



PitsfordSchool

CGW.jbr

1 April 2022

Re: We are the Easter people and Hallelujah is our song (Giovanni Paolo II)

Dear Parents,

The school's Easter miracle this year is getting to the end of term in one piece! Although a short term relative to the others we have been busy as bees being offered time and a half overtime. Public examination classes have been completed, clubs and activities have been expanded and there has been so much sport and music and art.

In addition, as a school, we have waited like expectant parents for Inspection to come all term and it has not. Being battle ready for ten weeks like that is in itself exhausting, but at least now we know that next term it will arrive. More anon!

As a community we have been relatively unscathed by the coronavirus which continues to rage around the country (as I write this though I pause to commiserate with all of you, not least my staff, who did get sick) but I am aware that colds and flus have been much worse than normal this term. I hope that most of you have been spared.

I myself had a cold (or flu – I can never tell the difference. Like alligators and crocodiles) of such severity that on a couple of occasions I adapted my last will and testament as I feared that I might be a goner. Two weeks on I am still weak as a kitten and feel ghastly and indeed, as I write this letter, I am literally on my knees.

And yet! And yet! And yet! We have achieved so much in this short term. We have had a whole mess of sports fixtures going on in the Junior and Senior school, with multiple teams competing every week, which was a wonderful thing to see.

Last night we had the Spring Concert which was superb. There was an extraordinary range of performances, singing, bands and instrumentals and I was blown away by the talent on show. For such a small school to produce such exquisite music is newsworthy and it was gratifying to see so many parents present to enjoy the performances. Well done to all the performers and *muchas gracias* to Mrs Humphrey for coordinating it all.

Our Open Day, which took place last Saturday was triumphant. The sun kissed the campus and we had a very healthy turn out of visitors. I am most grateful to the parents who gave up their Saturday



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mornings to meet our guests. As always, the real stars of the show were the children who are what it is all about. The visitors who I met were united in praising the confident, friendly and charming children the school had and I am delighted that they took away the key quality of our school. Well done to the students!

As I write I have just returned from the Senior School Easter Service in our Chapel. I had hoped to have a whole school service but the parish church is in the midst of renovation. I then decided we would meet as a community in the Junior School Quad (as we did so enjoyably at Christmas). But that was before the blizzards! Sweeping from the north, the south, the east and the west the school was engulfed in snow and, bearing in mind my own Spartan denomination of Christianity I was still intending to have the school sit outside in the elements and possibly change the hymns to Christmas Carols. However, I am pleased that wiser heads prevailed and we had a most pleasant meeting and hymns as separate schools.

Before I sign off, I have some other bits and bobs and, for the sake of clarity, I am using sub-headings (my apologies). Please see below.

Juniors invade France!

I was delighted when my alarm went off at 3.30am on Wednesday morning to get up and come in to join Mrs Heard and the parents of J6 in the Quad to wave off our first overseas trip since the pandemic!

The J6s were as excited to be going away as their parents were at the prospect of all that unfiltered adult time. As I type they have not yet returned, but their trip to Normandy under the leadership of Mrs Pitts with support from Mr Auckland and Mme Conroy, looks thrill-packed and we have posted many pictures on to Firefly.

I was jealous myself as I waved them off remembering so many great foreign trips through my teaching 'career'. I am very pleased that we are back to foreign trips and I am really happy that, for the first time since I joined Pitsford, the Juniors have left the country. How exciting!

As an addendum to that you will know that in October there is a Senior trip planned for Morocco and I am delighted by the rapturous uptake in places for that as well. Bravo to Mr Lewis for arranging and – at last – we start to become a normal school again.

Say hello and wave goodbye

Moving from previous references to the Beatles and Tim Buckley, I am now referencing '80s electronica legends Soft Cell as I update you on some staff changes which will take place after this break.



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In the Junior School we welcome a new HLTA in Miss Bull as well as a new teacher in Mrs Munro who will support Mrs Heard and the team. An exciting new world in the Juniors.

In the front office, we welcome Mrs Bailey as our new Head of Marketing, replacing Mrs Pacheco who left before Christmas.

In the Senior School we welcome Mrs Cunningham to the Science Faculty and Mr Swinford as our new Head of English. Miss Crews sadly departs to pastures new this break and we wish her all the best, and thank her for her service.

Internally Miss Jackson lays down the great honour of being Head of Wake and Mr Vié has embraced this mighty challenge, and now leads that Great Green House.

As Heraclitus so wisely said (or is reputed to have said): the only constant in life is change.

Easter and revision

Assistant Head Academic Mr Harrison has written to Years 11 and 13 with a revision programme taking place over the Easter break and I want to put down in writing how immensely grateful I am to colleagues who are giving up their well-earned holiday to help their students with additional revision. This is one of the great things about Pitsford School: so many other schools either do not do this, or if they do then they charge students more. That our staff are so eager to help and support is a beautiful demonstration their commitment to the students. Well done them and I hope the students take full advantage.

Ukraine

The human catastrophe taking place in Ukraine has shocked us all and I have been asked by one of our parents to draw your attention to work that she is doing to help those suffering in Ukraine as well as to support refugees fleeing the invasion which might help any of you looking to get involved.

Mrs Potter owns Riverside Hub and is Ukrainian and she has set up direct aid for Ukrainians and she has also arranged support for anyone looking to home refugees. More information can be found on the Hub website, please see here: [Home - Hub help Ukraine](#).

Sixth Form Tuck Shop

I have written to you before about Jake Pearce and Joel Houghton and their Sixth Form Tuck Shop, set up to raise funds for Prostate Cancer Research. It continues to run in an extraordinarily successful manner, with an expanding team of willing volunteers from younger years manning the shop, and queues of eager students looking to purchase that vital hit of energy at the end of lessons prior to after-school activities.

It has been such an unalloyed success that I want to go over, again, what an achievement it is: entirely student-run, immensely popular and impactful in terms of funds raised. To date they have



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banked almost £1800! I am very proud of the boys and their can-do attitude and get-up-and-go. To me this is the heart of Pitsford School, and especially the Sixth Form: we trust our students and give them a platform to do extraordinary things.

The only thing that I think they need is a snappier and catchier name than 'Sixth Form Tuck Shop', which we can then franchise and sell to other schools. My suggestions are 'Jake and Joel's Happy House of Haribo' (with the memorable abbreviation of JaJHHoH) or 'Granny Pitsford's Fudge Factory'. But I am not wedded to either suggestion and I am open to persuasion.

Bravo!

And that will suffice for now. I hope that you have a wonderful and safe Easter break and the eggs are many. See you on our return on Tuesday 26th April.

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