



Head's Newsletter

Dear Parents,

I am a big believer in the famous CS Lewis quotation -“Keep looking forward. Don't look back, you're not going that way.” This might sound strange coming from a History teacher but it is a useful mantra. The term has started positively and we have a great deal to look forward to as life and learning continue to return to normal.



We are finalising arrangements for public examination assessments and staff are collating and analysing the necessary information to ensure our pupils receive fair and accurate GCSE and A-Level results. We have a number of interesting curriculum and pastoral changes launching in September, including the return of A-Level Psychology. This week we are interviewing for a new Chaplain, to replace the wonderful Steve Bennett. Our Upper Sixth have done brilliantly with university offers this year. Two are heading to Oxbridge and many are off to elite Russell Group universities for degrees ranging from Neuroscience to Russian and Linguistics!

Sport fixtures return this term and our new cricket pitch on the Jackman Field is in great shape. We have also scheduled an exciting “Summer Celebration” programme to replace our normal Festival format for this year. This will include an innovative take on “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” in our Outdoor Theatre.



Public Speaking: Grand Final

On Saturday, our Regional Public Speaking Champions (Katie Head, Maurice Caldon and Hattie Pickles), took part in the ESU's Churchill Public Speaking Competition National Grand Final. The last time a Canterbury school was in the Grand Final was over ten years ago!

Representing the South East, our team came up against competition from across the country and the standards were exceptionally high. Twelve schools participated in total including Loughborough Grammar, Manchester High School for Girls, South Hampstead High and Bedford School. The St Edmund's team performed brilliantly, demonstrating exceptional planning, superb speaking skills and remarkable unflappability under pressure.

Maurice Caldon chaired the speaker from Bedford School who addressed the topic *"If we open a quarrel between past and present, we shall find that we have lost the future."* Maurice gave a faultless introduction and was a confident and reassuring presence as Chair, setting out the parameters of the conversation and providing the perfect platform for the main speaker. Hattie's role was to act as Questioner for the Bedford Speaker (helpfully reminding him to turn his microphone on too!). She executed this important function expertly with insightful, crisp and through provoking questions that enabled the Bedford Speaker to develop their arguments.

Katie was the main speaker in the final round of the competition on the subject *"We are more prepared to believe lies than the truth"* supported by a Chair and Questioner from Chelmsford County High School. It was clear that Katie had researched her speech thoroughly, structuring it intelligently around fascinating real world examples. She spoke with clarity and conviction using a range of oratorical devices to maximise the impact of her words. It was a deeply impressive (and at times very moving) performance.

Ultimately, the judges awarded the overall team prize to Taunton Academy in what must have been an enormously difficult decision. It was hard to see how many of the participants, including St Edmund's could have done any better. Dr Caiazza who has led the team with skill and passion this year wrote to me afterwards:

"The pupils did a wonderful job yesterday representing our school and the southeast. In the individual feedback session, the judges couldn't fault their performances, but the standard was exceptional."

I would like to extend my thanks to Maurice, Katie and Hattie for representing St Edmund's so brilliantly – we are extremely proud of you. My thanks also go to Dr Caiazza for her leadership and to Dr Sotillo, Mr Millard and Ms Florence for their unwavering support!

The final is available on You Tube here:

<https://youtu.be/Y49rnIvEmPI>





National Youth Music Theatre

Congratulations also go to Oliver Futchter who has successfully gained a place in the National Youth Music Theatre Company for 2021. Oliver will be appearing in the full senior production, The Hunchback of Notre Dame, at Manchester Cathedral from 11-14th August.



It was an arduous audition process with a taped submission followed by two rounds of recalls. Nearly 1000 young people auditioned for the cast of 60. Interestingly, it will be almost 5 years since Oliver last performed at Manchester Cathedral as he was there in 2016 for the BBC Choirboy of the Year finals.

Music Awards

Well done to everyone involved in the Trinity and ABRSM Music Examination process. We continue to perform extremely well in these important assessments across the 3-18 school. I have highlighted recent Senior School successes below:

P=PASS

M=MERIT

D=DISTINCTION

SENIOR SCHOOL

Trinity Digital (online)

Zoe Rogers	Singing	4	M
Edith Burton	Singing	6	P
Caspar Barton-Hodges	Singing	6	D
Anna McCabe	Trumpet	7	M
James Press	Singing	8	D



ABRSM Performance Grades (online)

Lucy Hollingsbee	MT	3	D
Matilda Perry	MT	3	P
Percy Soutar	Singing	4	P
Monty Hull	Piano	5	M
Marcus Yanni	Bassoon	6	P
Matthew Bawtree	Bassoon	7	D
Frederick Butler	Singing	8	D
Sophia Grundmann	Singing	8	M
Leo Watters	Piano	8	P

Sports News

Mrs Millard brings us up to date with a busy week...

“The pupils have enjoyed a fabulous week of weather for PE and Games enabling the start of our summer activity programme. Athletics, tennis, cricket and rounders are on offer amongst other activities and do check out the co-curricular timetable too. It has been lovely to hear the sound of cricket ball on bat, tennis ball on racket and the excited screams of 'Rounder'! Next week we will be remembering Sir Tom Moore by taking part in his 100 Challenge during PE lessons. This will finish with a year group bubble 100 metre festival.



Huge congratulations to Adam Whitlock (L5) who recently achieved a fantastic 2nd place in the virtual English Schools 2k Cross Country Championship. His lockdown training obviously paid great dividends!”

Have a great week!

Kind regards,

Edward O'Connor

Head