



# THE PERSE

## PREP SCHOOL

CAMBRIDGE

16 February 2024

Dear Parents,

The halfway point of the academic year should allow us a moment of reflection; every child has had opportunities to shine and sparkle over a busy six months. Parents will be able to see a difference in their children over this time and I am sure that they all have plenty of exciting stories about what they have been up to.

As parents, we should also be learning and, I hope, becoming wiser! I know my interest was piqued yesterday by an article in *The Times* with its headline advising 'Routine is key to a healthy, wealthy and wise child'. Perhaps I should not have been surprised with the age-old nuggets discovered by researchers from Colorado State University who found that 5-9 year old children benefitted from dependable schedules. They advised that set family mealtimes, regular playtimes with parents and bedtime stories in the evening all helped children get more sleep than those with less structure in their lives, and that this extra sleep is crucial for healthy development – both physically and emotionally. Perhaps this is a good reminder for us all...

On the subject of mental health, we were thrilled to host ex-Prep School Head Mike Crossley here last week as he led Mental Health First Aid training for 28 different staff across the Prep, Pelican and Upper. Mike will be back next term to run a Pastoral Talk for parents at 7.30pm on Thursday 18 April, in association with the PPP. Further details about this cheese and wine evening will be sent round in due course.



Last week the Year 5 cast in our Centre Stage club produced two outstanding performances of *One Night Only*. My thanks to Mr Bown who wrote this play and, with Mr Harris and Mr Reston, produced original music and lyrics. It is thrilling to see children growing in confidence through experiences such as this.

- School Calendar via SOCS [here](#)
- Year 6 Parents' Meetings (Mon 26 & Tue 27 February) – booking details were sent on 5 February
- PPP Second-hand Uniform (Fri 1 Mar) – 8.00am to 9.30pm in the Porson Rd Pavilion for parents
- Ensemble Concert (Mon 4 Mar) – 6pm to 7.45pm in two parts in the Hall. Parents welcome
- Parent IE&D Group (Thu 7 Mar) – 3.30pm to 4.30pm in Drama Studio for parents
- World Book Day (Fri 8 Mar) – our dress-up day with the theme of your favourite book character
- PPP Family Quiz (Fri 8 Mar) – 6.30pm to 9pm at the Upper for families
- Year 5 *The Voyage* Community Concert (Sat 9 Mar) – 9.30am to 12.30pm at the West Road Concert Hall. Optional event with parents welcome to the concert in the final hour.
- Year 6 *Wind in the Willows* (Tue 19, Wed 20, Thur 21 Mar) – 6pm to 7.30pm in the Hall.
- Year 5 French Trip (Fri 22 Mar to Mon 25 Mar) – depart 6am and return 5.30pm, both at the Upper
- Term ends (Wed 27 Mar) – normal end of day arrangements

Over the past week our POD members have been royally entertained by their counterparts, the Members of the Pelican Parliament, with a range of fun activities at the Pelican; Nour and his team marked Shrove Tuesday with piles of pancakes, we have looked at the festivals of Lent and the Lunar New Year, marked Safer Internet Day and hosted David Cook, the Founding Principal Elect of The Perse School Muscat, Oman.

Yesterday the children also enjoyed one of their favourite assemblies of the year – perhaps only in The Perse (!) – with great excitement generated by Mr Knowles' mid-year presentation on Rewards & Sanctions, reiterating how this process works and the emphasis on positive discipline. He gave some interesting statistics, such as the number of Housepoints given (36,311 – an average per pupil of 128), the number of Fridays given (89 – average 0.3) and the number of Deputy Head Detentions (20 – average 0.07). It is good to see a consistent share of Housepoints between the year groups (Year 3 26%, Year 4 25%, Year 5 25%, Year 6 24%)!

O Flower of Scotland,  
When will we see, your like again,  
That fought and died for,  
Your wee bit Hill and Glen,  
And stood against him, (against who?)  
Proud Edward's Army.  
And sent him homeward tae think again.

Whether you have Scottish blood or not, I suspect that you might have been moved by the rendition of *Flower of Scotland* in assembly this morning, close on the heels of the Welsh anthem of *Land of My Fathers* last week. We still have *Ireland's Call* (8 March) and *La Marseillaise* (15 March) to come ahead of England's rugby matches in the Six Nations as we travel around the British Isles, and France, and celebrate some of the national pride of our home nations.

### Routledge House Cup

The House Cup was awarded to Nomads for the first half of term. This took account of all housepoints awarded for academic endeavour and excellence, music and games, as well as kindness and consideration, organisation and improvement. Yueer Yuan collected the trophy on behalf of Nomads, as she was their leading Year 6 housepoint scorer.



### Sport – the week after half term

#### Tuesday 27 February

10.30am Pelicans Hockey IN2 County Tournament (H)

#### Wednesday 28 February

2.30pm U11 A/B/C/D Hockey v Bedford School (A)

#### Friday 1 March

3.15pm U10 A/B/C/D Netball v St John's (A)

3.15pm U10 A/B/C/D Hockey v St John's (A)



Welcome to the Year 6 Academic Parents' Evening.

To check your parents' evening appointments, log in to the **Parents' Evening Portal**. Instructions for doing this can be found in the email sent to you on 5<sup>th</sup> February.



Staff are seated around the Hall and **teacher desks are named** in case you're not sure who you're looking for.

A **countdown clock** on the screen will track the five-minute appointments. Staff will have to keep to these timings to ensure the event runs smoothly.



We hope your discussions are **productive**. Do **ask** any member of staff if we can help with a query.



### Year 6 Parents' Evenings – Monday 26 & Tuesday 27 February

Parents have received a PersePost with details of how to book five minute appointments with all of your child's teachers for this in-person Academic Parents' Evening in the Hall. Parents may make use of Late Stay, at no charge, whilst they attend this event; please notify Late Stay staff of this when you collect at the end of the evening. **To ease the traffic flow up until 5pm, parents should park at the playing fields rather than on the playground.**

### Parent IE&D Group – Thursday 7 March

Stef Abbott, our Head of IE&D (Inclusion, Equality & Diversity), is delighted to confirm the date of our next meeting for any parents interested in discussing and listening to views about IE&D at the Prep. Parents should come to the Drama Studio at 3.30pm. We aim to finish by 4.30pm. If you are unable to attend in person but would like to join remotely, do request a link ([spabbott@perse.co.uk](mailto:spabbott@perse.co.uk)). Parents have so far found this a helpful opportunity to share ideas and discuss what can be some complex issues. We hope to tap into parental expertise and experience and keep developing a diverse, understanding and inclusive Prep community.

### World Book Day – Friday 8 March

I am sure that parents will appreciate some advance warning of our dress-up day for World Book Day at the start of March. There is plenty of leeway for creative spirits, with the theme being 'dress as your favourite book character'! We are fortunate that leading children's author, [Lisa Thompson](#), will be visiting on the day.

### Giving Notice for the end of the Summer Term

Parents are required to give one term's notice of any pupil withdrawal. If no notice is given, it is assumed that pupils will remain at the school and staffing, resources and the timetable will be finalised accordingly. If you intend to withdraw your son or daughter from The Perse at the end of this academic year, then you must write to the Head to give formal notice by the first day of the Summer Term (Monday 15 April). If you haven't informed the School already, a term's notice in writing is also required for pupils who are leaving The Perse to go elsewhere at the end of Year 6. This applies also for those pupils who have already accepted a transfer place at the Upper School but will not be taking up this place. Parents giving notice after the deadline will be liable for the Michaelmas term's fees in lieu of notice, as the School will have committed to Michaelmas Term expenditure on the assumption that pupils were staying.

### Club Pelican – Monday 8 to Friday 12 April

Club Pelican is run by Perse staff and is available for a week over the Easter holidays to provide childcare and fun activities for Year 3 & 4, as well as Pelican children from Nursery upwards. The weekly rate is £300, which includes all activities, a morning snack, lunch and afternoon tea. Bookings should be made



**EASTER EGGSTRAVAGANZA!**

For Pelican Pupils from Nursery to Year 4, 8.00am - 5.00pm. Other pupils based in the main hall. 8.00am - 5.00pm. Booking a morning snack, lunch and afternoon tea.

8th-12th April 2024

EVIS children are based in Nursery. Other pupils based in the main hall. Book to Perse Learning Staff with high independence skills.

THE PERSE PELICAN SCHOOL

BOOKINGS NOW OPEN Book a place via the PersePost.



via the Parent Portal. The full day runs from 8am to 5.30pm; parents are welcome to drop off and collect children at their convenience, using the side gate near the Nursery. A timetable of activities and workshops can be found at the end of this newsletter.

### Perse Summer School – Monday 8 July to Friday 2 August

Please note that the programme for the Summer School, based at the Upper, is up for parents and children to view. This runs from Monday 8 July to Friday 2 August and is open to all children between the ages of 7-14. Further details can be found at [www.perse Summerschool.co.uk](http://www.perse Summerschool.co.uk). We are delighted with a new website and booking system. Please register on the system to create your account and add your children's details. This will be a great assistance to you when you book. Bookings are scheduled to open on 4 March at 10am.

### Artwork

This week's art banner showcases Year 4's drawings of tropical birds.



### Safer Internet Day

We have just acknowledged Safer Internet Day, an annual event celebrated around the globe, designed to promote safer and more responsible use of online technology. My thanks to 4A and Mrs Cassidy for their engaging and humorous assembly on this subject. I am also grateful to Mr Bown, our Online Safety Lead, who provides the following guidance about the benefits and risks involved with being online:

Our challenge as a school (which also applies to parents), is to devise ways to allow open, honest conversations about the benefits and risks of technology, but also to equip children with strategies to stay safe and to make good decisions if something does go wrong online. We cover this material across our Computing and PSHE curricula, but we also encourage parents to communicate with one another, to agree ground rules for usage, appropriate content and supervision so children receive a consistent message. Safer Internet Day provides us a good opportunity to reiterate some of our key recommendations:

- Children have at least an hour of time away from a screen before bed.
- Children are online in shared family spaces rather than alone in bedrooms.
- Children only communicate via messaging or audio chat with people they know in real life.
- Devices are charged and stored overnight in a different room from where children are sleeping.
- Age ratings for games and apps (known as PEGI ratings) are adhered to.
- Children keep passwords secure and change them if they feel they have been compromised.

If you ever have concerns about online safety, do get in touch with Mr Bown via [tabown@perse.co.uk](mailto:tabown@perse.co.uk).

### Academic Find Out More Videos

Continuing our series of sharing information about our approach and offering tips to support your child, we are publishing three more Find Out More videos this week. Mr de Albuquerque has this advice for [supporting learning spelling](#); Mrs Coleman sheds light on how [maths learning can be found in everyday life](#) and Ms Abbott explains more about how [Science topic tests](#) work. As ever, if you have any questions about the academic side of the Prep, do get in touch with Mr Bown, the Assistant Head (Academic), via [tabown@perse.co.uk](mailto:tabown@perse.co.uk).

### 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 Maths at the end of this newsletter.

### Computer Science Teaching Vacancy at the Upper

As has been widely reported in the media, there is a shortage of graduates entering the teaching profession, especially in STEM subjects. Although The Perse with its excellent pupils and staff, good facilities, and very competitive salaries, is an attractive employer, the School can find it challenging to recruit excellent teachers in some subjects. One solution has been to recruit high quality staff from outside teaching and train them in house. This route has allowed a number of members of staff to make very successful and rewarding career transitions into teaching. The School is currently recruiting for a teacher of Computer Science and would welcome applications from well qualified graduates considering a move into teaching. More details can be

found here [Work with us - The Perse School Cambridge](#). Alongside a competitive package rich in professional development opportunities, teaching staff also qualify for fee remission.

### IAPS Hockey Regional Tournament

Congratulations to the U11 hockey side who did very well at last week's IAPS Regionals at Framlingham where 16 sides had their sights on qualifying for the National Finals. They got off to a great start with a win over Langley (2-0) before losing to St John's (1-0). They beat Culford (2-1) to qualify for the quarter finals where they edged out King's (3-2) in a thriller decided by a last second Jonathan Goldsmith penalty flick. Unfortunately, we lost in the semi-finals to Beeston Hall (1-0) before narrowly losing the 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> place play off against Culford (1-0) in the final fixture! My thanks to the coaching duo of Mr McGregor and Mrs Clark who have led this side so well. Congratulations to the following: **Adam Agarizaev, Sam Brennan, Sam D'Arcy, Jonathan Goldsmith, Tom Lance, Tom McDade, Felix McDonald, George Pullan and Steven Wang.**

### Nordic Stroll Piano Concert

Well done to the following six children who took part in the interactive Piano Concert over three stages at the Upper this week. This event involved 80 pianists from across The Perse and celebrated Edvard Grieg and Norwegian culture. Well done to **Charlize Church, Elizabeth Kennedy, Sunny Li, Julia Saklatvala, Rosalind Selby and Matthew Wilkins** who lived up to the words of Grieg himself, "The beauty of music lies in its ability to unite people from all walks of life, transcending all cultural and language barriers."

### Certificates and Awards

Congratulations to **Iris Candea, Dhruv Ghildyal, Aurora Short and Arabella Wallace** on their Year 5 Reading challenge awards; **Charlize Church** on her first place in the 50m breaststroke at the Cambridgeshire County Swimming Championships and her EPTA UK Piano Competition certificate; **Ellie Zhu** and **Julian Zhu** on their EPTA UK Piano Competition certificates with Distinction and qualifying for the next round in London in their respective age categories; **Beatrice Toutoungi** on her Grade 1 Modern Theatre certificate with Distinction; **Eleanor Reynolds** on her Tap Dance certificate with Distinction; **Olivia Reynolds** on her Royal Academy of Dance Grade 3 certificate with Distinction; **Marissa Ojha** on her Royal Academy of Dance Grade 3 certificate; **Alex Smith** and **Ryan Smith** both qualifying for the Trailblazers 60cm Event following the show-jumping competition at the West Anglia College. This leads us on to this week's Scores on the Doors:

Yours sincerely



James Piper  
Head

| 4 <sup>TH</sup> | 3 <sup>RD</sup> | 2 <sup>ND</sup> | 1 <sup>ST</sup> |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| FORESTERS       | COMINTHANS      | BARBARANS       | ROMANS          |
| 2428            | 2474            | 2544            | 2550            |