



THE PERSE

PREP SCHOOL

CAMBRIDGE

2 February 2024

Dear Parents,

Although the days are getting lighter, children are often tired at this stage of term, especially with the first half of this term being a week longer than usual. Tiredness is no surprise with plenty of events taking place. Jackie Wright reliably informs me that, notwithstanding the 18 drop-in clubs, 1217 individual clubs slots are taken up weekly by the 283 children at the Prep, and that 214 of these children enjoy a total of 282 music lessons each week! It has been good to see so many parents for the two Year 3 and Year 4 parents' evenings, the Year 5 French Trip Information Evening and Year 6 tea and Q&A with Upper staff.

Recent assemblies have featured 3A's celebration of holy days around the world; a study of *Holocaust Memorial Day*; an exploration of the Highway Code for life and the moral of telling the truth and being brave even when it seems easier not to from the story of the Emperor's Seed. An excerpt from today's assembly follows.

The King and the Falcon

Once a king was given a gift of two peregrine falcons. However, whereas one soared high in the sky, the other stayed on its branch. The king complained that he had never encountered a bird this stubborn – despite his very best efforts the bird would not fly! He summoned healers and sorcerers from all the land to help this particular falcon, but no one could make the bird fly – it stayed on its branch.

Having tried everything else, the king decided to summon someone more familiar with the countryside to understand the problem. So, he asked for a local farmer. In the morning, the king was thrilled to see the falcon soaring high above the palace gardens. He asked for the miracle worker to be brought in front of him.

The farmer was fetched and was asked how he had made the falcon fly. He replied, "It was very easy, your highness. I simply cut the branch where the bird was sitting."



This is one of my favourite stories for a school environment. It reminds children that they are like the falcons – so full of excitement with the potential of the heights and freedom that they can achieve. However, it also provides a reminder to children not to settle for 'ordinary' by clinging too closely to what feels familiar and not making the most of the opportunities available.

Importantly there is also a salutary lesson for us adults who are all trying to help our children fly high. Firstly, much as we want them to soar high right now, this doesn't always happen straightaway. Secondly, we must beware 'over parenting' our children – at times children do need the firm nudge to fly independently. This is precisely why we put on so many extracurricular opportunities and trips for the children at school. It is natural for parents to worry when children are outside of their comfort zones, but these experiences do help them on their journey to soar and circle high and free...

- School Calendar via SOCS [here](#)
- 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 were sent on 22 January
- Year 6 Parent Meetings (Mon 26 & Tue 27 February) – booking details will be 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.

Start of the School Day – 8.25am

May I take this opportunity to remind parents that the School Day starts at 8.25am which is when the children go to Form Rooms to settle and get themselves organised. If children are late, they can miss various messages given for the day ahead. I am ever mindful of Cambridge traffic and the increased journey times for most parents in recent years, especially for those dropping off children at different sites or rushing off to work themselves. I apologise for not having any immediate solutions to the problem other than perhaps setting the alarm clock five minutes earlier!

5Alpha Form Concert – Tuesday 6 February 4.00 – 4.45pm

We look forward to 5Alpha's Form Concert next Tuesday. Please can I remind parents to park at the Porson Road Playing Fields if they are attending this event.

Year 5 Centre Stage Production – Wednesday 7 February 6.00 – 6.45pm

We look forward to seeing parents and families at next week's production of *One Night Only*; do park on the top playground. The children will be performing a dress rehearsal to the School at 9.30am on the Tuesday morning; parents are welcome to attend this if they are unable to attend on the Wednesday.

Year 5 *The Voyage* – Saturday 9 March

Many thanks to all the Year 5 who have signed up for the Community Music Project involving the Upper and four other schools towards the end of this term. If anyone else would like to take part, please contact Jackie Wright (prepadmin@perse.co.uk) by Wednesday 7 February. A reminder that rehearsals will take place at the West Road Concert Hall from 9.30am with 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.

Tickets (£12, concessions £5) for parents and families are now available to purchase at www.westroad.org/whats-on/the-voyage.



Sport – the week ahead

Monday 5 February

10am Pelicans IAPS Hockey Regional Tournament at Framlingham (A)

Wednesday 7 February

2.30pm U11 A/B/C/D Netball v St John's (H)

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Thursday 8 February

11.30am – 12.25pm Year 3 Mixed Netball & Hockey House Matches (Round 1)

2.30pm U9 A/B/C/D Hockey v Bedford School (H)

Friday 9 February

2.30pm U10 A/B/C/D Hockey v Kimbolton (A) *NB this is rearranged from two weeks ago.*

Do check www.persesport.co.uk for the specific start time for each individual team in hockey and netball.

PE Kit

As the gymnastics topic has now come to an end, children should revert to their normal uniform for PE lessons (unless already in games kit because of Games on that day) but remember to bring in trainers.

IAPS Netball Regional Finals – U11 Pelicans

Congratulations to our U11 netballers who did very well at yesterday's IAPS Regionals at Uppingham. They stormed to the top of their group by winning comfortably against Solihull (3-1), Winchester House (5-1), Felsted (5-1) and Maidwell Hall (8-0). However, in the quarter finals they then lost against a strong Heath Mount side (4-9) who then qualified for the National Finals. Well done to the entire squad for playing some excellent netball throughout the day: **Jacqueline Danesh, Marianne Gouliouris, Eryn Jonas, Julia Saklatvala, Arabella Sedgemore, Sherry Shao and Siobhan Wan.** My thanks go to Mrs Cassidy and Miss Turner for their coaching and umpiring throughout the day.

Artwork

This week's art banner showcases some of Year 3's iris paintings inspired by Van Gogh.



PPP Family Quiz – Friday 8 March 6.30 – 9.30pm

It's that time of year again! The PPP cannot wait to put on another fun evening for parents and children at the annual family quiz. Last year saw our largest number of participants enjoy the evening, for which all tickets sold out in a record 3 days! Those joining the evening can get an independent team together or join their child's class team. **The booking system will go live on Monday 5 February**, so please watch out for a PersePost showing further details of the evening and how to join in. For now, **save the date!** If you have any questions, please contact catharinedickinson@outlook.com.

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 French at the end of this newsletter.

HomeRun App

Parents across the Pelican, Prep and Upper will soon receive details about a new app called HomeRun. This app has been purchased by the School and will provide a secure platform for Perse parents to liaise with other Perse families whom they may be able to share transport with for their children to / from school.

The app will **only** show details of Perse families, and not anyone external to the School; it will also be free to use. Details of how families can download and use the app will be published soon. We hope lots of Perse families will benefit from using this app which is already in use in over 100 schools around the country.

Oxford University Computing Challenge

A couple of weeks ago, twenty Year 6 children took part in the Oxford University Computing Competition, having scored enough points to qualify in the Bebras Computational Thinking Challenge last term when they competed against over 60,000 students. These children had qualified as the top 10% of children in the world and had to



solve a series of complex logic problems in 45 minutes using online coding tools. Well done to all who took part: **Adam Agarizaev, Ben Finch, Benjamin Keen, Carmen Li, Dhruv Sajog, India Short, Torrin Somner, Selina Wong, Yueer Yuan and Austin Zhang.**

In addition, particular congratulations to **Charlotte Goodfellow, Sophie Oldfield, Annabel Ramsden, Julia Saklatvala, Siobhan Wan and Hanzhe Wang** who came in the top 1% globally and received a merit and **Rosalind Selby and Steven Wang** who came in the top 0.4% and received a distinction for their high scores. Finally, qualifying as one of twenty children for the global grand final taking place online in March, congratulations to **Linus Chin** for receiving both a distinction and an invitation to the final!

Certificates and Awards



Congratulations to **Elizabeth Kennedy** and **Liam Veness** on their Year 5 Reading challenge award; **Ziyan Lu** for completing her Suzuki Piano Book 2 Recital at Girton College; **Ayaan Kakad** on winning a gold medal during the Global Taekwondo International competition; **Annabelle Daly** on gaining her Blue Peter Music Badge; **Angelica Gupta** on her Level 5 Swimming Award; **Charlie Qin** and **Oscar Qin** on their first and second place respectively during the U9 Colchester Chess Tournament, both also qualifying for the EJCOA National Youth Chess Championship Finals to be held in Nottingham. This leads us on to this week's Scores on the Doors:



Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "James Piper".

James Piper
Head



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



Subject	French
Nutshell	"A different language is a different vision of life."
Head of Department	Mrs Claire Soares Winter
Lessons per week	2 (Y3, 4 and 6) or 3 (Y5)
Approach	Our active and immersive approach to learning French, packed with interactive games, songs and roleplay, bring the subject to life and help children expand their horizons beyond the classroom. Making language learning fun and engaging is a critical aim as we seek to equip the children with the linguistic skills they can apply in an increasingly globalised world. We gradually intensify our focus on grammar as the children move through the school, combining this with key vocabulary and real-world context. By embracing this holistic approach, we not only cultivate linguistic abilities but also foster a deep appreciation for Francophone culture.
Current topics	Y3: Animals; Colours Y4: Meet the Family; Wanted: Monsters Y5: Sports and Hobbies; Food and Drink Y6: About Town; Holidays
Highlights of the year	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In Year 3, children love playing interactive games and learning catchy songs. Rediscovering <i>The Hungry Caterpillar</i> in French is always popular.• In Year 4, children enjoy getting dramatic with French exclamations in posed iPad photographs or solving Cluedo crimes as French detectives.• In Year 5, the highlight is the four-day trip to northern France, where classroom learning can be applied in the real world.• In Year 6, children explore the wider Francophone world as virtual tourists. They later compose their own French version of the song <i>This Is Me</i>.
Homework	French sets a weekly task in Y4 – Y6 that provides an opportunity to learn vocabulary, apply knowledge or prepare for a forthcoming activity.



