

January 2019

Dear Parents,

Happy New Year! I hope that you have enjoyed the seasonal festivities and that you (and your children) are ready for a degree of normality and the return of the school run!

Last term ended with some magical Nativity plays and performances in all sections of the school and our wonderful Carol Service by candlelight at St Dunstan's Church. The children deserve great credit for the mature way in which they approached the evening. Their singing was fantastic, the readers spoke clearly and confidently and the Service was a fitting way to begin the Christmas season.

The Christmas holiday saw the return of our Chef School, run by Miss Jess Skilton, our newly appointed Catering and Domestic Services Manager, and Miss Juliet Hazebroek, one of our Head Chefs. The children thoroughly enjoyed making the contents of a traditional Christmas hamper during the week, complete with mince pies, a Yule log and beautifully iced Christmas cakes. Thank you to Miss Skilton and Miss Hazebroek for providing this fantastic new opportunity for the children.

At the end of last term, you should have received a copy of the school magazine for 2017/2018. It is a superb record of the last academic year and my thanks go to Mrs Betts, the Editor, and to Mrs Prynne and Mrs Wood for their extraordinary commitment to producing such an excellent publication. I hope you also enjoy the photos reminding us of all the activities that have taken place since September, in our Autumn Term Review 'Inside', which you will receive later this week.

I'm sure that parents would wish to join me in congratulating Amanda Brown on her marriage last term in October. Mrs Brown had already changed her name from September to Mrs Hipkiss-Brown to avoid any confusion for the young children in Nash House. We wish Amanda and Stephen every happiness for the future.

Mrs Townsend has informed me of her intention to step down from the position of Art Technician at the end of this term. I will write with details of the appointment of her successor in due course. There will, of course, be an opportunity later this term, to thank Mrs Townsend for all she has given to the Art and Drama departments. During last term we welcomed Mrs Clare Preece as a new Visiting Music Teacher teaching the French horn and this term we are joined by Mrs Sue Norman who will be teaching the flute.

Having wished Lucy Avvenevole, Ruby Gow, and Tom Small well at the end of their year with us, we warmly welcome our new gap students: Oliver Shelbourne, Joseph Hodges and Mackenzie Garside from Australia. We hope that they will settle quickly into school life and enjoy being part of the Dulwich family. An exciting year lies ahead of them.



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Relevant staff have attended training as follows since the start of the academic year – Online Safety Training; Safeguarding Refresher Training; Designated Safeguarding Lead Training; Duty Manager Training; Mental Health First Aid Training; Music for Life; Kodaly Musicianship Training Course; iPad Coding across the Curriculum; specific medical training; ISBA HR Conference; Preparing for a Boarding Inspection; BSA A man in a girls' world Course; 12 hour Paediatric Training; – SEN Show; SENCO Training and Conference; BEAM and Sensory Circuits Training; RFU Teacher Licence New Rules of Play; Contemporary Swimming Teaching for Schools; English Lacrosse Association Teachers' Coaching and Umpiring Award; IAPS Heads' Conference.

Last term's theme of Togetherness and Unity emphasised the value of teamwork, in addition to reminding us that the whole is always greater than the sum of its parts. As we approach the New Year still with very little idea of what 'Brexit' might look like, perhaps now is the time to consider the power of positive thinking. We encourage the children to have a growth mind-set, recognising that challenges are what makes life interesting and overcoming them is what makes life meaningful, so our theme for this term is Think Positive, Be Positive and Positive Things Will Happen!

Last term's initiatives have been very positively received. The Manor House has been a buzz of activity with both boys and girls enjoying the opportunities for fun and friendship that our flexible boarding and extended day options allow. My thanks go to Mrs Montgomery and Miss Fosbery and their boarding team for all their hard work in creating a really homely atmosphere for all. The 'Dulwich Inspires' programme offering children in Years 6, 7 and 8 alternative activities beyond our usual Games programme has been a great success. This term sees Indoor Games (including Handball, Badminton and Basketball) and a computing Animation option alongside the popular Outdoor Activities programme at the Swattenden Centre.

As a development in our commitment to safeguarding, last term we implemented a Duty Manager scheme within our Educational Trips and Visits programme. This role oversees the necessary rigour of the trip planning, organisation and implementation, in addition to improving the immediacy of communication between the accompanying staff and the School, when off-site with the children. There are currently five Duty Managers, from within the Senior Management Team, who, on a rotational basis, provide support and assistance to trips and visits during term time and in the holidays. Mr Thompson coordinates this programme in his role as Assistant Head Co-curricular and is always happy to answer any questions that parents may have about trips and visits.

We continue to closely examine the feasibility of a year round day-care Nursery here at Dulwich. Our initial study into the conversion of the Lodge facilities has shown that the cost of refurbishment of the current building is not significantly lower than the cost of a new design and build. As a result, we are now considering the potential for a new build and are working with our architects to determine the best siting for this as well as for the best use of the facilities that have been released. I will update you on progress as these plans develop.

As always this term, the shortest of the school year, is very busy. Please do look at the Calendar and make a note of all the Parents' Evenings and the many events in which your child will be participating. I will be leading an Information Evening on Tuesday 22nd January, which will focus on entry routes to senior schools at both 11+ and 13+; I would

suggest that this is particularly relevant for parents of children in Years 4 and 5 and I hope that many of you will attend.

You will see from the Calendar that, throughout the Spring and Summer Terms, Dulwich Prep Cranbrook will be hosting Mental Health Champions training for School Leaders in Kent. Working in partnership with Place2Be, The Sam West Foundation and The Brook Trust, we will be delivering the Mental Health Champions School Leaders' Programme to maintained schools in the mid-Kent area. The Programme draws on Place2Be's 24 years' direct experience of working in schools to support School Leadership Teams to take steps towards becoming mentally healthy school communities. We are very pleased to be playing a part in supporting School Leaders to bring about strategic change in schools in our local area. [The Sam West Foundation](#) works to promote awareness, diagnosis and treatment of mental health issues affecting children, young adults and their families. [The Brook Trust](#) works to support early intervention programmes with children and families aiming to break cycles of social and economic deprivation and dysfunction in Kent.

This term, a number of Year 8 pupils will be sitting senior school scholarship examinations and assessments; we wish them every success in these important examinations. Congratulations are due to the 36 children in Year 8 who were successful in passing the Cranbrook School Entry Assessments last term and my thanks go to the many members of staff who supported the children in achieving such phenomenal success.

Children in Years 5, 6 and 7 will have their mid-year examinations in the week beginning 28th January. Whilst slightly less formal than the end of year examinations, these play an important part in our assessment of progress mid-way through the academic year. Year 8 examinations commence on Tuesday 12th February, immediately prior to half term, with the Tuesday start reflecting the timetable of Common Entrance in the Summer Term.

So, a busy term of academic challenges and extra-curricular events and activities awaits. I look forward to seeing you at Parents' Evenings, concerts, plays, coffee mornings and on the touch-line throughout the term.

With all good wishes from Nicky and me for a happy and successful 2019.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul David". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Paul David.