



THE PERSE

PREP SCHOOL

CAMBRIDGE

1 March 2024

Dear Parents,

If you were a Gladiator, what would your name be and what would your specialist skill be? What was the worst punishment you ever got at school? Is there anything you have found hard as a Head? What's the biggest prank you've ever pulled? Are there any Prep teachers who scare you? Do look at the end of this newsletter for some of the collated answers from my interrogation in *Head's Questions* yesterday; I was really impressed with the breadth and depth of the range of questions.

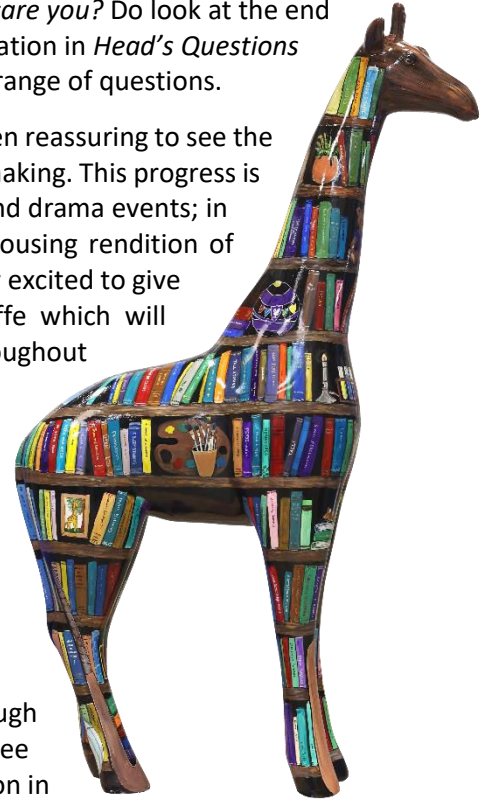
This week has seen the last of our Parents' Evenings; I hope it has been reassuring to see the teachers and hear about the progress that your children have been making. This progress is evident as rehearsals pick up pace for the many end of term music and drama events; in fact, the whole community demonstrated their fine voice with a rousing rendition of *Ireland's Call* in assembly this morning! As for our artists, we are very excited to give

*Ireland, Ireland,
Together standing tall.
Shoulder to shoulder,
We'll answer Ireland's call.*

you a first glimpse of our 2.5m Perse giraffe which will feature as one of a herd of 40 giraffes throughout Cambridge at the end of this month on behalf of charity [Break](#).

Best wishes to everyone involved in running the Cambridge Half Marathon this Sunday. There is a sizeable Prep contingent with Clare Cassidy, Jaime Dipple, Ed McGregor, Jules Reston and Claire Soares Winter all involved. Jules is raising funds for [ACT](#) and Clare for [CPSL Mind](#) and would welcome any final donations.

Finally, we wish one of our TAs, Rebecca Rundle, all the best as she departs on maternity leave next week. We welcome Charlotte Fairclough to the Prep as cover from the start of next term. Charlotte has a degree in English Literature & History of Art, a PGCE, and has taught in London in the state and independent sector. She has a three-month gap as part of her MA in Children's Book Illustration from Cambridge and will be able to join us full time for the whole Summer Term.



- School Calendar via SOCS [here](#)
- Lent Concert (Mon 4 Mar) – 6pm to 7.30pm 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
- *Prep Has Got Talent* (Wed 27 Mar) – children to sign up with friends from their House
- Term ends (Wed 27 Mar) – normal end of day arrangements

News from the Upper

The Perse is continuing to take stock of the wider political and economic environment, and the possibility of a different government introducing VAT on fees and removing the business rate relief that independent schools currently receive. The former would be a financial challenge for parents and the latter a financial challenge for the School.

To mitigate some of the financial challenges that could lie ahead, The Perse is working hard to grow non-tuition fee income streams including those from our overseas schools and the commercial letting of our new sports facilities when they are not being used by Perse pupils. This week a Sports Hall Manager has been appointed who will oversee the running of the swimming pool, sports hall and climbing centre which remain on schedule for completion this summer.

We are conscious that many parents, braced for the prospect of VAT on fees, will be concerned about the affordability of a Perse education. We recognise that demand for means tested bursaries and hardship bursaries are likely to grow, and we want to do what we reasonably can to meet this demand as breadth of pupil intake has always been a defining feature of The Perse where we have a mix of children from very privileged and less privileged backgrounds. Whilst mindful of the many financial pressures Perse families face, we hope that Perse parents will feel able to support our biennial [Giving Day](#) on 22-33 March later this month. All donations of whatever size are greatly appreciated, and UK higher and additional rate taxpayers will be able to claim tax relief on any gifts. If you would like to find out more, do contact Erin Charles, Head of Development at echarles@perse.co.uk.

On our last Giving Day in 2022 parents, alumni and friends of The Perse helped to raise over £114,000. This has enabled more children to access a Perse education through means tested bursaries or remain in the school through times of adversity caused by parental unemployment or bereavement via our means tested hardship bursaries.

Perse parents can also help the School by sharing Perse job opportunities in their networks. In order to get the best out of pupils, the School needs to recruit and retain excellent staff. As such, competitive teaching packages include fee remission for qualifying staff, attractive working conditions, and a commitment to training and professional development. The School is currently recruiting for the following roles: Head of Estates Contracts & Energy Management, Director of Development (fixed term), Head of Learning Support (fixed term), Teacher of Computer Science and Teacher of Chemistry. More details can be found [here](#).

Artwork

This week's art banner showcases Year 3 flower drawings inspired by Henri Matisse.



Sport – the week after half term

Tuesday 5 March

3.00pm U10 A/B/C/D Hockey v St Faith's (H)

3.00pm U10 A/B/C/D Netball v St Faith's (A)

Wednesday 6 March

2.30pm U11 A/B/C/D Netball v King's College (H)

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

Thursday 7 March

2.30pm U9 A/B/C/D Netball v Kimbolton (A)

2.30pm U9 A/B/C/D Hockey v Kimbolton (A)

Friday 8 March

3.10pm U10 A/B/C/D Netball v King's College (H)

3.10pm U10 A/B/C/D Hockey v King's College (H)

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

Lent Concert – Monday 4 March

The Lent Concert is split into **two parts**, running from **6pm – 6.40pm** and **6.50pm – 7.30pm**. Further details with a running order were included in the PersePost for parents of those involved on 16 February. Children will receive a hot meal in school before the event. With the two-part format of this concert, there should be enough parking for most parents on the top playground and in the staff car park. Year 6 should come into school in game kit but also bring school uniform to change into after school.

4Aleph Form Concert – Tuesday 5 March

We look forward to 4Aleph performing in the Hall next week from 4pm to 4.45pm. Please can I remind parents to park at the Porson Road Playing Fields if you are attending this event.

Parent IE&D Group – Thursday 7 March

Stef Abbott, our Head of IE&D (Inclusion, Equality & Diversity), is looking forward to hosting our second 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 click [here](#) to join the meeting (ID: 322 126 853 445, passcode: G3bacV).

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. Please park at the Playing Fields if attending this event.

World Book Day – Friday 8 March

We are celebrating World Book Day with a visit from leading children’s author, [Lisa Thompson](#), next Friday. She will give a whole school talk and lead workshops for Year 5. If you would like to buy a signed copy of one of her books, please go to [Parent Pay](#). We are also collecting book donations for HELP Nepal and Mondo Foundation; children should bring any donations to the Library by Monday 11 March. We look forward to seeing everyone’s costumes next Friday. There is plenty of leeway for creative spirits, with the theme being ‘dress as your favourite book character’.

PPP Family Quiz Night – Friday 8 March

The PPP is looking forward to welcoming parents and pupils to the Family Quiz Night next Friday at 6.30pm at the Upper, where there is parking available. Extra spaces have now been made available so do contact Stacey Sinclair (sinclair.cahill@gmail.com) if you would still like a ticket.

Please look out for an email communication this coming week confirming your team. Do arrive promptly for 6.30pm to meet with your team, grab a drink and settle ready for questions to start at 6.45pm. There will be an immediate picture round for you to start on your team table. Please bring cash (preferably coins) for the soft drinks. There will be a card and cash bar for alcoholic beverages. Any queries please email catharinedickinson@outlook.com.

The Voyage – Year 5 Concert – Saturday 9 March

Thirty of our Year 5 children will be performing in the Community Music Project involving the Upper and four other schools at West Road Concert Hall next Saturday. 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. Tickets (£12, concessions £5) for parents and families are available to purchase at www.westroad.org/whats-on/the-voyage. All of Year 5 have been learning pieces from *The Voyage*. Unfortunately, we are no longer able to perform these in full in the Friday assembly next week but we are planning on a few very brief excerpts to start off our assembly.

Sustrans Big Walk & Wheel Week – 11 to 15 March



In two weeks’ time, we shall be recording the different methods of transport we all use to and from school. Mr Reston is challenging us to see whether we might be able to incorporate walking, biking or scooting into our journeys, particularly if we can park further from school. Whilst it would be wonderful to see families include one of these sustainable forms of transport into their routines wherever possible, we do realise that for some families, journey distances and logistics can make this difficult!

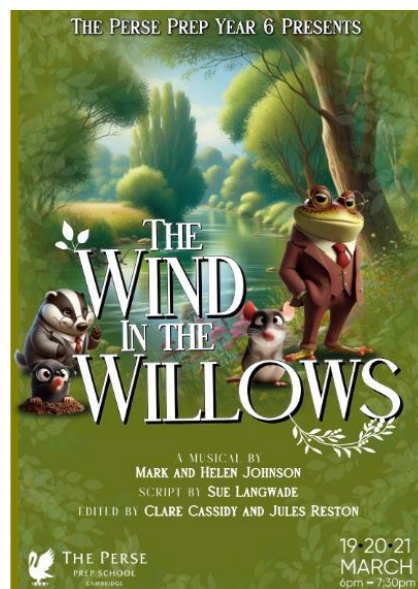
The Wind in the Willows – Year 6 Musical – 19, 20, 21 March

Rehearsals are gathering momentum for the Year 6 production of *The Wind in the Willows*, involving all seventy-five children, with a different twenty-five in the main roles for each show. Children in Years 3, 4 and 5 will be watching the dress rehearsals on the mornings of each show. Evening performances begin at 6pm for all three nights (Tuesday 19, Wednesday 20, Thursday 21 March), finishing at approximately 7.40pm.

With each family able to take up four tickets for their child’s cast night, we have a capacity of a hundred seats. We do have a number of spare seats for each performance, so do contact Jackie Wright if you would like to reserve more seats for your specific evening (prepadmin@perse.co.uk).

When collecting your child on a different night from their cast night, do feel free to pop into the Hall, standing room only (and via the side door), to catch the finale.

Finally, a reminder that costumes need to be in school before next Friday (8 March) in a **named** carrier bag.



Pastoral Newsletter

If you have missed the 3-11 Pastoral Newsletter this week, do click on this [link](#). As well as providing details about PSHE topics this half of term, there is some useful advice and research about good sleep habits.

Perse Summer School – Monday 8 July to Friday 2 August

The Summer School, based at the Upper, runs for four weeks over the summer holidays and is open to all children between the ages of 7 to 14. Further details can be found at www.persesummerschool.co.uk. Bookings can be made from 10am this coming Monday 4 March. We strongly advise you to register on the system in advance to create your account and add your children's details. This will help when purchasing courses. Sadly, because of a steep price rise from the external provider of water sports, this course is no longer being offered.

The Perse School Podcast



If you enjoy listening to podcasts, do try out *The Perse School Cambridge Podcasts* which are available on all podcasting platforms including Spotify and Apple. We have a growing number of podcasts with students and staff for you to listen to. This week the featured podcast [here](#) is aimed at children joining the Upper in Year 7 and Year 9 from outside The Perse. However, some of this might be of interest to some of our Year 6 families ahead of transition in September. For general information about the school's podcasting channels, take a look [here](#). We also have a very active social media presence on [Twitter](#) (Prep School) plus whole school channels on [YouTube](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

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 Art & DTE at the end of this newsletter.

IN2 Hockey County Tournament

Well done to the Pelicans Hockey side who competed well in the closest County IN2 Hockey Finals for a few years, hosted at the Prep. They beat Kimbolton (1-0), before drawing against St Faith's (1-1) and losing narrowly against King's College (1-0) and eventual winners St John's (1-0). My thanks to the Prep coaching duo of Mr McGregor and Mrs Clark and the following squad: **Adam Agarizaev, Sam Brennan, Jonathan Goldsmith, Tom Lance, Adam Lee, Tom McDade, Felix McDonald, George Pullan and Steven Wang.**

Certificates and Awards

Congratulations to **Florence Boyle** on her Year 5 Reading challenge award; **Serena Bailhache** on her Silver Yeti Skiing award; **Sophie Itani** and **Scarlett Smith** on their Peak Snow Sports Skiing Level 1 awards; **Charles Balfour** on winning the Regional Table Tennis competition for St Neots Table Tennis Club; **Ellie Zhu** on her silver medal (50m breaststroke) and bronze medal (100m individual medley) in the Cambridge Swimming Club's Mini Meet; **Leopold de Ris** on his Royal Ballet School Intensive Classical Ballet award; **Léonie Ricciardi-Baquié** on her ABRSM Grade 2 Piano and to **Andrew Villaverde** on his Trinity Grade 3 Drum with Distinction. This leads us on to this week's Scores on the Doors:

Yours sincerely



James Piper
Head

4 TH	3 RD	2 ND	1 ST
FORESTERS	BARBARIANS	NOMADS	CORINTHIANS
197	202	204	209

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

Are there any Prep teachers who scare you?
No - it's more the other way round. I have been known to hide under teachers' desks and scare them in lessons!

If you were a Gladiator, what would your name be and what would your special skill be?
Invictus (unconquered) or Imperium (absolute power)! My special skill would be throwing squishy cricket balls at contestants!

Except for Latin, what subjects have you taught?
I have taught Greek, Games and Maths but have also been called upon to teach French, History and Computing!

What is your favourite book?
Whatever I am currently reading. However, some children's books that stick in the memory are 'My Family and Other Animals' and 'The Midnight Gang'.

What are you bad at that you wish you were good at?
Singing

Which of the 4 Values do you most represent?
I try to keep kindness at the forefront of what I do - so thinking what is the best for children. This is not to be confused with being nice all the time! I also try really hard at everything so Endeavour also features quite highly.

How will we get to the Swimming Pool and what happens if it rains?
I'd love to say travel in your swimming costumes but you'll need your coats if it rains as everyone will be walking along Long Road.

If you could have one thing in the world, what would it be?
A day in the nets with the England cricket team.

If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you go and who would it be with?
Safari in Africa with my family.

Why do you like cricket so much?
I blame my elder brothers who, when I was tiny, used to tie a batting pad round me and put a colander on my head before bowling at me as if I were the stumps! When I got a bit older, I was keen to prove myself at cricket to them. I love the mix of team and individual elements and especially the tactics and mind games involved.

What's the most disgusting thing you have ever eaten?
Playdough and also Mashed Potato with Fairy Liquid. It's a long story but my fault for eating any scraps that look like food at home...

How many children do you have and are they more similar to you or Mrs Piper?
Three children (18, 16 and 13) who all love their cricket, are similarly competitive to me but have the sense of humour, practicality and musical talent of Mrs Piper.

Will we use the Swimming Pool next year?
Yes - every child will use the swimming pool during first two terms, leaving the Prep at 8.45am and getting back for break at 10.15am. One class will do swimming, one class will be in the Sports Hall and one class will have Outdoor Pursuits which will include bushcraft and climbing. We will be able to have House swimming competitions too!

Will you coach us swimming?
Thankfully, no - we want you to make progress!

What's the worst lie you ever told?
Winding up my children by teasing them which one is my favourite child!

What was the worst punishment you ever got at school?
I complained to my housemaster at school that the grass was too long for us to play outside. He promptly made me mow the whole garden as a punishment for being so rude. Perhaps this is why I now like mowing so much!

What is your favourite food?
Roast Lamb or a giant pan of Toad in the Hole

Is there anything you have found hard as a Head?
Plenty and it never gets any easier! However, it's important to keep learning and try to improve. When I started, I used to worry about public speaking and overly prepare; practice has helped me relax and enjoy this but now Mrs Piper worries what I might say when I get carried away!

What new things are planned for next year for the Prep?
Mrs Schneider and Mrs Wright will have a new office beside Reception with Learning Support and the Snug moving to upstairs in Leighton House. New School has lots of repainting, the Netball Courts are being smartened up, Year 6 will get 1:1 devices and all of you will be using the Swimming Pool, Sports Hall and Climbing Wall!

What's the biggest prank you've ever pulled?
Putting 200 cups of water on the office floor of a colleague at my previous school so they couldn't get to their desk...

Have you taught or met any famous people?
I taught Emma Watson (Hermione from Harry Potter), played cricket with Andrew Strauss and had interesting Parents' Evenings with Jeremy Paxman and Jeremy Clarkson, having taught their children.

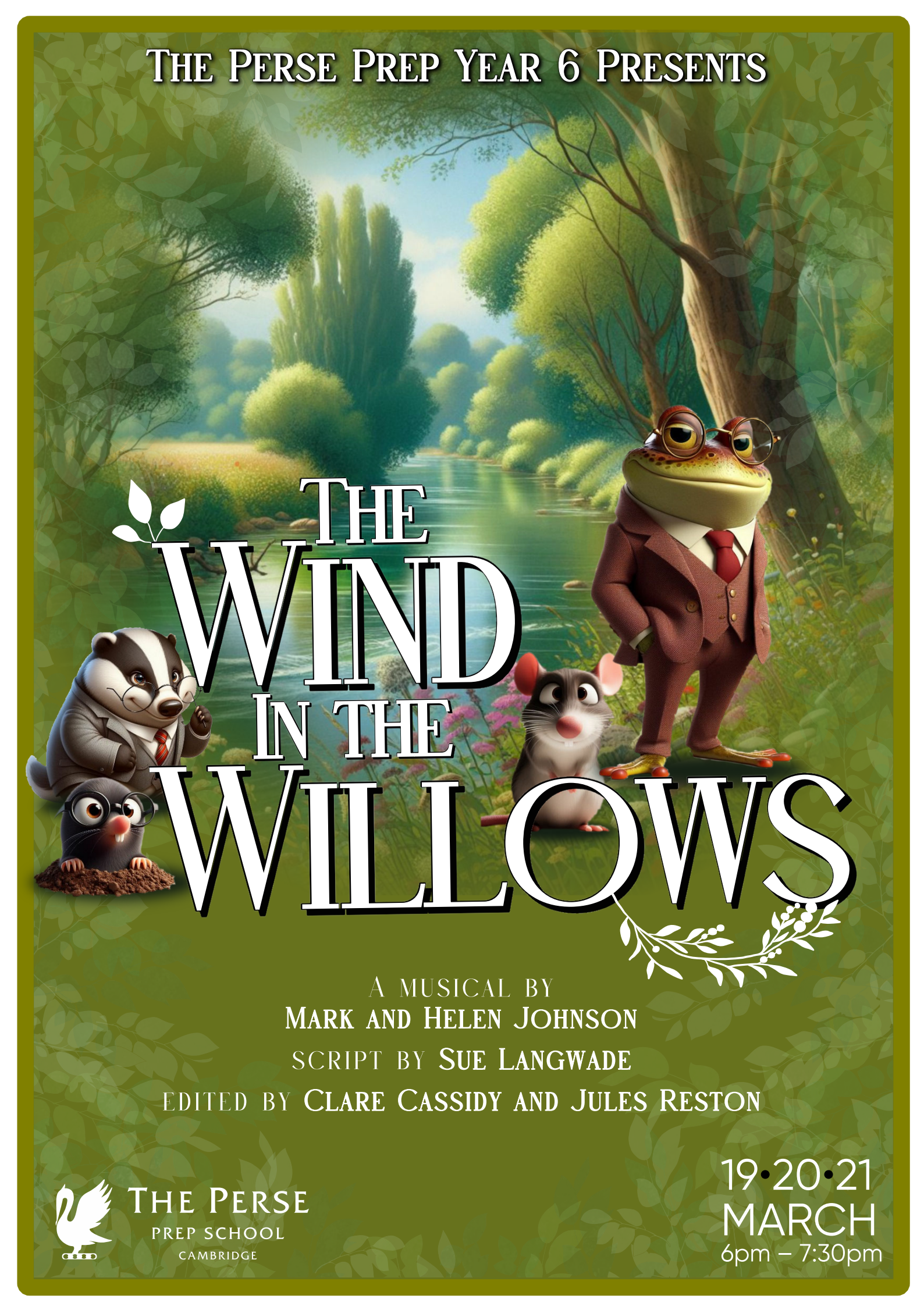
Who was your favourite teacher at school and why?
Mr Duncan who taught me Latin and French and was inspirational, in what might be considered an old-fashioned manner. I was honoured when he visited the Prep a few years ago.

If you had unlimited money to spend on the Prep, what would you do?
Knock down Year 3, the Hall, Music Block and the Drama Studio and build a Theatre and purpose-built Music Department! It would be good to be able to have a shortcut to the Fields so we could use the Astro for all of our playtimes, and a one-way route from Porson Rd to Long Rd to keep cars off the top playground so we could create a Cambridge Quad with fake grass!



Head's Question Time

THE PERSE PREP YEAR 6 PRESENTS



THE
WIND
IN THE
WILLOWS

A MUSICAL BY
MARK AND HELEN JOHNSON
SCRIPT BY SUE LANGWADE

EDITED BY CLARE CASSIDY AND JULES RESTON



THE PERSE
PREP SCHOOL
CAMBRIDGE

19•20•21
MARCH
6pm – 7:30pm



Subject	Art and Design, Technology and Engineering (DTE)
Nutshell	<p>Art: Become a confident artist and engineer across a range of different media, developing skills, knowledge and interest in both art and engineering.</p> <p>DTE: Enhance skills and confidence in engineering, developing proficiency, gaining knowledge, and exploring various engineering disciplines with curiosity.</p>
Head of Department	Mr Dan Wansell
Lessons per week	Y3 and Y4: 2 Y5 and Y6: 3 (Art and DTE alternate through the year)
Approach	<p>Art: We offer an enriching, hands-on learning environment that ignites creativity and nurtures individual expression. Through a variety of media like painting, drawing, sculpting, printing and 3D work such as clay modelling, we empower children to explore their artistic instincts freely. Each project delves into the study of renowned artists or movements, allowing ample space for interpretation, encouraging children to infuse their unique perspectives into their creations. With the provision of necessary tools and guidance, we aim to bring each child's imaginative visions to fruition, fostering the unleashing of their creativity.</p> <p>DTE: Through a range of engineering projects like tornado towers, truss bridges, flying cars, and propeller cars, children are encouraged to freely explore their design and engineering instincts. Each project incorporates the study of influential designers and engineering principles, allowing for interpretation. Our goal is to nurture the development of every child's inner engineer!</p>
Current topics	<p>Y3: Pupils engage in capturing a still life vase of flowers, drawing inspiration from Henri Matisse's style. Through this project, they refine their observational drawing skills and deepen their understanding of colour theory.</p> <p>Y4: Delving into the lush world of jungle landscapes, pupils use oil pastels to create vibrant scenes reminiscent of Henri Rousseau's work. This project enhances their drawing abilities and introduces techniques such as blending and layering for rich, textured final pieces.</p> <p>Y5: Inspired by the innovative designs of Frank Gehry, pupils craft furniture using newspaper sticks and cardboard. They hone their skills in joining and fixing materials while exploring concepts like triangulation for structural strength.</p> <p>Y6: Taking on the challenge of controllable vehicles, pupils delve into principles of flight, wind resistance, and aerodynamics. Through design, construction, testing, and evaluation, they engineer solutions to optimize performance, fostering hands-on exploration of engineering concepts.</p>
Homework?	No.



