



THE PERSE

PREP SCHOOL

CAMBRIDGE

19 October 2023

Dear Parents,

Your children should be able to reflect on and celebrate all that they have experienced and achieved over this first half term of the year. They have certainly played their parts in adjusting to new routines with the minimum of fuss. I hope that they use some of the upcoming break to recharge batteries. Much of the children's personal growth, increased confidence and eager curiosity is inspired by the teachers and I would like to thank the dedicated staff who go the extra mile to make memorable moments for each child.

We look forward to welcoming the children back to school on Tuesday 31 October.



- Parent Year 6 Ski Trip Evening (Wed 1 Nov) – 7.30pm to 8.15pm in the Drama Studio
- Parent IE&D Group (Thu 2 Nov) – 9am to 10am, meet at Reception
- Year 3 Parent Meetings (Mon 6 & Tue 7 Nov) – Drama Studio. Check PersePost for bookings
- Remembrance Assembly (Fri 10 Nov) – outside in top playground (or in Hall if wet)
- Year 4/5/6 Online Parent Meetings (Mon 13 & Tue 14 Nov) – booking details sent today
- Michaelmas Concert (Thur 30 Nov) – 6pm to 7pm at the PAC, Upper.
- Year 4 Production (Wed 6 Dec) – 6pm to 7pm in the Hall. Parents welcome
- Year 3 Christmas Celebration (Thur 7 Dec) – 6pm to 6.45pm in the Hall. Parents welcome
- Year 6 Italy Ski Trip (Tue 12 – Sun 17 Dec)
- Christmas Fair & Festive Day (Wed 13 Dec). Final day of term

Wellbeing Week

The last week has seen an array of different activities as we celebrate our tenth annual Wellbeing Week, also held at the Pelican this year too. A huge thank you to Laura Robertson, and the rest of the staff, for running such a variety of experiences, all of which help the children (and us adults!) to get better at self-managing emotions and feelings.

Across all four year groups, we have squeezed in the following: BMX biking and an assembly on failing and learning including [a stunt jump over the Head and Assistant Head Pastoral](#), orienteering, dance, drama, disability volleyball, first aid, mindful painting, rock art with Year 12 students, completing a whole school kindness display, weaving, raft building and launching, Indian dancing, making comfort matchboxes, looking at emotions cards, generating worry monsters, plantings salad seeds with charity *Cultivating Change*, inventing super heroes, designing playground challenges, playing mental health bingo, completing a mind maze and discussing resilience. We have worn green mental health ribbons donated by Dr Balasubramanian which remind us to be kind and caring to our friends and family, to take care of our minds and to listen and be there for others who need a friend – all of which is particularly relevant considering the difficult situation in the Middle East – we send our best wishes to those with friends and families caught up in this situation. Communal singing has featured heavily, including the Year 3&4 Choir rendition of *You Raise Me Up* and Year 5&6 Choir *You Will Be Found*. These will be re-performed in Assembly on Friday 17 November when parents may attend, although it might be standing room only! A poignant finale to this half term saw the whole school taking part in a special jamboree which included a rendition of Bruno Mars' *Count on Me*; do enjoy a clip via this [link](#).



NSPCC Speak Out, Stay Safe

As part of our Wellbeing Week, we have participated in this NSPCC programme for children aged 5-11 which, in an age-appropriate way, aims to help children understand about abuse and to speak out if they are worried. This child friendly programme is aligned with the curriculum and consists of age appropriate virtual assemblies and supporting classroom based activities. The content is delivered in an engaging and interactive way with the help of the NSPCC mascot Buddy. Further details can be found at www.nspcc.org.uk/speakout. It may be that your child wishes to discuss this topic with you at home. Please see the links below for additional resources to support you as [parents](#) or additional activities to take part in with your [children](#).

Political and Economic Outlook

Last week the Labour Party reaffirmed its commitment to charging VAT on school fees and removing business rate relief from the independent sector. The policy is designed to raise additional revenue to be spent on state education. As Mr Elliott explained in his letter to parents on 7 July 2023, the imposition of VAT on school fees and the loss of business rate relief will lead to Perse fees rising. However, the extent of that increase will depend on the details of any legislation, including the rate at which VAT is charged and the services on which it is charged (it is possible that some services, for example, school lunches and after-school care could be exempt). At present we do not charge VAT on fees, but nor do we recover VAT on expenditure. If the VAT status of schools was to change, we would anticipate being able to recover VAT on inputs, including some VAT on buildings constructed in the last 10 years, via the Capital Goods Scheme. As such, the net effect on The Perse will require detailed calculations that can only be done once the specifics of any future VAT scheme have been announced. However, as a large 3-18 school, The Perse benefits from economies of scale so we can seek to mitigate the impact on fee increases where possible through careful planning, cost control and by growing non-fee income streams, such as international schools and the hiring of facilities.

NHS Advice for Parents on illness and missing school

It can be tricky deciding whether or not to keep your child off school when they are unwell. The NHS has provided the following guidance [Is my child too ill for school? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk) to help parents decide whether their child should be kept off school or not. This guidance refers to coughs, colds, sore throats, temperatures, vomiting and diarrhoea as well as a range of other illness and infectious diseases.

Artwork

This week's artwork showcases year 4's observational drawings of trees from the prep grounds.



Mini Giraffe – deadline Friday 3 November

After the success of Cows About Cambridge in 2021, the Charity [Break](#) are bringing a new sculpture trail to the streets of Cambridge next Spring with a herd of 40 giant giraffes creating a towering new exhibition entitled [Cambridge Standing Tall](#). We are working with a local artist on plans for our very own Perse Prep 2.5m giraffe which will feature in the city centre, as well as our 1.5m mini giraffe which will be designed and created in-house at the Prep! We were delighted to take possession of this cute giraffe (provisionally named 'Percy') this week and we would now love to take on board ideas from children, staff and parents for its decoration. Any final ideas can be sketched on the blank canvas of a giraffe provided at the end of this newsletter and which should be returned to Dan Wansell after half term.



Christmas Shoebox Appeal – deadline Friday 3 November

A reminder that we shall be collecting Christmas shoeboxes immediately after half term. Boxes need to be left at Reception. Printed leaflets (with labels to stick on the wrapped boxes) have been handed out and you can download extra information at this site [Christmas Shoebox Appeal](#).

Christmas Card Competition – deadline Friday 3 November

Children are invited to take part in this year's Christmas card competition; they may use any artist's media and should submit their designs on an A4 sheet of paper, using the whole of the page. The winning design will be used for this year's official Prep Christmas card; it is not a bad idea to include some Perse branding into the design! Entries should be handed in to Reception.

Friday Assemblies, including Remembrance Assembly – Friday 10 November

Children are just starting to reach the 50 Housepoint level and will all have a chance to come up on stage and receive this in front of the whole school. Children are told their total at the very start of each week. On 3 November, we shall also find out which House has won the Routledge House Trophy, awarded to the leading House each half term.

Advance warning that we shall be holding a Remembrance Day Assembly on Friday 10 November. If we have dry weather, this will be held outside on the top playground. As usual, parents are very welcome to attend. We shall award housepoint certificates and other awards immediately afterwards. Poppies will be available after half term; these were charged in advance to this term's bill at £2. However, if you wish to opt out of donating for this then please email fees@perse.co.uk and this amount will be credited to your next bill.



Sport – the first week back after half term

Wednesday 1 November

2.30pm: U11 A/B/C/D Girls' Hockey v King's College School (H)

Friday 3 November

3.10pm: U10 A/B/C/D Girls' Hockey v St John's College School (A)

It was lovely to see so many parents supporting the recent House Matches; results are as follows:

Mixed Football: Y3: Foresters

Boys' Football: Y4: Foresters, Y5: Foresters, Y6: Nomads; Overall: Foresters

Girls' Hockey: Y4: Nomads, Y5: Nomads, Y6: Barbarians; Overall: Nomads

After half term we move onto the rugby season for the boys and the Year 3 girls. All children should have mouthguards, whether opting for contact or touch rugby. As colder weather tends to set in after half term, please can you remind your children to bring warm clothing for all outdoor activities. This includes base layers, tracksuits, gloves and hats where necessary.

Football – ISFA Regional Champions and qualification for the National Finals

Well done to the Boys' Pelican football team who have had two big tournaments recently. They recently lost in the IAPS Regional quarter finals on penalties but last week won the ISFA Regional Final and thus qualified for the National Finals next May, to be played at St George's Park. In the group stages they beat Stephen Perse (5-0), Heath Mount (1-0) and Dame Bradbury's (1-0). In the knockout stages they beat Broughton Manor (6-0) in the quarter final, Kimbolton (1-0) in the semi-final and Heath Mount (2-1 AET) in a nail-biting final, with only one team qualifying for the Nationals! A big thank you to coaches Dan Nicholes and Jacob Butler and well done to the squad of **Adam Agarizaev, Sam Brennan, Ted Jenkin, Tom Kelliher, Tom Lance, Adam Lee, Hugo Magliano, George Pullan and George Robson.**



Hockey – IAPS Regional Champions and qualification for the National Finals

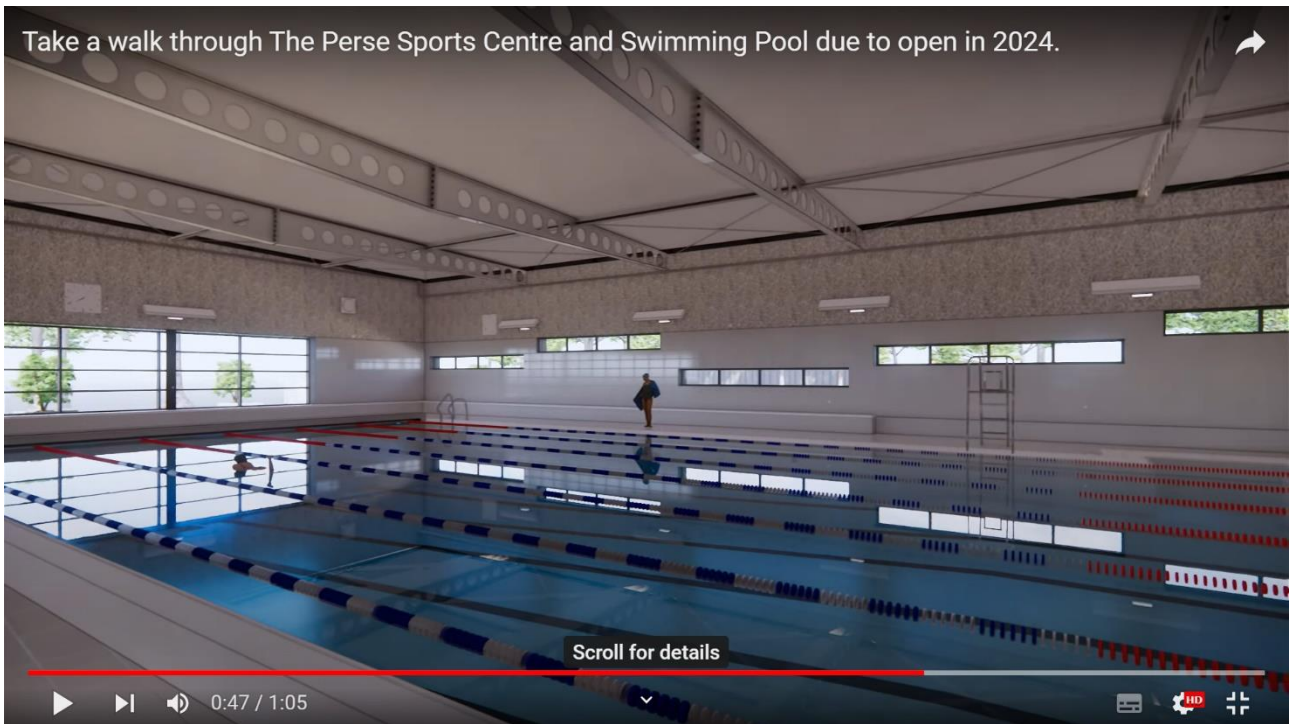
Well done to the Girls' Pelican side who won the IAPS Hockey Regional Tournament last Wednesday, scoring 7 goals and conceding none in open play, with victories against Old Buckenham Hall (4-0), Norwich (1-0) and Woodbridge (1-0) before beating Felsted 2-0 in penalty strokes in the quarter final and Langley 3-2 on strokes after a tense semi-final. The girls were delighted to beat Sevenoaks (1-0) in the Final to crown an impressive day and confirm qualification for the National Finals at Millfield in November. Well done to the squad of **Marianne Gouliouris, Eryn Jonas, Hanqi Lu, Annabel Ramsden, Julia Saklatvala, Arabella Sedgemore, Sherry Shao, Arabella Wallace, Siobhan Wan and Lucia Whelan.**



Swimming Pool and Sports Hall

We hope the 3D walkthrough visualisation that can be accessed [here](#) will give you an impression of just how transformative the new swimming pool, climbing wall, and sports centre development will be. This facility will be used by all Prep children as well as bringing in additional income from hiring The Perse's facilities and learn-to-swim lessons.

Take a walk through The Perse Sports Centre and Swimming Pool due to open in 2024.



Academic Find out More

You may be aware that we group children differently for Maths at the Prep, and this is starting for Year 3 when we return after the half term break. In this [Academic Find Out More video](#), Mr Bown explains how our system for grouping children in lessons works.

Academic Department Snapshot

Throughout the year we are highlighting each of the departments in the school to provide a little more information about some of the current work that is going on in lessons. This week we include a page on Geography at the end of this newsletter.



Lost Property – how it works!

Lost Property can cause significant stress in most schools; however, very few have their own *Lost Property Management Service* (!). Almost giving credence to the children's belief that teachers actually sleep at school, early bird Annelise Sanders, our Head of Year 6, sets off on her daily journey around the main Prep site just before 7.00am each morning to collect up any lost property items:

- Any named property is put on children's pegs.
- Unnamed water bottles are displayed by the table tennis tables.
- Unnamed lost property is kept at the front of her classroom and is toured around Form Rooms by her Year 6 helpers every day except Friday.
- On Friday, unless the weather is poor, all unnamed lost property is laid out for view on the table tennis table beside the flagpole.

It is the responsibility of the children a) to check their peg in the morning, b) listen to the helpers when they visit each morning, c) check the Friday display and d) visit Ms Sanders' room to check on the lost property.

Safety to and from School

With the dark soon upon us at the end of the school day, I would like to reiterate the importance of safety for your children. Thank you to parents for confirming with Mr Knowles (tpknowles@perse.co.uk) if your child is making their own way to or from school by themselves.

Half term can also be a good time to check on hi-vis equipment for all those cycling to school; it is impressive to see so many arriving at school on two wheels, or by foot.

Mary Poppins Jr – Upper Production – 23 / 24 / 25 November

We would like to invite you to the upcoming Perse Players' Production of Disney and Cameron Mackintosh's **Mary Poppins JR** in the Peter Hall Performing Arts Centre on Thursday 23 November (6.30pm), Friday 24 (6.30pm), and Saturday 25 (3pm and also 7pm). This musical features favourite tunes from the film plus new material from the writing duo Stiles and Drewe. Tickets priced £15 (adult), £12 (over 66, unemployed, disabled) and £7 (full-time education) can be purchased through the school's box office www.perse.co.uk/box-office. We expect Mary Poppins to be a sell-out show so we recommend booking your tickets early!



PPP AGM

My thanks to all the parents who attended last week's AGM where co-chairs Melissa Whelan and Liz McDade and secretary Lucy Crosby celebrated and acknowledged the significant work of the PPP over the past year. A pdf summary has been sent via PersePost to all parents. The treasurer, Stacy Sinclair, reported that a staggering £13,500 is once again being donated by the PPP this year, with funds split between the PPP charity *The Red Hen Project* and the children's charity *Guide Dogs*, and also the School for a particular tangible project. Much of this staggering figure came from the proceeds from the Autumn Family BBQ which gave a surplus of £6,152.15.

Parents also used the AGM as an opportunity to vote for this year's PPP charity, with [Blue Smile](#) (children's mental health charity working in schools in Cambridgeshire) being the top choice. A reminder that the children's vote for next year is [The Marine Conservation Society UK](#).

PPP Water Bottles

The Prep purple water bottle is available to buy, priced at £15. This aluminium bottle has a screw-on lid with a handle for easy carrying. It holds 650ml, is BPA free and has a space to write your child's name. Profits from sales go to our two chosen charities. To order your Perse Prep water bottle, use the password *PPPwaterbottles* and go to <https://www.eventcreate.com/e/pppwaterbottles>. These can be collected from Reception from the Friday following your order and payment.

Certificates and Awards

Congratulations to **Saskia Addis** on her two trophies with Cambridge Triathlon Club; **Benjamin Keen** on his Chief Scout's Silver Award and for coming 7th in the British Schools Score Orienteering championships.; **William Moss** on his ABRSM Grade 2 Piano; **Charlie Qin** and **Oscar Qin** for playing in a Chess Exhibition with Grandmaster Michael Adams to celebrate the life in chess of ten times British Chess Champion Dr Jonathan Penrose OBE; **Dina Wortley** on her Year 5 Space Quest, and being the first to reach the fifteen book mark already! This week's Scores on the Doors are:

My very best wishes to you all for a super half term break. Yours sincerely,

James Piper
Head

4 TH	3 RD	2 ND	1 ST
CORINTHIANS 2799	ROMANS 2864	BARBARIANS 2903	FORESTERS 2931

We value endeavour, intellectual curiosity and scholarship, breadth and balance,
one another and our environment.



Images from Wellbeing Week

