

April 2022

Dear Parents,

Welcome back to the start of the Summer Term. I hope you have all enjoyed the break and the recent sunshine in which we have been basking. It does feel as if summer is approaching! I apologise for the slight delay in sending you beginning of term information; a family bereavement required me to be away over the Easter weekend and the beginning of this week.

You may be aware that schools' operational guidance in respect of COVID-19 was withdrawn on the 31<sup>st</sup> March, in line with the Government's "Living with Covid-19" plan. There is now no specific schools' guidance and free testing has also ceased. The guidance issued at the end of February on contacts and self-isolation was also withdrawn on 31<sup>st</sup> March, and replaced with new guidance called [People with symptoms of a respiratory infection including Covid-19](#). This contains details on what both children and adults should do if they have symptoms and includes information on when children with symptoms should stay at home and when they can return to education. In essence, a return to "normality" is expected with the indication that children should attend school if they generally feel well or have minor ailments such as runny nose, sore throat or slight cough, but should remain at home if they feel unwell, returning to school as soon as they feel better.

It is not recommended that children and young people are tested for COVID-19 unless directed to by a health professional. However, if a child or young person has a positive COVID-19 test result, they should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for three days after the day they took the test, if they can.

Notwithstanding the above, we will continue to take sensible, pragmatic steps to minimise transmission of this virus, which is still prevalent nationally, by maintaining ventilation and encouraging good hand and respiratory hygiene. Please do contact me should you have any questions about the latest guidance.

Whilst we return to a degree of normality in the UK, the situation in Ukraine remains a global crisis. As noted in the newsletter at the end of last term, during the Easter break Mark and Helen Howgill were able to visit friends in Poland who run a church near the border and who have been helping the Ukrainian people. Their aim was to raise funds to help in whatever way was necessary and they would like to thank everyone who contributed so kindly to their JustGiving crowdfunding page which currently stands at £5,435.

During their visit, they saw that the queues of refugees at the border have thankfully shortened and the need is now to provide essential supplies and resources to those who have been internally displaced to the West of Ukraine or are being hosted in Poland. They met drivers coming over the border to pick up supplies such as generators, first aid trauma kits and bullet-proof vests. These vests are needed to protect the drivers as they are visiting extremely dangerous locations. Each vest costs in excess of £700.00 and Mark and Helen feel this is where the funds will be of most use. Their friends in Poland are working hard to coordinate everything and it was good to see that the money will be well-spent. Any surplus from the funds raised will be used for the benefit of the Ukrainian people and Mark and Helen are happy



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to leave the fund open if anyone would still like to contribute:

[https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/howgills-for-ukraine?utm\\_term=9praPZQzj](https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/howgills-for-ukraine?utm_term=9praPZQzj)).

Since my last letter, relevant staff have attended training courses as follows: Whole School Safeguarding & Child Protection, Information and Online Security e-learning, Whistleblowing Policy e-learning; ISBA Safeguarding Update, DfE Tackling Sexual Abuse and Harassment in Schools: Domestic Abuse and Coercion and also Pornography and the impact of viewing harmful content online, BSA – LGBT+ History Month and Beyond, ISBA Transgender Webinar; DSL Refresher Training and Early Years Designated Safeguarding Lead Refresher Training; Early Talk Boost; SENCO Training, SALT Training; Diabetes Training; Understanding ADHD, Achieving Outstanding Department Leadership; 'Natalia Luis Bassa Conducting Masterclass'; 12 hour Paediatric First Aid Training; Drug Sense UK Drugs Awareness, Working Together to Safeguard Children; First Aid at Work; Employment Law Update; IAPS Mathematics Conference, Edexcel Pearson Feedback on GCSE Maths, Next Steps for Maths Education in England, Outstanding Subject Leadership, Advanced Hockey: Attacking in the Final Third; English New Syllabus ISEB Common Entrance 13+ CPD webinar and I took part in an ISI Inspection of another school as an ISI Team Inspector.

I am sure that parents will wish to join me in congratulating Mrs Lizzie Taylor (née Pearmine), who was married during the holidays. We welcome Mrs Jess Butler back from her maternity leave and thank Miss Hazebroek and Miss Amos-Taylor, our dedicated chefs, and all the catering team for their hard work and support during Mrs Butler's absence. Mrs Amy Vine, Mrs Suzi Hinge and Ms Holly Clayson will be our new exam invigilators and Mrs Ginny Bozeat will work with Miss Tully as a Tennis Club Leader. Mr Chris Higginson joins as our Fencing Club Leader in Upper School. Miss Meg Butler joined as a gardener at the end of last term and we welcome her to the Estate team.

Mrs Kilb, Teaching Assistant in Little Stream, will be leaving at the end of this academic year. Additionally, whilst Mrs Brock will retain her role as Archivist, she will not return as a Teaching Assistant in Little Stream in September. Mrs Kish will leave the PE Department at the end of the Summer Term and Mrs Delahaye will not be returning to the Science Department. As previously notified, Mr Rutherford will be moving to The King's School Gloucester. We will miss all these staff enormously and wish them well for the future.

From September 2022, Mr Richard De Wet joins the PE and Games Department full-time and I have appointed Ms Liz Coleman, currently Head of Sport at Cranbrook School, as an additional PE and Games specialist. Both bring important Senior School experience to the team. Mr Matthew Roche joins us in September as Head of RS, Philosophy and Ethics. Mr Roche is currently Head of Year 9 and Head of Philosophy and Ethics at Fort Pitt Grammar School, Rochester, where has been teaching through to GCSE and A level.

We are also in the process of recruiting a SENCO and Learning Strategies Manager. From September 2022, Mrs Alison Eckersley becomes Deputy Head Pastoral and Welfare and maintains her role as Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Mr Dove's title changes to Deputy Head Academic and Mrs Whiting's to Deputy Head Co-Curricular. Interviews are to take place this term for a new Head of Senior School, who will join the team in January 2023.

I will write with news of further appointments as they are made this term.

Following the announcement of our plans to expand to GSCE in September 2023, we have been busy moving forward on all fronts. Detailed planning has been taking place with the architects to finalise the design plans for the redevelopment of the Coursehorn Building. Our entry processes, including Scholarship and Governors' Awards programmes have been formulated and published and information about our exciting offer has been launched on the

school website. This will be added to over the coming months and later this term we have an external Open Morning, for parents not currently at the school, who have expressed an interest in their children joining us. Please do contact Mrs Georgie Labram, Head of Marketing and Admissions, if you would like to find out more about any aspect of our future plans. An online information leaflet can be accessed by clicking [here](#).

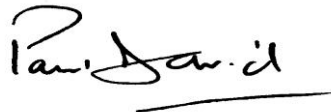
This term's theme is 'Building on firm foundations', an appropriate one as we expand and develop. It is also an important reminder for the children as they prepare for academic assessments in all sections of the school. They should be approaching this period in a positive frame of mind, recognising all the hard work they have put in so far this year. In Upper School, in Years 5, 6 and 7, this will include assessments in most subjects during the week prior to half-term. Children will be directed in appropriate revision over the first five weeks of term. Year 8 examinations and Common Entrance assessments will take place during the week after half-term. The theme also reminds the children that they will be building successfully on what they already know, as they prepare to move into their next school year, particularly if they are moving on to senior school.

The School Calendar is now available and updated in real-time online. Please do take time to look through it to establish the important dates and events, including any Saturday fixtures, in which your children are likely to be involved. In addition to the usual school events, the Swimathon and Friends Platinum Jubilee Party take place on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> May. A Coffee Morning offering parents of children in Year 4 the opportunity to tour Upper School and meet key staff will be held in the John Leakey Foyer on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> May.

Nicky and I look forward to seeing you during the coming weeks.

With every good wish,

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.