



# THE PERSE

## PREP SCHOOL

CAMBRIDGE

5 January 2024

Dear Parents,

Happy New Year to all of you. The beauty of the start of the Lent Term is that children can hit the ground running from day one; reenergised, they slot straight back into familiar classes and groups and settle straight into a good school routine. It has been a pleasure to see so many bounding and skipping back into school!

In this morning's assembly we saw [video highlights](#) from Year 6's ski trip to Italy at the start of the holidays. The children were outstanding ambassadors for the School and their families, and made huge progress, with the majority of the 55 children all beginners. A huge thank you to the staff team of Ed McGregor, Jacob Butler, Clare Cassidy, Nicky Clark, Nat Farrant, Dan Nicholes and Laura Robertson. Ed is already working on next year's trip and will be writing to Year 5 parents before the end of this term.



With the onset of cold weather likely next week, can I remind parents to ensure that their children have sufficient warm clothing for break times, games and clubs. A reminder that 3-18 Snow Procedure information can be found via this [link](#) on the Perse Portal in case of particularly cold weather later in the term.

Next week sees the start of our Entrance Test process, with 7+ candidates joining us from Monday, and 8+, 9+ and 10+ candidates coming over the next two weeks. The positive marketing that current parents continue to do for the School is very obvious to see, with 165 children registered for just over 30 available places across the four year groups. Thank you.

A special thank you also to all the parents who contributed to the individual boxes of chocolates that were delivered to all Prep staff at the end of last term; hugely appreciated!

- School Calendar via SOCS [here](#)
- 5Alep Form Concert (Tue 9 January) – 4pm to 4.45pm in the Hall. Parents welcome
- 5A Form Concert (Tue 16 January) – 4pm to 4.45pm in the Hall. Parents welcome
- Year 3 Parent Meetings (Mon 22 & Tue 23 January) – booking details were sent on 3 January
- Year 5 French Trip Evening (Wed 24 January) – 7.30pm to 8.15pm in the Drama Studio for parents
- Year 4 Parent Meetings (Mon 29 & Tue 30 January) – booking details will be sent on 8 January
- Year 6 Upper Transition Talk (Wed 31 January) – 3.45pm to 5pm in the Drama Studio
- Year 5 Centre Stage *One Night Only* (Wed 7 February) – 6pm to 6.45pm in the Hall. Parents welcome
- Year 5 Parent Meetings (Mon 12 & Tue 13 February) – booking details will be sent on 22 January
- Year 6 Parent Meetings (Mon 26 & Tue 27 February) – booking details will be sent on 5 February

### **Parking on Site – 5Alep Form Concert – Tuesday 9 January**

In order to keep traffic flowing on site, can I ask that parents don't park for sustained periods on the top playground. For example, for the upcoming Year 5 and Year 4 Form Concerts on Tuesdays, it would be helpful if parents could park at the Porson Road Playing Fields. These concerts (4-4.45pm) provide a chance for all children, whatever their level, to practise performing in front of a friendly audience of peers and parents!

### **Opening of Art Exhibition – Monday 15 January 3.30 – 6.00pm**

Parents are invited to view their children's artwork in New School at the end of the school day from Monday 16 January until half term. There will be light refreshments available to those visiting on the first afternoon when Mr Wansell and Miss Matthews will be present.

## Artwork

This week's art banner showcases Year 5's prints, created by using rotational symmetry.



## Centre Stage – Wednesday 7 February 6 – 6.45pm

The first Centre Stage cast will perform *One Night Only* in the penultimate week before half term. The following week, the second Centre Stage cast begin their rehearsals, with their production taking place towards the end of the Summer Term.

## Year 5 *The Voyage* – Saturday 9 March

Director of Music at the Upper, Ben Wingfield, is staging another Community Project involving five schools, live instruments, artwork and dance for the end of this Lent Term. The date for this event has now been confirmed as Saturday 9 March, with rehearsals from 9.30am and the concert running from 11.30am – 12.30pm. All Year 5 children have already been rehearsing the pieces for this in school with Paul Harris and will perform to parents in the Friday assembly on March 8. The Concert at West Road is open to as many of Year 5 who would like to take part; further details will be sent to parents at the end of next week.



## Recording Reading in Planners

We really appreciate all the support parents are giving to help children record their reading in their Planner. Just a reminder that we ask children to read at home for a minimum of 15 minutes each day, and that parents should record this with an initial once done. We recommend that children read aloud at least once in the week. Full instructions can be found in each weekly page of the Planner.

## Sport – the week ahead

### Wednesday 10 January

Sadly, Framlingham have cancelled the U11 A Hockey Festival next Wednesday. Normal games arrangements will apply instead.

### Friday 12 January

2.30pm: U10 A/B/C/D Netball v Dame Bradbury's (H)

2.30pm: U10 A/B/C/D Hockey v Dame Bradbury's (H)

For home netball fixtures, parking will continue to be available at the playing fields. Parents will have to buzz Reception to get onto the main site if they are wanting to watch the matches at the bottom playground. The Gazebo will be up to provide some cover from the elements and also as a focal point for the match tea afterwards.

To find out the exact start time for each individual team in hockey and netball, do check [www.persesport.co.uk](http://www.persesport.co.uk) as not all teams can play at the same time. This means that some matches will start a little later than the time advertised above. Please note that children must wear mouthguards and shin pads for every hockey session.

## PE

A reminder that, for the first half of term, the following classes can wear games kit all day on the occasions when they have PE lessons (Monday 5A; Tuesday 3A, 4A, 4Aleph, 6Alpha, 6Aleph; Wednesday 3Alpha; Thursday 5Alpha, 5Aleph; Friday 6A). We will revert to normal uniform once the gymnastics topic stops after the Lent half term.

## 3-18 Update

Despite the stormy weather over Christmas, construction of the 6-lane swimming pool, the 11m roped climbing wall and the new sports hall remains on track. The Perse will shortly be advertising for a Sports Centre Manager to oversee the school use and external lets of these excellent new facilities which will be open for school and community use in September.

2024 is the largest election year in history with over 4 billion people set to vote in regional, legislative and / or presidential elections in more than 60 countries. This includes 3 of the largest elections in the world – India, The European Union, and the USA. For the UK General Election, likely to be in the autumn of 2024, we know that a subsequent result could mean a VAT charge on school fees at 20%. Parents are understandably asking questions about The Perse’s response but, until the General Election result is known and we see the legislative detail of any potential VAT change including the scope for mitigations, we can’t give specific answers. However, we are very mindful of the financial pressures that parents face and will do all we can to control costs whilst continuing to invest in our staff and facilities to ensure we offer an excellent 3D (academic, pastoral, and extra-curricular) education.

Artificial Intelligence will play a role in the 2024 elections. Used well it should allow politicians to communicate their messages more clearly to the electorate but used badly it may subvert elections by spreading false rumours and untruths. Both visibly and invisibly AI will play a larger role in our lives in 2024, and The Perse will be exploring AI in our AI Networking event open to all current parents on Thursday 25 January from 6-8pm at the Upper. Our guest speakers are Professor Neil Lawrence, DeepMind Professor of Machine Learning at the University of Cambridge, and Dr Anthony Cox, computer scientist and bioinformatician at the Wellcome Sanger Institute. If you would like to attend, please sign up [here](#).

### Certificates and Awards

Congratulations to **Léonie Ricciardi-Baquié** on her Y5 Reading Challenge Award; **Ilyas Khan, Max Taylor, Tom McDade** and **Felix McDonald** on coming fourth and **Arabella Wallace** coming third with their respective Cambridge City Hockey Club U10 teams at the National Indoor Championships; **Saskia Addis** on her Oxygene Gold Award for skiing; **Neha Sathiyamoorthy** on her Trinity Electronic Keyboard Award with Distinction; **Evelyn Taylor** for her bronze medal for U9 Floor Gymnastics at the Gymfinity Christmas Gymnastic competition; **Charlie Qin** on winning the U10 title and **Oscar Qin** on winning the U8 title in the North London Chess Grand Prix, both contributing to The Perse winning the title of Best School! This leads us on to this week’s Scores on the Doors:



Yours sincerely,

**James Piper**  
Head

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



