

19<sup>th</sup> April 2023

To Parents and Guardians of All Children

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome back to the Summer Term. I trust that you enjoyed the holidays despite the rather mixed weather over the Easter weekend. During the break, our skiers enjoyed the Italian sunshine in Sestriere, where an end of season fall of snow provided excellent conditions on the piste. I would like to thank all the staff who gave up their holidays to accompany the children on our first overseas residential trip since the pandemic and a particular thank you to Mr Collins for his hard work and commitment in arranging this exciting experience.

At the end of last term, we enjoyed two wonderful productions. Year 3 performed 'Hoodwinked', a hilarious take on the classic tale of Robin Hood and children in Years 7 and 8 took part in our senior production of 'Matilda'. Both showcased the extraordinary talent, confidence and commitment of the children to produce exceptional performances. Such opportunities for collaboration, creativity and the encouragement to aspire to real excellence in performance are an important part of Dulwich life and I thank everyone involved in providing such fantastic opportunities.

Since I wrote in January, relevant staff have attended training courses as follows: Making Learning Sticky; Food Hygiene Level 2 Early Years; IAPS Pre-Prep and Early Years Conference; Introducing Children to Swimming; Adaptive Teaching Strategies; Middle Leader Development Course; Managing Difficult Conversations; ASD Emotional Regulation; ADHD-CCSP Certified Clinical Services Provider, ASDCS Certified Autism Spectrum Disorder Specialist; Youth Mental Health First Aid; Diabetes Management Training; Diabetes Training Basic and Advanced Level; Concussion Awareness Training; First Aid Training, HR Employment Law for Managers – Right to Work Checks, NSPCC Safer Recruitment Training; Teacher/Parent Forum with Gina Martin on Understanding Andrew Tate and Online Misogynists (Beyond Equality); Mission Impossible: engaging readers at Key Stage 4, Shakespeare Workshop; ISRSA Conference; DATA Accreditation Health & Safety Course for Machines;

Mr Gosnold has informed me of his decision to resign from his position of Little Stream SENCO and will leave us at the end of the Summer Term. After 16 years' service, he has decided to move on to new adventures. Mrs Barber will step down from her role as Head of Year 1 at the end of this term, but will join the SEND Department in September, supporting children in Years 1 and 2. In addition, at the end of this term we say farewell to Mrs Harrow, who has been an excellent member of the Nash House team. All will be greatly missed by children, parents and colleagues alike. I know that there will be an appropriate opportunity later in the term to thank them for all that they have done for the school.

In addition, owing to a family move overseas, Mrs Labram, Head of Marketing and Admissions, will be leaving at the end of the Summer Term. Also, Mrs Hoye, HR Manager, has indicated that she will be leaving in July. Both have been superb in their respective roles and we wish them well for the future.



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In June, we will welcome Mrs de Wet back from her maternity leave. Mrs Alonso, Head of Modern Languages, and Mrs Davey, Deputy Head of Little Stream, will commence maternity leave at the end of this term.

This term we welcome Mrs Katharine Lawrence and Mrs Diana Rabot who will jointly fulfil the role of SENCO and Learning Strategies Manager. Mrs Lawrence joins us full-time and Mrs Rabot will be in school on certain days throughout the term before joining three days a week in September. Both bring significant experience to the school and we are excited to welcome them to the SEND department.

Mrs Stephanie Plewes and Mrs Jane Sullivan both joined the Little Stream team last term, working as one-to-one Learning Support Assistants. Miss Hannah Goldsmith joins Nash House this term as a part-time Teaching Assistant.

We also welcome a number of staff to our Housekeeping and Estate teams. Mrs Hanna Ishchenko and Mrs Michelle Longstaff join as Housekeeping Assistants and Mr Darron White joins us as a Minibus Driver.

I will write with further news of any appointments in due course.

You will be aware that the school hosted a team of Inspectors from the Independent Schools Inspectorate last term. This was a Focused Compliance and Educational Quality Inspection and, in addition, the team reported to the Department of Education (DfE) on our Material Change Application in respect of the school's plans to extend to GCSE. A Focused Compliance Inspection is designed to establish whether a school meets each of over 500 regulations in the Independent Schools Standard Regulations. Schools are advised to view Regulatory Compliance Inspections as similar to a vehicle MOT and to use them as an opportunity to tighten up any areas that are found to require improvement. The report, to be published to parents shortly, lists only whether each regulation has been "met" or "not met".

The Educational Quality Inspection evaluates the school's provision by focusing on two areas: the quality of the pupils' academic and other achievements, and the quality of the pupils' personal development. The highest grade achievable is 'Excellent', the one below 'Good', followed by 'Sound' then 'Unsatisfactory'. I am very pleased to report that the school received an 'Excellent' grade in each section of the report. In addition, the school has been judged to be fully compliant with all regulations, having met all requirements. Additionally, the inspection team recommended that the school's request to extend the age range from 2 to 16 years be approved, the final step necessary for our Senior School launch in September 2023.

I am delighted to report that the results of the questionnaires for parents, staff and pupils were universally favourable. Our parental endorsement percentage was a very encouraging 96%. Such positive feedback is much appreciated as we continue to refine and develop the educational experience that we offer across the school. I will write to you shortly with a copy of the full report for your information and it will also be published on the school website.

Work is continuing apace in the development of the Coursehorn Building ready for our first Year 9 students. Windows and doors have been replaced over the Easter break and the café space, new science laboratory and break out spaces are beginning to take shape. We will share some more pictures of the transformation in the coming weeks.

Thank you to all parents who continue to support the school through your social and professional networks; we regularly hear that the reason a family has come to visit us is because of your endorsement. Thanks to your positive recommendations, and the strength of our new offer as a through-school up to GCSE, we have 88 joiners already confirmed for September across the school. Of these, 22 new children will join Year 7 in September, and this number will continue to grow in the run-up to the Autumn Term. We hope you will continue to play your very important, and very appreciated, part in keeping our Admissions team busy!

This term, we will be completing a number of academic assessments in all sections of the school. 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 guided to 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.

This first half of term includes two Bank Holiday Mondays, when the school will be closed. The second, as you will be aware, is to celebrate the coronation of King Charles III. On Friday, 5<sup>th</sup> May, the school will be celebrating the Coronation with a special street party lunch (weather permitting!) and the friends are planning a Coronation Party later that day. I know that the *friends'* committee would welcome your help so please look out for an email detailing which job your year group has been allocated. The *friends* will also need your help with set-up on the day. Please contact Tom Rhodes, Chair of the *friends*, via WhatsApp on 07887 954 057.

This is, of course, my last beginning of term letter to you and in my final term here as Headmaster, I have chosen my last theme for the term to be the same as my very first at Dulwich – **Togetherness and Unity**.

Aesop told us that "In union there is strength". I have thoroughly enjoyed working in partnership with you to ensure your children have the very best educational opportunities and experiences. This term, we will be focusing on the importance of community and the key role that every single person plays in ensuring success and happiness for all. Your involvement in this is paramount, as demonstrated by the poem below which is simply entitled 'Unity'.

I dreamed I stood in a studio  
and watched two sculptors there.  
The clay they used was a young child's mind,  
and they fashioned it with care.

One was a teacher; the tools he used  
were books and music and art;  
One a parent with a guiding hand,  
and a gentle, loving heart.

Day after day the teacher toiled,  
with touch that was deft and sure,  
While the parent laboured by his side  
and polished and smoothed it oer.

And when at last their task was done,  
they stood proud of what they had wrought.  
For things they had moulded into the child  
could neither be sold or bought.

And each agreed he would have failed  
if he had worked alone,  
For behind the parent stood the school,  
and behind the teacher, the home.

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

With all good wishes,

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