



December 2018

Dear Parents

As we reach the end of a long and happy term, we can look back on great successes in many areas. Your boys have done you proud and have certainly taken advantage of all the opportunities a Birkdale Prep education gives them. I do hope you have enjoyed the various Christmas celebrations - as a self-confessed Christmas addict I love celebrating Christmas at school and then celebrating it again with family and friends on 25 December!

Do allow me to update or remind you of some of this term's news:

All of the boys from PP2 – P4 have undertaken Maths and English assessments. These provide us with individual scores, Birkdale cohort average and National average. These are very useful and proved to be useful discussion points at parent's evenings.

The quiz culture continues to thrive. The Science team won both their regional heat and semi-final and will now compete in the National Finals in Oxford in January. The Maths team also progressed through their regional heat and last week competed in the next round of their competition. We await news on their success. For the first time this year we entered the 'Kids Lit Quiz', this is a local, national and international competition that has been running for 30 years. Our 2 teams travelled to York and demonstrated a very wide knowledge of books, authors and quotes. The competition is open to pupils up to the age of 14 and so, considering all the other teams were 14 years old, it was a creditable achievement.

For all of the above we run 'trials' for the boys and it is great to see that, on the whole, final teams are made up of different boys. In addition to these external competitions, there have also been internally run Geography and English quizzes, which many boys have entered and enjoyed. On the penultimate day of this term, all boys in Prep 1-4 competed in the House General Knowledge Quiz, where quizmaster Mr Cooper tested the boys, not only on their general knowledge, but also on what they have remembered about this term's assemblies. Congratulations to Westbury house on their success. I do think this quiz culture encourages boys to be intellectually curious.

Sport

As always, the boys have enjoyed plenty of sporting activity and they should be congratulated on plenty of success this term. Special mention to the U11's who won the HMC North of England Rugby Competition, beating some much bigger schools. Once again, we have managed to field a, b, c and d teams at U9-U11 age groups.

The hard work done by Mrs Thake, our resident cross-country expert has certainly begun to pay off. Not only has she started a lunchtime and after school club, she has been running a team on Saturday mornings in the Sheffield Schools league. It was a fantastic achievement for the U11 team to win the HMC North of England Competition!

Music & Drama

Many of you will have enjoyed the fantastic Prep 4 version of *Twelfth Night*. It was superb to see the boys perform with such confidence and obvious enjoyment. Just this week two packed audiences have been wowed by performances of the Pre-Prep Nativity Musical *Well I never!* Many congratulations to all those involved.

It was lovely to get into the Christmas spirit with our ensembles Christmas concert on Tuesday night. Well done to all players and to their parents for all the help given to boys with their regular practices at home.

Nayan Gupta from Prep 4 continues to perform in the West End in the Production *School of Rock* as 'Freddy' the drummer. Last week all Prep 4 boys had a tremendous trip to London to see their classmate in action.

Assemblies and a date for your diaries

I do hope you enjoyed our Harvest and Remembrance assemblies and Carol Service. In my weekly assemblies I have been speaking on various aspects of The School Principles <https://www.birkdaleschool.org.uk/prep-school/pastoral-care/>. Visiting speakers have included Mr Pietrek, Mr Jones, Mr Clark, and Ms Stolz from the Senior School. We look forward to welcoming Mr Harris as new Headmaster in January.

There will be a 'meet and greet' event to welcome Mr Harris at 7 pm on Thursday 17 January in the Prep School Hall.

Fundraising

Throughout the term, there has been a huge amount of fundraising:

- A 30 strong team of staff, parents and a governor raised over £3,000 for St Luke's Hospice by running the Sheffield 10k
- Parents and boys contributed to our Harvest appeal supporting Parson Cross food bank
- As always we raised money for The Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal
- Over 100 shoeboxes were filled with gifts and sent to Samaritan's Purse
- Charities week events raising over £4,000 for 'Children in Need' and 'Mercy Ships'
- Our Christmas Charities Fair raising £1,488.78 for 'Mercy Ships'

Thank you so much for your generous giving to all these very worthwhile causes.

Final concluding thoughts

This term many have felt the support of our school community. At difficult times, we see its real strength; thank you for the practical, thoughtful and prayerful support many of you have shown.

Pip joins me in wishing you all a restful, enjoyable Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Yours sincerely



Chris Burch
Head of the Prep School