



29<sup>th</sup> March 2018

Dear Parents/Carers,

As we draw towards the end of the spring term, it has been some time since I last wrote. It has been a busy time and a great deal has been happening at the school ensuring that pupils have continued to receive a rich experience.

Holocaust Memorial Day was marked with everyone coming together for a whole-school assembly. This was led by members of Year 8 who delivered some thought-provoking and moving presentations. Against the background of terrible genocides, we were all given the chance to consider how we relate to each other irrespective of our similarities and differences.

The weather again played a big factor in some of our plans. In particular, our first ever trips for Year 6 pupils to visit the Tower of London were impacted on with the first going ahead in spite of extremely cold temperatures and some snow. Despite this, the visit was extremely successful and thoroughly enjoyed by all those who participated. Unfortunately, things went from bad to worse and the second trip had to be cancelled as conditions worsened and the school was closed; a rearranged visit is programmed for the second week of the summer term.

Happily, the Year 7 trip to Warwick Castle, another first for the school, fared better and a very informative day augmented the pupils' classroom learning about the development of castles. The Year 6 visits to St Albans Abbey, our diocesan cathedral, has also taken place this term. Focusing on the Easter story, pupils were able build on their knowledge through consideration of some of the special features of this magnificent building.

Sporting activities have continued to be key aspect in the life of the school. Cross-country has been particularly prominent with participation in a number of increasingly high status competitions. Several pupils produced consistently good performances with Katie Olive being especially noteworthy in achieving medal positions in both the Bedfordia run, District and the County Finals.

The Year 8 indoor rowing squad attended their second major event, the National Junior Indoor Rowing Championships. Given that it was the school's last opportunity to take part, our pupils were joined by former pupils making it a very special day. Our rowers all performed extremely well with many personal bests being achieved. This was especially true for Chloe Howe who won the school's first ever gold medal in the competition.

All pupils in Year 7 have been involved in a significant STEM challenge linked to the Bloodhound SSC project. This has involved them working in small groups across science, design and technology, computing, and mathematics to build models of rocket powered cars. It has been exciting to watch the development of these, especially when trial runs powered by compressed air were being launched down the school corridors. For the competition runs, which took place on the playground, we were visited by members of the Royal Air Force who dealt with the

rocket propulsion. They were extremely complimentary about what had been achieved and two of our teams will be going forward to the next round to be held at RAF Wittering.

After weeks of committed rehearsal, *Oliver* finally took to the stage last week. The commitment and hard work of all concerned was clearly evident in the marvellous



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performances from all members of the cast. It now seems strangely quiet after school with no choruses being sung, dances practiced or scenes worked through. Very special thanks must go to Miss Garner for her overall direction of the production and also to Mr King, Miss Clark and Mrs Barrows for their major inputs.

Yesterday, the weather again interfered with our arrangements. For only the second occasion within the last twenty-six years, we were forced to abandon our intention to go to All Saints Church to celebrate Easter. Instead, the whole school met together for what turned out to be a lovely celebration of this major festival. Musicians and readers responded to the change of venue and lead our worship superbly giving the school the opportunity to reflect on the significance of the events in the Easter story and to sing lustily.

All these activities cannot take place without the incredible dedication and hard work of the staff at Alban. Sadly we are bidding farewell to Mrs Sam Auburn, our HLTA, who has obtained a position at a middle school in Central Bedfordshire; we wish her every success. While some other colleagues have gained new posts, these are for September starts. Consequently, I am delighted to report that the remainder of the staff continues as it is and that the teaching staff will be unchanged for the whole of the year. Given the circumstances, this level of loyalty and commitment to the school, its pupils and the community it serves is truly remarkable.

The Friends of Alban have continued to support the school supremely well. Pupils have benefitted from the recent disco while broader audiences enjoyed the Bingo Evening and Quiz Night. As always, they also provided refreshments at the *Oliver* performances. Our continued thanks go to the Committee for their unflinching efforts.

One noticeable absence during the term has been Charlie Beeton. It is thrilling to be looking forward to welcoming him back to school following his excellent recovery from a lung transplant. We will be continuing to raise funds for Great Ormond Street Hospital in support of the fantastic work they do.

May I take this opportunity to remind you that the optional summer uniform can be worn on our return in April. This consists of the logoed pale blue polo shirt instead of a white shirt and tie. The school still holds a stock of these; please contact the school office in the first instance if you wish to purchase any of these shirts.

Next term promises to be equally full with many trips and events scheduled over the weeks. My colleagues and I look forward to our continued association during this time.

Wishing you a joyous Easter.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Chipperton  
Headteacher

