

Dear Parents,

The summer holiday has been a busy time, as we received, digested and implemented government guidance regarding the full opening of schools which continued to be published throughout – the latest update arriving in my inbox last Friday at 8.00 pm, to mark the beginning of the Bank Holiday Weekend! I thank and pay a huge tribute to my senior staff, and Estate and Housekeeping teams who have been working tirelessly throughout the holidays to plan for the arrival of all the children back in school. Yesterday, the classrooms were full, with a happy and excited buzz throughout school and we were delighted to welcome everyone for the start of the new academic year. I hope that the children have enjoyed their summer break, are pleased to return and are excited about all the opportunities that they will encounter in the year ahead.

I am sure that parents will wish to join me in congratulating Mrs Jess Butler (née Skilton), our Catering and Domestic Services Manager, who was married over the summer break. We wish Jess and Henry the very best for the future. Congratulations also to Miss Alonso who announced her engagement to her fiancé, Christian, over the break. They are to be married next summer.

Over the summer holidays, following ten years' service in Manor as Resident Boarding Tutor, Mrs Pepler and family moved off-site to their new home. I thank Mrs Pepler for all she has given to boarding life over this time and I hope that we are able to say a proper Boarding farewell, once we are able to welcome the children back into The Manor House. Mrs Montgomery has now relocated to The Cottage, in advance of the development of the Lodge site.

During the Summer Term, Mrs Viv Thorpe our longest-serving member of staff decided to retire. Viv had served the school loyally for 46 years - a lifetime of service - and I know that the children will miss her wonderful skills as 'queen of puddings'. Mr Jim Waghorn, our cheerful driver and porter, retired over the summer holidays. Jim was always on-hand and happy to help, whatever the request. We wish them both every happiness for the future; I know that colleagues and parents will join me in sending them our best wishes.

Mrs Huish, Little Stream Learning Support Teacher; Mrs Booth, Upper School Librarian and Mrs Harding, Little Stream Teaching Assistant have informed me that they have decided to retire at the end of this term. Mrs Booth and Mrs Huish have been at the school for 17 and 16 years respectively, and Mrs Harding has been involved with the school for 30 years, first as a parent and subsequently as a member of staff. I hope that we will be able to gather on a suitable occasion before the end of term to thank them for all that they have given to the life of the school.

Having embedded the Place2Be service within the school, Gemma King has decided to develop her own private practice in London and, as a result, will be leaving us later this term. We are in the process of recruiting her successor and I will write again with more information in due course. We thank Gemma for all the support that she has given to children, parents and staff in her time as Place2Be School Project Manager.



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This term we welcome new members of staff and there are a number of internal changes in roles and responsibilities:

Mrs Stephanie Vidler joins the Music Department, teaching both in Little Stream and Upper School. Mrs Vidler is a very experienced addition to our teaching team; and will continue with her individual schedule of piano lessons. Mrs Helen Sampson joins the Art Department to support Art teaching in Little Stream. Whilst in Singapore, Mrs Sampson was Head of Infant Art and Design at The Tanglin Trust School. In addition, two former pupils, Jemima Bruce-Lockhart and Ella Carter join us as additional Gap students this term, having completed their studies at Cranbrook School and Sutton Valence School respectively.

Internal changes see Mrs Cavell appointed as Head of Reception as Mrs Barber moves to teach a Year 1 class in Little Stream. Mrs Pepler was appointed Director of Music last term and Mrs Bourne took on the role of Head of Upper School Music. Mrs Whiting, Assistant Head Co-Curricular, takes over as Head of Year 8 and Dr Mitchell has been appointed as Head of Year 7. Mr Collins takes on the role of Non-Resident Boarding Tutor in The Manor House. Mr Sheridan takes on a new role as a Form Teacher in Year 5.

We wish Miss Pearmine well as she starts her maternity leave next week and Miss Spearink takes on a teaching role in the Art Department during Miss Pearmine's absence. Mrs Masters increases her hours to provide support to both the DT and Art Departments as their Technician. Congratulations to Mrs Hannah Carter who announced her pregnancy at the end of last term. She will start her maternity leave at the end of this term and we will welcome Mrs Kelly O'Leary-White back to Dulwich in the Spring Term 2021 to teach Drama in Upper School. Mrs Westcott, as Director of Creative Arts, will continue to oversee and promote the work of both the Art and Drama Departments.

We are delighted to welcome Mrs Marlowe Barham back to the P.E and Games Department where Mrs Harman continues to provide support.

Since I wrote in April, relevant staff have completed training courses as follows: Post COVID-19 Supporting the Transition to Reception; Heart to Heart with Kodály and Singing and COVID (online workshops with the British Kodály Academy); MIND Mental Health Awareness for Sport and Physical Activity; BEE Netball webinars and various webinars held by the Professional Association of Directors of Sport in Independent Schools (PADSIS).

Our theme for this term is **Staying Apart but still Working Together**. As we start this new academic year, we recognise that we are working with a number of restrictions to what we can and can't do. At the end of last term, the children adapted brilliantly to the 'new normal' way of working in school and I am confident that they will respond in the same way this term. The requirements for minimal mixing and the required separation of cohorts inevitably make it more difficult to develop the sense of community and team spirit that normally permeates all that is on offer at Dulwich. We are determined to be creative and imaginative to ensure that this important feeling of belonging is not lost whilst we continue to battle the pandemic. As ever, we are always stronger when we work together and we will be encouraging the children (and parents) to communicate and collaborate, albeit it at a distance!

Outside the various entrances to Upper School, you may have noticed a new door entry mechanism. As a result of the pandemic, hand hygiene has taken on a new significance as one of the most important ways to prevent spreading germs. With this in mind, we have introduced a new process for children and staff to follow throughout the school day.

We have partnered with a government-funded technology start-up, Tio, who are giving us early access to trial their hand hygiene system. The system is designed to ensure that everyone in the community follows the guidance and, over time, we hope to free up our staff from physically overseeing hand hygiene. The system works by integrating hand hygiene systems with the building's door entry mechanisms.

In the coming weeks we will be introducing wristbands which will work alongside the existing door codes, providing children in Upper School with access to the school, via registration of their wristband, whilst also recording their hand cleaning event. The soap dispensers in washrooms will also allow us to log and record an individual's hand washing activity. We hope to encourage the children to maintain the excellent hand hygiene protocols of hand washing and using hand sanitizer throughout the day by introducing an element of competition between Tribes. We are delighted to be participating in this trial which has gained a great deal of interest already from other settings and industries.

At this time last year, I wrote to inform you that discussions with the Local Authority had established that it would support an application to develop an attractive residential scheme for a small number of houses on the site of the now redundant Lodge Boarding House. I am pleased that the application was subsequently approved and that over the summer break contracts for the sale of the Lodge site were exchanged with a local developer. Contract completion is expected within the next few days and it is likely that work on the development will commence before Christmas. The proceeds of the sale at a time of universal financial challenge, will provide greater certainty for the school's development priorities to be considered and funded by the Dulwich Preparatory Schools Trust.

Inevitably, some of the usual events at the beginning of term have been adapted and some will not be able to take place because of guidance still precluding the arrangement of large gatherings. Our online Calendar gives you 'real-time' information about forthcoming events www.dulwichprepcranbrookcalendar.org. As mentioned in the recently published Phase 3 Full Opening of Schools document, I will be inviting parents to respond to a questionnaire early next week, regarding before and after school provision. We hope to be able to offer this for all those who need support in this regard and to operate a core programme of co-curricular clubs and activities for the children from Monday 21st September.

I would draw your attention to three imminent events. On Monday 7th September at 6.30pm and at 7.00 pm, we will be hosting online Little Stream Information Evenings for parents. On Tuesday 8th September, a short meeting will take place online for all parents of children in Year 5 to introduce Upper School staff and on Tuesday 15th September, parents of children in Year 7 will have the opportunity to connect with Tutors and other key staff. Invitations to these Zoom meetings will be sent to parents shortly.

I look forward to seeing you throughout the first few weeks of term at drop-off and collection. Should you wish to arrange a meeting with me at any stage this term, please contact my PA via headmaster@dulwichprepcranbrook.org.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul David". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

Paul David.