



June 2018

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

I am writing this letter as our pupils come to the end of a busy term, with examinations both internal and external.

Whilst there will be surprises and the odd concern that the right question didn't come up, I have been impressed by just how hard the boys and staff have been working and how they have done their best to prepare thoroughly for their exams. Therefore I hope that August, with the opening of the envelope, is a positive experience for the vast majority of the boys in our school. One of the changes in exams, particularly in GCSE and A Level, is the return to linear and terminal examinations after two full years, with the reduction and removal of modules. This has created more scope in the timetable for teaching and learning, particularly in the Lower Sixth, and also allowed for wider participation in sport and extra-curricular activities.

One of the highlights of the school year is the annual Sports Day and this year, despite the weather, it was another wonderful afternoon of sporting achievements. I am very grateful to the Parents' Association and all the support of parents, staff and the boys, who made this such a happy and enjoyable occasion despite the rain! School athletes have also had significant success at regional level, with the Merchant Taylors' Team winning the Sefton Schools' Championships this year – congratulations to all involved.

Another highlight of the term was the Musical Inspirations Concert and anyone who attended could not fail to agree with me that the standard of solo and ensemble music is as high as ever. The concert showcased soloists on trumpet, classical guitar, violin, piano and voice. Particularly encouraging was to see the talents of younger boys; the long term future of our musical performances is assured.

Independent education believes in sport because of the values and qualities it engenders and obviously it is also good fun! But it is also such a good vehicle for promoting resilience, grit and a healthy lifestyle. As it happens, although sport's fortunes go up and down for schools, this year we are enjoying a glorious summer of cricket for the school. Currently the 1st XI is top of the Merit League with a 100% win record against other Merit League schools, the Under 13 and U14 teams are both unbeaten, and several players have represented their county.

Academic excellence is at the heart of Merchant Taylors' and a good example of this has been awards and competitions in the Science Department. In the Salters Chemistry Festival – boys were chosen to represent the School at John Moores University and secured a 1st place over 18 other teams. In the annual Biology Olympiad William Surridge secured a gold award and Vyas Burra a Silver award. Both boys scored highly on a mix of multiple choice questions; many of which are set at University standard. Boys in Year 7 have once again excelled in 'Maths in Motion', an extra-curricular club where pupils are given the chance to work together in small teams, to set up virtual racing cars and then compete against each other in a series of Grand Prix type races in the hope of becoming the champions. The Merchants' Team competed strongly in the international final, leading for much of the race only to be pipped at the post, missing out on a podium position on the very last lap. Despite this, the event was a fantastic achievement for those boys.

Sport is going well, academics are going well and I am also mindful that I am drafting this letter on the day that the Lower School are producing a Joint School Production of 'A Night at the Theatre' on stage, being performed tonight and tomorrow night. The character and the confidence required, skills and teamwork on display, to bring these productions together is always beneficial and hugely enjoyable. I have had a few sneak previews and am very much looking forward to seeing the performance with extracts from some of my favourite theatrical productions.

This term also saw 'mobile free week'. Despite initial reservations amongst the boys, they coped without undue trauma! It was purely coincidental that there was much coverage in the press during this week about the effects of mobile devices and social media on young people and we will be reviewing our mobile phone policy next year.

I would like to remind parents that time off during the term should always be avoided. We have long holidays which are advertised well in advance and over the last few months there have been a number of absences for boys on holidays which have not been requested. For anyone wishing to request time off during term time, please email headmaster@merchanttaylor.com Going forward, this is the email address for all correspondence with the Headmaster.

As we approach the end of another academic year, the school inevitably says goodbye to some of its members of staff and we also wish every success and happiness to our Upper Sixth Form Leavers, a superb group of talented young men. As my year of Acting Headship comes to an end, I can reflect on many highlights along with a few challenges. However, I have been immensely proud to lead the School, working closely with MTBS colleagues and also the Heads of the other Crosby Schools and Governors. I want to take this opportunity to thank the community of Merchant Taylors' for the tremendous support offered to me personally this year and for your ongoing support for the School. Mr Wickes is looking forward to the opportunity of being our next Headmaster and I know he will do a superb job.

It only remains for me to wish you and your families a very happy summer break.

Yours sincerely



D Williams