

Message from Mr Bidwell



What an incredibly busy and productive term this has been. It started with the mock exams for Year 11 who performed extremely well. The class has also shown the way to our Year 10s who also sat some exams and have worked alongside the Year 11s in their core lessons this year. I am sure the Year 10s are up to the task of leading the way next year and acting as the role models for our younger students.

I said to parents and students at the post-mock exam consultation evening that the next few months would fly by and the official exam season would soon be upon us. Well here we are, just a few weeks away from the first exam. It is important that year 11s find a balance between work/revision and blocking in short but regular breaks over the holidays.

Of course, just before half-term we had the fantastic whole school production of Roald Dahl stories. What an incredible evening (and week) that was. To see our students speaking and performing with such confidence and gusto was heart-warming and inspiring. I'd like to thank all the students for taking part as well as all the staff for their work behind the scenes in the weeks leading up to the performance.

Straight after half-term a team of students from Year 5-11 represented the school in the National Deaf Swimming Championships at the Aquatic Centre in London. They performed admirably, particularly considering we had such a young team compared to other schools.

Finally, we hurtle towards the last day of term with a whole-school careers day with ELSA on Tuesday. These days are an important part of what we offer at Knightsfield and can often sow the seeds of ideas for future career aspirations.

I always find this half-term particularly enjoyable as Spring arrives and we get to see increasingly lighter mornings and evenings on a daily basis. When we return from the holidays, I am looking forward to working with the Year 9s on finalising their options for next year, celebrating the end of the exams with Year 11 and meeting all of our new students in July who will be joining us next year.

It has been a privilege to lead the school whilst Mrs Thrower has been on secondment, and I'd like to thank you for your support throughout.

I hope you all have a relaxing Easter holiday.



Singapore Visitors



In early March, we were lucky enough to be visited by eight wonderful Teachers of the Deaf from the Canossian Village Catholic School in Singapore.

They came to see Knightsfield and our staff and students and how we model teaching on a typical rainy Monday morning highlighting the true British weather for them!

They were very impressed with how we teach the students and how much they achieve. The teachers were particularly interested in our ABC programme and how we use this holistic 'whole child' approach to ensure the students benefit from this just as much as they do from our academic teaching. After sessions with Mr Poole, learning what it means to be a SenCo in our school, an observation of a speech and language intervention with Mrs Lynagh and some audiology training with Mrs Cromack our audiologist they completed their visit by delivering an assembly to our younger students. The visitors told us all about their school and showed pictures of the wall-to-wall library, beautiful grounds and 35 degree heat! Some of our students declared they would like to live there as it was so hot until the visitors told us that school starts at 7:30am every day in Singapore!

It was a pleasure to welcome them to Knightsfield and for our students to hear all about a school for deaf young people in another part of the world.



Voice in a Million

On Wednesday 20th March, we took our talented student choir to Wembley Arena to participate in the Voice in a Million school choir event. The students were fantastic, they sang, they danced and they all had so much fun!

The choir have met at Choir Club every Wednesday lunchtime since September to practise and along the way, they also performed at the Christmas concert at St John's Church, Digswell. They have worked incredibly hard to learn the words and dances of several challenging songs and on the night they joined in with enthusiasm and confidence which was a joy to see.

A special mention also for our dedicated teaching assistants, Mrs Clarke, Mrs Brake and Mr Jones who joined the students at the event, supporting them throughout the day of rehearsals and the evening performance. We are very much looking forward to continuing with our school choir in the coming months and participating in other events in the summer and autumn terms. Watch this space!



Deaf Awareness Assemblies

At the start of the spring term we began our Deaf Awareness assemblies taking our student voice form representatives to a local primary school to explain about their hearing impairments. They started the sessions by talking about their various forms of deafness, their equipment and how it is used and then explaining what deaf awareness means and how to speak to a deaf person. Students then delivered a questions and answers session with the primary school pupils.

We extended this further throughout the term to ask all of our students if they would like to volunteer to deliver an assembly in various other schools and now numerous students have participated in this event, with several asking if they can repeat the experience, which many now have. We are extremely proud of how all the students were able to deliver these assemblies in front of hundreds of other children with confidence and answered some tricky, some hilarious and some difficult questions from all the pupils.

It has certainly been a rewarding experience and we will be extending this further throughout Hertfordshire primary schools in the summer term as it has been hugely successful for our students especially in developing their confidence in public speaking and in showing the local community what a wonderful place Knightsfield is.

Careers Update

Our career events this term have included a CV Writing Workshop with the Job Centre, National Careers Week, an Apprenticeships and Opportunities workshop and an Oaklands College sample day. The students have learnt about the process of applying for jobs in various industries and what skills and qualifications they need for a variety of roles. Students have had the opportunity to think about their different skills and qualities and situations in which they have used them outside of the school environment.

The students also discovered how their hobbies could be beneficial in providing good examples of their interests in an interview and were encouraged to take up a hobby if they haven't already got one. We also hosted 'ELSA Day' at the school on Tuesday where students participated in workshops throughout the day from local businesses and volunteers including Sky Studios. The students had a very enjoyable day learning new skills and finding out about the various industries on offer.

We were also lucky enough to have a visit from an ex-pupil of Knightsfield who came to speak to our upper school students about his life at the school and his future successes. He had some wonderful memories of Knightsfield and we discovered that after attending University College London university as a student, he now works there as the sports team manager and oversees 91 different teams and over 50,000 students! A true inspiration for our students who all listened intently to his life story and asked some thoughtful questions about the school and his career path since leaving Knightsfield.

Swimming Competition



On Tuesday 27th February 13 students went to the deaf swimming championships at the aquatic centre.

They competed in a number of events, and both teams did very well coming 5th and 7th out of 12 teams.

We are extremely proud of all those who took part and we look forward to competing next year.



UPCOMING EVENTS:

Year 7 Hindu Mandir
 Year 9 London Central Mosque
 Essex & Herts Air Ambulance Visit
 Year 7 Sports Experience Day
 Knightsfest