



MALVERN COLLEGE

February 2009

Dear Parents

The snow is with us here in Malvern and the College is lit up by weak rays of winter sun slanting through grey clouds. People have witnessed such scenes for decades in Malvern at times when they have come here in a quest for better health, or to enjoy a bracing walk in the hills. Today, boys and girls in dark suits and coats scurry from lesson to lesson, occasionally glancing up at the beautifully proportioned stone buildings. Apart from the odd snowball narrowly missing a classmate, the school is busy, the air purposeful.

It was about three weeks ago, in our Chapel Assembly, that I posed ten questions to every member of the school, and these were sent through to the Houses for the House notice boards. They are not meant to be philosophically penetrative, but practical, as I do want our young people to be asking questions of themselves and, thus, challenging themselves to strive for fulfilment in their daily lives. A positive response to some simple questions will bring reward to young people.

Here are the questions I posed:

1. Am I setting myself achievable goals in all spheres of my life?
2. Am I continually measuring how I am doing against my own goals and taking corrective action when necessary?
3. Am I taking responsibility for my own learning and education by spending time on what I do not understand and by following up with teachers when necessary?
4. Am I making every lesson and hall count?
5. Am I wasting time because I do not have the drive and the determination to make things happen for myself?
6. Am I developing myself to the fullest possible extent in all areas beyond the academic sphere?
7. Am I trying to develop myself spiritually and in my relationships with other people?
8. Am I doing things for my friends, my peers, my house, my school or is my focus myself and only myself?
9. Am I taking chances I should not be taking?
10. Am I open enough to ask for help in areas in which I know I need it?

I am striving to encourage endeavour in the knowledge that we hardly ever succeed in all that we do. But we must, like Ulysses, aim “to strive, to seek, to find and not to yield”. You may like to discuss how (if at all) your sons and daughters dealt with these questions, as this may provide a valuable insight into their approach to the past weeks.

Holiday Successes

Over the Christmas interlude, there were several notable achievements:

Oxbridge Acceptances: We have a robust system which prepares students for interviews at Oxbridge, in Medicine and other similar fields and, as a result, it was with some disappointment that we received the news that only six of our Upper Sixth have, this year, gained admission to Oxford or Cambridge. About 50% of the students at Oxbridge come from 7% of the schools – the independent schools – so I do not think there is bias against independent school candidates, but there are just many more applicants now than used to be the case.

Warmest congratulations to Sam Baylis (Physics at Lincoln College, Oxford); Verity Bramson (Music at Sidney Sussex, Cambridge, as well as Choral Award); Yannick Hecker (Engineering, Economics & Management at Hertford, Oxford); Dani Moyles (Land Economy at Jesus College, Cambridge); Stephanie Ong (French & German at Homerton, Cambridge); and Nina Price (French & Latin at Gonville & Caius, Cambridge).

Exhibitor at The Tate Modern Gallery: Similarly warm congratulations are due to Yeng Yeng Shang who had a painting displayed in an exhibition at this famous London gallery. What an achievement for one so young!

Engineering: Four pupils, Patrick Jackson, Quentin Spottiswood, Jonathan Topfer and Justin Wong, attended a four-day residential workshop as part of the Engineering Education Scheme at the University of Birmingham. They were set a task of designing and building a ‘demonstration unit’ to illustrate the effect that changing air pressures have on moving objects. Their work was highly commended and this has brought considerable credit, too, to our Design & Technology Department led by Mr Darren Stokes.

Vietnam Trip: A group led by Messrs Chris Hall and Mathew Lloyd and Mrs Judy Cockbill, travelled the length of the country, visiting the major cities and enjoying a range of experiences, including spending time in the tunnels made by the Viet Cong during the 1960s and 1970s, as well as seeing the Mekong Delta. It was, by all accounts, a most interesting and rewarding ten days.

Cultural and Related Activities

Music: Well done to the following pupils who achieved at Grade 4 and above in their recent Royal School of Music examinations: Sarah Fung (Grade 8 Flute with Merit); Scott Mahoney (Grade 8 Trumpet with Merit); Adam New (Grade 8 Singing); Jennifer Simpson (Grade 8 Singing with Distinction); Wesley Chow (Grade 7 Clarinet with Merit); Marcus Suen (Grade 7 Bassoon); Genevieve Byers (Grade 6 Flute with Merit); Harriet Sale (Grade 6 Clarinet); Lily Sanders (Grade 6 Piano); Kirsty Wombwell (Grade 6 Clarinet); Verity Bramson (Grade 5 Piano with Merit); Hebe Dickens (Grade 5 Singing with Merit); Alice Makin (Grade 5 Singing); Hebe Nicholson (Grade 5 Singing); Daisy Powles (Grade 5 Flute); Alexander Gregory (Grade 4 Piano); Jacob Lee (Grade 4 Clarinet).

Special congratulations, too, go to Andrew McDade who has recently competed in The Concerto Competition, open to all students in the Junior Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama in Cardiff. Andrew performed Martin Ellerby’s *Concerto for Tuba* and was the overall winner in this keenly-contested event. This success gives Andrew the opportunity to perform a concerto with the Royal Welsh College’s orchestra in their summer concert in July, and it marks him as one who has brought great credit to Malvern in the sphere of music.

The College Jazz Band has also recently been to the fore, entertaining a large audience in Malvern Priory as part of the Lunchbox series. The band, which some of you may have heard, plays a variety of music and, on this occasion, there were also vocal solos from Lottie Rugeroni, Verity Bramson and Simon Eaton. Mr Stephen Spanyol is to be commended on his enthusiastic and expert guidance of the band.

Debating: Three Malvern teams competed in the Midlands round of the Oxford Union Schools' Debating Competition. From over forty teams, six were selected to go forward to the national finals and two teams from Malvern College were placed among those six: Hannah Campbell and Laura Joyce in one team, and Alex Jupp and Josh Wilkes in the other. Sam Goldblatt and James Wootton also competed in the competition and matched teams some three years older than them. We are the only school in the Midlands area to have two teams in the finals, and this augurs well for the national finals in March.

At House level, the final of the Junior Inter House Debating Competition was won by No. 2 (Bar Bartlett and Sam Goldblatt) who defeated the No. 4 team (Annabel Crowther and Poppy Donaldson) on the motion *This House would instate mixed sex boarding Houses at Malvern*. Well done to all of those who are learning to 'think on their feet' by debating on a regular basis.

General Knowledge: The Hart Inter-House General Knowledge Quiz was contested between No. 2 and No. 4, the former having been the winning House in 2008. There were eight keenly-fought rounds and a few amusing wrong answers entertained the supporters, before No. 4 surged ahead and secured victory by 2 points in a happy Sunday event.

Inter-House Drama: As I write, the competition between the Houses lies before us this weekend: the Houses are to perform in front of other pupils on Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings in the Rogers Theatre.

Sport

Netball: Matches have been played by our teams against Clifton, Bromsgrove and Uppingham. The 1st VII is an ever-improving side and, following a 14-30 loss to Clifton, we just failed to beat a very strong Uppingham side, losing 37-41, but we finished very strongly in the last quarter, taking it 13-8. Malvern players of the latter match were Chanty Hudson and Zippy Chappell. In the first encounter against Clifton, Sarah Jefferson was the Malvern player of the match. Our 2nd and 3rd teams, slightly weakened by examinations, have lost their games, whilst our U15A and U14A teams were on the winning side against Bromsgrove, though were narrowly beaten by Uppingham. The U15Bs and U14Bs have had some tough matches, but it is to their credit that our teams are playing in a positive spirit.

Football: The 1st XI followed a 4-1 victory over RGS-AO with a particularly pleasing win against Marlborough by 2 goals to 1. The game produced a most exciting finish, with Odege Davey excellent in goal. Our senior teams lost to their Marlborough counterparts, whilst the U15A and U14A drew 4-all and 2-all respectively, and the U14A beat Wellingborough 4-0, with the U14B going down 3-4.

Our 1st XI has also beaten King's, Taunton, 2-0, with the 2nds winning 5-0 and the U15As 9-0 against the same opponents.

Well done to our 1st XI on their unbeaten run thus far this season over four matches.

Hockey: Our 1st XI have plenty of talent and have just been edged out in tight games against Cheltenham College and an undefeated Wycliffe side. Nikolaus Börner, Stuart Monteith, George Davies and Tom Saxton have all caught the eye, as has Matt Ramsay, the youngest player in the team.

Rackets: At the end of last term, our rackets players competed at The Queen's Club. Jonty Hylands and Arthur Wakeley, our 1st Team, did very well but special congratulations go to Will Vanston who

reached the final of the Jim Dear Cup. In a subsequent fixture against Haileybury the 1st pair lost 4-2, whilst our Colts pairing of Arthur Wakeley and Will Vanston won 3-0. There were narrow losses for Will Wright and Matthew Saxton, as well as for Chris Harwood and Mark Jefferson.

Squash: Our boys lost 3-4 to Cheltenham College in an exciting match with Will Vanston, Christian Schnittker and Alex Jupp winning their matches.

Cross Country: Malvern dominated the District Cross Country championships with seven pupils recording positions qualifying them for the County championships. In the Junior Girls' race there was a clean sweep for the College with Vicky Moritz very impressive in first place, Rebecca Raby-Smith in second and Lydia Sharp third. Then, in the Intermediate Girls' race, Amy Cook was second and Alys Marr third.

In the boys' events, Jamie Paterson was the easy winner of the Senior race and Jonathan Betteridge was second in the Intermediate race. Well done to all of these athletes.

Fives: Over the course of the recent leave out weekend the U16 and Senior Fives teams went on tour, playing four matches in Edinburgh and the North of England. The former were successful in their games against Fettes and Sedbergh. The seniors beat Rossall and Fettes, but struggled to adapt to the faster Merchiston courts. The best performance by the Seniors, though, was against a very strong Sedbergh side. Though down after the doubles, strong singles performances from Will Bishop and Stephen Coffey led to a very exciting finish. In the end the deficit was just one point, out of a total of 209 played.

Fencing: Well done to Lucy Henshall who represented Great Britain in an international fencing tournament in Sweden. Lucy was placed 22nd out of 130 competitors, the highest placing by a British team member. What a star!

Miscellaneous

Prep School Head-Elect: About a week ago, I sent out a letter from the Chairman of the Governors of The Downs, Malvern College Preparatory School in connection with the appointment of Sam Cook to the position of the Headship of the Prep School. Sam's formative years as a teacher were spent at The Dragon School, Oxford, and he has already headed two schools – Boundary Oak and Pembroke House, Kenya. He is very well known in British prep school circles and is a versatile all-rounder who understands boarding issues, in particular, and children, in general, very well. His wife, Phillippa, is a charming person and a great support to Sam: they have three children, currently of prep school age.

Funding for Gap Years/Other Projects: I have informed the Upper Sixth about the availability of funding from two particular sources. The first of these is the Lesley Pountney Memorial Fund to which pupils can apply if they have a particular summer coaching course, such as a choral course, in mind or, alternatively, a specific gap year project. About £125 - £150 may be available to some pupils at certain schools including Malvern. The second opportunity lies in the HMC Bulkeley-Evans Scholarship Fund. I have recently been asked to be a trustee of this fund: larger sums tend to be available through this fund for specific gap year projects abroad, particularly in the upliftment of Third World communities. There is a special format that needs to be followed in application and further information on this may be obtained from my PA, Theresa Bensted.

Culture Shock: A fortnight ago it was a delight to see about thirty different nationalities represented in our programme, Culture Shock. This was a celebration of our diverse backgrounds, and a large number of students and staff attended an unforgettable event in St Edmund's Hall on a Sunday at which different national dress, national foods, folk dancing and music enriched our lives.

Sunday Activities: In addition to some of the activities already mentioned above which occur on a Sunday, Mr Justin Major frequently organises trips away from Malvern in order for our pupils to benefit

from the beauty of our surrounds. Last Sunday, for example, a group of ten paddled 20 kilometres from Goodrich to Monmouth on the River Wye: the river was quite high but conditions were great and the event enjoyed by all of those who experienced it. We encourage our pupils to grasp such opportunities.

Website: You may be interested that a virtual tour of the new sports complex, as well as the two new boarding houses, is available on our website. Incidentally, Mrs Sarah Angus, the new Housemistress of Ellerslie, has visited Malvern very recently to talk to girls who may like to help with the formation of the new House. I have already referred to Mrs Angus's capability as a leader and, if you would like to discuss Ellerslie as a possible option for your daughter for the new academic year, please speak to our Registrar, Mrs Sheila Jackson.

Enrolment: In the week of 26 January, we achieved a record number of registrations for the College ever in a single week, several of them for 2011, 2012 and 2013. There were 23 registrations which eclipsed our previous record of 19 and our usual rate of 10-14. With considerable economic difficulty being experienced in the country as a whole, dare I say this could be seen as a 'green shoot'?

Building Projects: I thought I'd let you know that we are on time and on budget with the building projects being undertaken at the College. Gradually, they are taking shape and what wonderful facilities they will be!

Conclusion

I trust that you will understand that I cannot include every detail of every activity in my letters to you, but I do hope to communicate with you frequently (and, preferably by email). In such letters my aim is not simply to transmit information, but to make you feel a part of the lives of your sons or daughters.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely



Antony Clark
Headmaster

