



Head's Message

Theme for next week: Celebration/Achievements

Dear Parents,

It was fantastic to welcome the Year 5 pupils back to school on Thursday. We are delighted to have them in school again and hope they benefit from a few weeks back with us.

In 2005, whilst working at St Dominic's Priory in South Africa, I was fortunate that my governors afforded me the opportunity to attend the Convention of International Confederation of Principals. This was to be hosted in Cape Town and I flew there enthusiastically, eager to learn from keynote speakers and network with fellow Heads from around the world. I have attended many conferences but this particular conference really stood out for me and, over the years, I have often wondered why. Following recent events, I now know that it is because of the Black Lives Matter movement.

The theme of the convention was Ubuntu. For those of you unaware of the term, Ubuntu is a traditional Zulu maxim that translates: 'A person is a person through other persons' or in other words; 'An individual's existence is relative to that of the group.' The communal self provides the basis of Ubuntu. It can also be roughly translated as 'human kindness' or 'humanity toward others.' In a more philosophical sense, it is a belief that a universal bond of sharing connects humanity. In other words, I am because of you; we are dependent on each other to survive and be happy. Each presentation reflected on Ubuntu in different ways and considered the many different aspects of education. This ranged from the emotional life of boys to reforms in global education; from tips to strengthen your school to the heady domain of philosophy. The concept of Ubuntu enables us to understand why Nelson Mandela, despite his incarceration on Robbin Island, was forgiving and sought for the peaceful destruction of apartheid. As delegates, we were allowed to visit the island and visit Mandela's cell. The tour was conducted by a prisoner whose cell was next door to Mandela's. Despite the hardships this man had endured, his light-hearted good spirit and forgiving nature was an incredible thing to witness.

The Black Lives Matter movement is about the same concept – to me anyway. By marginalising different sectors of society, aren't we taking away our own humanity? In his keynote speech, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, declared that "educators have the high calling to nurture and develop a new breed of human being who will want to be more compassionate and caring, who will be gentle and sharing, who will know that we are one ... human family." He made the statement in 2005, yet here we are again in 2020. Significant sectors of our society continue to feel discriminated against and marginalised. Arguably, change is an evolutionary process that takes time to happen. Following the events surrounding George Floyd's death, the overwhelming feeling seems to be that change is taking too long. Indeed, real change may never occur unless there is more direct and determined action. The Nigerians have a saying: 'It takes a whole village to educate a child'. In Ghana, they exemplify proverbs with literal meanings: 'A single tree can hardly withstand the pressure of wind, it falls.' The metaphor drives home the fact that wisdom, knowledge and skills are needed to solve the problems of a country or organisation, often going beyond the capacity of an individual. In the case of Black Lives Matter, the right group of people need to be involved in these discussions to correct the wrongs of the past and ensure that going forward, the future is promising.

Bishop Tutu said that: "A person with Ubuntu is open and available to others, affirming of others, does not feel threatened that others are able and good, for he or she has proper self-assurance that comes from knowing that he or she belongs to a greater whole." Whatever views people may have about the way the protests have been conducted, we must not let this distract us from the simple fact that until more people in our world are willing to



tackle prejudice in whatever shape or form it takes, prejudice will continue. Perhaps the concept of Ubuntu provides us with a way of thinking about how we can make a positive and lasting difference in the world.

Currently, schools have a lot to manage. We are preparing youngsters to live in an increasingly unpredictable world. Now we are also being asked to drag this sometimes messy world towards a better future, which respects religious and political differences, even if the powers that be seem to be muddling through in open conflict and deceit. The biggest challenge we face at the moment is continued uncertainty. How do we plan for September? The best case scenario is that we return to a school as it was before March 20 this year, although I have a strong suspicion that this will not be the case. No matter what transpires, it is my biggest hope that all pupils return to school in September in some capacity, even if we have to create a new kind of normal.

Going forward, we have now trialed Teams. I am sure we will iron out the teething problems, and the platform will present an opportunity to enhance our current online provision.

Have a super weekend!

Sincerely,

Leonard Blom

Remember to celebrate milestones as you prepare for the road ahead.

Nelson Mandela



Nursery children continued their Pirates theme this week. One exciting challenge they faced was a swashbuckling obstacle course where, at the very end, the children had to walk the plank!



We were thrilled to see the return of Year 5 to school yesterday. After temperature checks and hand sanitising, the children made their way up to the playground where they found their bubble colour.

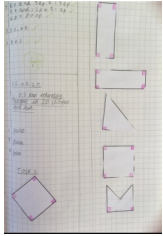


There were plenty of happy, smiling faces on display despite the rainy weather!

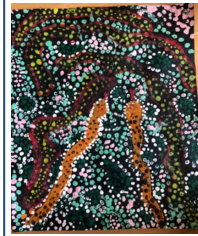


Year 1 enjoyed a lovely sunny morning at the beginning of the week and took part in a range of activities during their PE lesson.





Remote learning for Year 3 maths this week has included learning how to identify angles in 2D shapes and turns. Odette in 3NL has continued to present all of her work to the best of her ability- embracing one of our St Aubyn's promises.



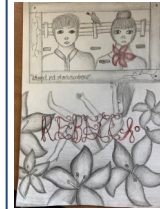
Year 3 have produced some outstanding pieces of aboriginal art this week. Here are some fine



examples by Willow and Madeleine in 3SL.



In readiness for Father's Day this weekend, Reception children have worked hard to create wonderful cards. Shhhhhh, don't tell the Daddies!



Year 6 have been studying

Gothic horror. One part of the unit required them to create an advert for a film version of 'Rebecca'. Here they are hard at work, as well as the excellent advert created by Jennifer in 6MG.

For the last two weeks, children in Pre Prep and Middle school have been taking part in an Eco Crafts Challenge. The winners are



Sohan in 1CM for a piggy bank made out of a recycled bottle and Dhevi in 4HS for making a giraffe bookshelf made from cardboard. Well done to everyone who took part.



Talvin in 2HL has become a gardener with very green fingers during lockdown. He has grown his very own peas which he reports are delicious!



This week, Nursery children have enjoyed the opportunity to feed the ducks with Mr Lawson.

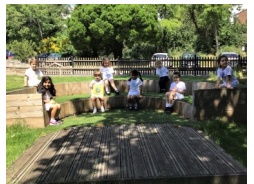


Congratulations to these children who were awarded Headmaster's Commendations this week.

There is an escaped alien on the loose and Year 1 have been very busy helping the police to catch it. They have gathered lots of evidence about the alien and are getting very close to finding it. Well done, Year 1, for including lots of descriptive words on your evidence wall!



Children in Reception on Monday wrote about their weekend news. They produced some wonderful pieces of work, beautifully presented as illustrated here by Grace in RMD.



On Wednesday morning, Reception red bubble enjoyed sitting in the outdoor theatre and listening to a story in the sunshine.

Forest School would like to inform our Year 5 parents about their upcoming 11+ Virtual Admissions Event starting on Monday, 22 June. They have produced a range of resources that will be available from 8am on Monday on their website, which will help parents get a flavour of the breadth and depth of opportunities there are for pupils at Forest. Please see their website for further information on how to register.

Bancroft's School will be holding a Virtual Open Event on Thursday, 25 June at 4.30pm and would like to invite our Year 5 pupils, who will be transferring to Senior School in September 2021. Prospective parents will be given the opportunity to hear from the Head, Simon Marshall, and the Head of the Junior Section. The virtual tour of the school will be followed by a live Q&A. Please visit the school website to complete the online registration form.