

Welcome to the New School Year

The new school year started this morning and we are all looking forward to another outstanding twelve months. I extend a warm welcome to all the new boys (and new Form 6 girls) who have joined our College family. I hope that you will have a wonderful time in our school and take every opportunity to participate fully in the many activities that we offer our students. High school is all about exploration, participation and giving. It is the time when new skills are acquired that will help you lead full and rewarding lives.

The academic year commenced with 193 new Form 1 boys. A total of 104 students were admitted via the Discretionary Place pathway, given that the College is no longer linked to the Central Allocation scheme. A further 18 boys were admitted after the release of the SSPA results. The remaining 71 places went to boys from our own Primary School. As has been the case since the College changed from the aided to the DSS sector, the new Form 1 boys come from across the Hong Kong SAR, some having long journeys each day. We are all waiting for the day when the MTR extension arrives on our doorstep!

It has been very busy around the campus over the summer holidays. The Hall is still under renovation but on track to be finished by mid-October. However, we have taken the opportunity afforded by the vacation to complete the main lobby and entrance to the College. The style and finish of the lobby will give some indication of how the main body of the Hall will look when all the work has been completed. There is a focus on natural wood and marble befitting a school of our history and traditions. A newly configured backstage area will accommodate all the larger musical instruments and a lecture theatre is being incorporated into the balcony, providing more seating and modern audio-visual systems. What we are all looking forward to, however, is the installation of a new organ to replace the excellent 'workhorse' that has served us well in recent years. The new instrument will allow our boys to continue the fine track-record of our school in producing accomplished organists.

The Chapel also received a face-lift over the summer break including the acquisition of a new altar that is in the Chinese rather than Western tradition.

Mr. Ho Fuk Yan took early retirement at the end of the last academic year after 33 years service to the College. It was strange not seeing his face on the first day of a new school year but we wish him well for a healthy and joyful retirement. Mr. Ngan Ka Hing has been appointed the Head of Chinese and Mrs. Hsu Lai Pui Shan, Sandy, the Head of Chinese History. In addition to their other many duties, Mr. Poon Wai Hoi, Bobby, has taken on special responsibility for gifted boys in our school and Miss Ng Ka Yun, Amanda, the Head of the Integrated Humanities Department.

In line with our aim to provide more curriculum offerings, particularly in the NSS years, the number of teachers has increased again this academic year. Joining us today were Miss Chan Kit Yee, Sharon (English), Miss Chau Wing Yin (Chinese), Mr. Kwok Yik Yuen (Mathematics and Computer Literacy), Miss Sameen Mazhar (English), Mr. Lam Pak Kei, Paul (Visual Arts and Liberal Studies), Mr. Ng Ting Fai (English and Liberal Studies), Miss Chan Lee Lee (Chinese) and Mr. Lee Ka Wai

(BAFS and Economics). This takes the number of teachers in our College to its highest level.

The HKALE and HKCEE results were most satisfactory with 100% of the graduating Form 7 class of 2010 gaining entrance to tertiary education. The University of Hong Kong was once again the 'university of choice' for many of the graduates.

My recent conversations with students and teachers all point to the global classroom tours held over the holidays being a great success. I would like to make special reference to the inaugural Cambridge Summer School, based at Trinity Hall and The Leys School, where the boys studied Mathematics and the Sciences. It is anticipated that many of the boys who participated will sit for the IGCSE and GCE A-levels in addition to the new Hong Kong Diploma. Hopefully, the Summer School will have stretched their imaginations and desire to attend great universities like Cambridge. If you have not done so already, I encourage you to look at the photo gallery on our website so review some of the more recent activities.

This coming week is a time of excitement and anticipation about what is to come. Sadly, the recent tragic events in Manila mean that for some families and schools in the SAR the new school year will be marked by great sadness. The thoughts and prayers of the St. Paul's College community reach out to those families and schools.

Finally, my weekly address will be posted on the website while the Hall is being renovated. I do hope that the students will take the time to read what I have written!

I wish all students, teachers and families a successful 2010-2011.

Dr. J. R Kennard