



Head's Message

Dear Parents,



As we reach the end of this very long term, it is with a sense of satisfaction that I reflect on the positive learning experiences our pupils have had. In this most unusual of years, most of our children have had the opportunity to attend school with only limited disruption to their normal routines. I must also take this opportunity to thank our parents for the support, good wishes and words of encouragement, all of which have meant so much to the teachers and management. We know that we have a job to do and we do not expect praise. However, it has been very much appreciated in light of the current situation we find ourselves in.

In the final assembly on Monday, I used the word virus as the theme for discussion. I wanted the children to understand that humankind is used to dealing with viruses. However, this time it has been more difficult to manage because of the rate of infection and the ease of transmission. At the end of the summer holiday in August, a medical milestone was reached: Africa declared itself free of the last remaining strain of the poliovirus. 95% of the continent's population has now been immunised. Polio has afflicted millions of people for centuries. Viruses such as polio do not just disappear. In Africa, herd immunity has been achieved which means the majority of the population are now relatively safe from and free of the poliovirus.

I wonder how many people were aware that this milestone was reached in August of this year? As recently as the 1980s, 350,000 people were left paralysed every year worldwide. 25 years ago, it was rampant in Africa, and thousands of children were affected. In 1996, Nelson Mandela launched the "Kick Polio out of Africa" initiative. As we continue to adapt to living with and managing coronavirus, it is important to remember that these diseases which leave such a terrible footprint can be eradicated. It is perhaps more surprising that it was barely celebrated and received only limited press coverage. I suppose polio never affected Europe in the same catastrophic way. We only tend to concern ourselves when something affects us and impacts our lives directly.

Last Tuesday was World Aids Day. Again, I wonder how many people actually realised this. In my early years of teaching in the 80s, HIV was the bane of a generation. It was a new and horrifying virus that had the scientists and medical experts baffled, with little prospect of a cure. Just as polio seemed invincible to my parents and grandparents, the coronavirus has the same effect on us. Neither polio nor AIDs has been entirely eradicated and these viruses have overlapped generations. I wonder how long it will be before our generation and our children's generation speak of COVID -19 in the past tense? If we can learn anything from the past, it's that we will at some stage in our lives, refer to COVID -19 as an historical event. Coming to the end of a challenging year, this should give us all hope.

I am sure that everyone will make the most of the Christmas break. I wish all our families a safe and happy Christmas and very peaceful and prosperous New Year. I look forward to seeing you return refreshed and ready for the Lent Term.

Sincerely,

Leonard Blom





Year 5 House football took place this week. Congratulations to the winning Hayton team. The boys won their event by one goal!



Year 1 have been sequencing and retelling the story of 'The Snowman'. The children enjoyed working in groups and discussing the order of the story. They worked

hard to include descriptive words and full stops and capital letters in their writing.

In English, 5AM enjoyed rehearsing and performing a poem called 'I'm walking with my iguana.' They worked



collaboratively and thought carefully about actions, rhythm, tempo and dynamics!



In Hama after-school activity, pupils have been busy creating some wonderful pieces. The children have really enjoyed their time in the group.

In DT this week, Year 7 have been working on forming, shaping and smoothing their snack bars from sculpture blocks.



Pre Prep to Year 3 have been listening to 'Happy Narwhalidays' by Ben Clanton in the library or their classrooms this week. They then created their own Narwhal or Jelly artwork. A variety of expressions can be seen on their characters' faces!



The Senior School House Quiz took place this morning. Teams of pupils from Years 6, 7 and 8

battled to be the winning House. Many congratulations to School House (again!) for being victorious.



Year 6 enjoyed a festive physics lesson this week. They designed reindeer out of balloons and raced them



on the string tracks across the classroom. Great fun!



This week, Year 6 took part in a number of House basketball matches that involved playing in a team as well as organising and umpiring their own

matches. Well done to all those who took part.



Year 4 have been adding the finishing details to their desk tides. They have designed, constructed, toughened using papier-mâché and then glazed their fantastic creations! Pupils have learnt the importance of recycling materials and now have a fabulous desk tidy to store all their stationery.



Years 7 and 8 have taken part in House football this week. Many congratulations to School House for being the winning team.



Children from across the School have been thinking about members of our community by making Christmas cards to send the residents of care homes. They produced some excellent artwork and spread some much needed Christmas cheer!



Children and staff alike from Year 1 through to Year 8 had the chance to snuggle up in their Onesies on Tuesday this week. All monies raised will be donated to Haven House and Great Ormond Street Hospital. Thank you very much for your contributions.



Thursday lunch was a very festive affair with children across the School enjoying a delicious Christmas lunch. Thank you to our wonderful catering staff for all their hard work this term.



A wonderful festive atmosphere filled the School today as both children and staff sported their Christmas jumpers in aid of 'Save the Children'. Santa and his elves also found the time to pop in for a quick visit!

