly on a Friday morning and you'll see what I mean. There are regularly over 100 different children receiving different awards each week. I read out the poem below to the school, at our final assembly today. The point is obvious: whilst physical prizes are awarded, individuals must never feel they are not valued or rewarded or unseen for their daily successes, achievements and challenges, however small. As the adults, we need to be there to encourage our children to bounce back when our children are disappointed. They need our guidance to lift them when they are down and to ground them in their successes. Finding that balance can be tough and testing.

WE SEE YOU

(with apologies to Colleen Wilson)

It's a time of badges, certificates, medals, trophies, recognition, awards, prizes and 'seeing' of high achievement.

We love seeing the pupils that shine at this time of year - a big high heartfelt round of applause to you.

You so deserve it for the effort you have put in.

Yet this message is for the pupils that didn't get called up for any of the above... **WE SEE YOU!**

To the child that conquered their fear of heights, or sleeping in the dark, **WE SEE YOU!**

To the child that resolved more conflict than they started this term, **WE SEE YOU!**

To the child that learnt to say the impossible; "I'm sorry", **WE SEE YOU!**

To the child for whom school is a huge struggle, **WE SEE YOU!**

you get up everyday and put on your uniform and you go, **WE SEE YOU!**

To the child that battled all term with maths,

or reading, or concentration, or speaking out in class,

or learning their words, but persevered anyway, **WE SEE YOU!**

To the child that found the kindness to reach out to another person **WE SEE YOU!**

To the child that learnt to give and to share for the first time

and even found joy in these, **WE SEE YOU!**

To the child that battles to make friends **WE SEE YOU!**

To the child who wanted so much to please, but was just out of sight of an adult, **WE SEE YOU!**

To the child who lost a friend or a loved one this term,

but carried on bravely, everyday even though their heart ached, **WE SEE YOU!**

To the brave parents that try every day to do the best for their kids, **WE SEE YOU TOO!**

May you and your children revel in small but significant victories that you have both experienced this term,

for every term there is progress and growth,

You don't need a podium or handshake or a round of applause to be seen.

TO YOU ALL, WE SEE YOU!

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The Week Ahead

Week 1

Mon 06 January

Staff Inset
13:00 - 14:30 N: Pre-season Training: U11 (selected)
13:30 - 15:30 H: Pre-season Training: U13 & U11 (selected)
14:30 - 16:00 N: Pre-season Training: U13 (selected)

Tue 07 January

PREP SCHOOL CLUBS COMMENCE TODAY
Duty Form - 8N
07:00 *Pre-Prep: Farmhouse Nursery Opens*
(Nursery is closed from 23.12.19 through to 6.1.20)
08:20 Pupils return
08:40 Whole Prep School Assembly (Chapel)
08:45 *Pre-Prep: Term Starts*
16:10 House Meetings

Wed 08 January

14:00 H: Hockey trials
14:00 N: Netball trials

Thu 09 January

Fri 10 January

09:15 Coffee with the Friends (Dining Hall)

Sports Fixtures are available on the Sports Website www.ardinglysport.com



Parent Notices

Prep School Calendar for Lent Term

Please find attached an electronic copy of the Lent Term School Calendar, the yellow hard copy will be sent to you before the beginning of next term.

Christmas Express

There will be a Vocab Express competition running throughout the holiday period. Learn some vocab to get your name on the Christmas Express leader board, win prizes and earn points for your House.

Poetry Declamation 2020

When: Monday 2nd March 2020
Where: The Studio
Time: 18.15-19.15

As part of their English studies, each child (Years 3-8) is required to learn a poem 'off-by-heart' and recite it to the rest of their English class during w/c Monday 10 February 2020. This year the theme is 'Laugh Out Loud' and should be a humorous or nonsense poem. The poem can be short, long or an extract from a longer poem written by a well-known poet.

The pupils will be given time to practise their poem in school but would benefit from additional practice time at home. One pupil will be selected from each of the English classes to declaim their poem at The Poetry Declamation Evening which will be judged by a member of the Senior School English Department.

Parents are invited to attend the evening which historically has been a thoroughly enjoyable and entertaining experience for both the performers and the audience. Some suggested poems can be found on the Prep School Portal, but pupils are welcome to select an alternative one.

Mark Russell Sports Talk "How to Help Your Child Perform Freely", Parent Workshop, 17th January, 3pm-4.30pm, The Under

This workshop is aimed at parents of children who might be athletes, dancers, singers, musicians, gifted and talented students. It will help you discover how to communicate in a way that supports your child to perform freely without expectation, pressure, or worry. Please click the [link](#) to book your place through Eventbrite.

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Drama News

Tickets for the Prep School Show "We will Rock You" are on sale from the Chequer Mead Theatre.

Upper School Drama Club – Costumes

We are sourcing most of the costumes. However, we need some help with the basics.

Please can parents help by providing shoes for their children. ALL Yr 7 need a pair of WHITE ANKLE SOCKS and WHITE PUMPS and BLACK BOOTS/PUMPS (found cheaply on Ebay/ASDA etc, please make sure there are no logos).

The Yr 8 GAGA girls (Isobel W, Georgia G, Isobel B, Esme and Amelie) all need white pumps too.

All Police/Doctors/Yr 8 Bohemians need black boots.

Please can ALL GAGA Kids (ie all year 7) provide a pair of white leggings/shorts/jeans/skort as well.

Yr 7 Chorus - Extra Rehearsals

The Yr 7's Chorus will be having 2 morning rehearsals in the Drama Studio on the first 2 Thursdays of the Lent Term, timings are 8am-8.30am in the Drama Studio.

REMEMBER - SUNDAY 19th JANUARY DRESS REHEARSAL at school 9-3.30pm in the Under.

Lent Term 2020 Clubs & Activities

The Clubs' Lists for next term are attached. Please note that a lot of the clubs are now FULL and cannot be joined. However if you would like your child to join any of the other clubs please contact Mr Castle (jim.castle@ardingly.com) and he will allocate remaining spaces on a first come, first served basis. Final Clubs Lists will be published at the beginning of January.

Charity News

Thank you to all of you who supported The Reindeer Run for Chestnut Tree House – it was a huge success and we raised over £1,800 – Thank you so much.

