



AUTUMN 2019 ISSUE 21

# Et Cetera

THE NEWS MAGAZINE OF HOLLAND PARK SCHOOL

# Contents

PAGES 2 and 3  
HEAD'S INTRODUCTION

PAGE 4  
A MUSICAL TRIUMPH  
*Handel's Messiah*

PAGE 5  
LIVING IN THE PAST  
Emotional History  
Thirty Years Later

PAGE 6  
A MOUNTAIN ADVENTURE  
In *Edie's* Footsteps

PAGE 7  
IN THE BARD'S HONOUR  
Once More Unto The Breach!

PAGES 8 and 9  
FESTIVE CELEBRATION  
Prayers, Psalms and Canticles  
The Ghosts of Christmas Past

PAGES 10 and 11  
GETTING IN AND GOING OUT  
Working in Leighton House: pt II  
The Porter's Lodge

PAGES 12 and 13  
ROLLING THE DICE  
*Guys and Dolls*

PAGES 14 and 15  
OUT AND ABOUT

Cover shot: Ms Sheila Hancock  
at *Handel's Messiah*

## HEAD'S INTRODUCTION

It is a gloriously bright Sunday morning and I am writing this in my kitchen before going to school for 10am to do a good day's work to get ready for the week ahead. There is nothing like pain for putting a perspective on things and running into week sixteen of some yet properly diagnosed ankle/foot pain, let alone treatment or prognosis is proving to be a mental challenge as well as a physical one. On and off crutches, the kindness of students has been a hallmark of the term so far as I determinedly seek to make the same pace around school. Having managed an entire career with only four days' absence from work (in October 1992) I am not spoiling any record any time soon. So, onward. The pain only makes me appreciate work even more. Inter-generational relationships: that is my theme. Who do we look at and learn from? Our peers, our own age group offer an obvious perspective: we share things in common and can therefore empathise readily. We often feel the same. But, what do we learn when everyone we speak to of our own age is merely an echo. Those who have lived longer know more, it does not necessarily make them wiser but it surely gives them perspective. The old adage that you cannot put old heads on young shoulders is true of course but having young people take older people seriously is a valuable asset. Children's heroes and heroines (is there yet a gender free common noun for that, there probably is but I am too out of touch!) are frequently glittering youths on whom fortune has smiled, but what about learning values. I am very hopeful. In assemblies last summer term I showed two things: Dame Janet Baker: *In Her Own Words* and a film called *Edie*, starring Sheila Hancock CBE. The former, a renowned 86 year old classical singer and the latter an 86 year old who climbed Mount Suilven in Scotland to make the film. Not, you might well think, fodder for 11-18 year olds but the response was phenomenal. Here are two spectacular octogenarians with so much to offer and their wise words resonated clearly with students. I wrote to Dame Janet and shared her beautiful response to me with students. Sheila Hancock offered to come into school to speak to some students and now Ross Wilson is taking a group under the expert mountain guidance of Ian McClelland to climb the very mountain. We shall donate all of our charitable fundraising this year to The John Thaw Foundation (Sheila Hancock's late husband) and to a charity of Dame Janet's choice. Dame Janet is coming to



school to be interviewed in March: what a privilege that will be. So, to the excitement of the rest of term: the school production, of *Guys and Dolls*, spread joy and an infectious enthusiasm; it filled a cold November night beautifully. Hot on its heels came our annual choral event on 7th December (*Handel's Messiah*) to name only two highlights of the term. Our students' participation in the Schools' Shakespeare Festival, the hundreds clambering up and down hills in their quest of the various Duke of Edinburgh awards, and the busy after lessons life that fill school till 5pm every day. This is all as important as the day to day work in lessons. In late October, to facilitate a visit to Normandy and a Duke of Edinburgh expedition, we covered some lessons and for two periods there were over 150 students in the Hall, all working impeccably in silence: it might sound mundane, or be to you only what should be expected but I considered it

to be a veritable privilege and honour to have such students before me just as, in that same week, I have burst with pride to exhibit some students' workbooks in assembly. Books that resonated diligence, care and profound attention to detail. The renovation of Thorpe Lodge grinds on, it will be good to get our entrance back and be done with builders. All of this, and more, not least the students I have just finished teaching (114X), makes Achilles, my tormentor, only a deviation from the real point which is the exciting (and sometimes exhausting) journey of Holland Park's young people who are very willing to embrace all that their elders have to offer them. To all of our readers, whatever your connection with us, we wish to convey our warmest wishes as 2019 closes and we are grateful to you for your support and encouragement.

MR COLIN HALL  
HEAD

# HANDEL'S MESSIAH

If you follow most of the things teachers nationally say about their jobs, you might think it a thankless and frustrating career choice. But as our fifth annual choral performance begins to form in the memory, I must confess to feeling rather more privileged and fortunate than my counterparts. This December celebration is the buzz of the entire school - supported generously by staff, friends of the school, governors and parents, all dressed in their finest garb, gathering from the cold, warmed by moreish morsels and the sacred sounds of this year's chosen opus. The event itself is always very special, but perhaps this year more than any other, the music was a treat of delicious delicacy and though I may have been the figure centre-stage, the debt of thanks I owe is tenfold that I am due. *Messiah* is a work of timeless genius; its centrality in the canon is well justified as its choruses have charmed and arias moved audiences for generations and I count myself honoured to enjoy this work from the best vantage point in the house. New for this year was the fabulous contribution of professional violinists, Antonia Kesel and Clare Hayes. Their sense of musicality, ensemble and pace, their skill, versatility and virtuosity enchanted us all. Our fabulous organist Matthew Jorysz, navigating a new instrument as the restoration of Our Lady of Victories' organ is in full swing, was extraordinary in his sensitivity to the music, to the instrumentalists and even to a few wayward waves on my part. Sheila Hancock, in her magnanimous words at the end of the performance, recognised quite how impressive this group of three performers were, describing them as sounding akin to an entire orchestra. The professional soloists were similarly superb. Julian Debreuil's bass, rich in the dark tones required for his arias, Matthew Keighley's plaintive beauty in 'Thy Rebuke Hath Broken His Heart', Hamish McLaren's soaring top range in 'He Shall Feed His Flock' and Rebecca Hardwick's power to fill the vast church with potent pulchritude alongside gentle grace - each were marvellous. Alongside the instrumentalists, these seven professionals set the stage for a magnificent night of music making. Mr Jack May's rehearsal of the tenors

and bases was rigorous, thorough, resulting in a miraculous transformation in their confidence and accuracy. And though many in the choir had only rehearsed the music since that morning, each vocalist rose to the occasion admirably. We were delighted to welcome ex-students, ex-parents, parents and friends of the school to join the choir. Those skilled in navigating the fiendish phrases in much of the music - both amongst students and teachers - led their compatriots courageously; those new to the musical game worked tirelessly on their parts - unabashed and unhindered by the sometimes frank appraisals given to them in rehearsal. Where talent deserted, there was teamwork and gusto; alongside a carefulness not to put a foot wrong during the performance, there was also confidence and a palpable pleasure taken from singing this resplendent oratorio. And all I was required to do? Hold my hands aloft and enjoy the fruits of everyone's efforts. My part in it all has been very well and widely appreciated; this particular celebration is for the many others who made this event a first-rate five year anniversary. The substantial donations will go to the John Thaw Foundation represented by Sheila Hancock and to St Luke's Hospice, the charity chosen by Dame Janet Baker.

MR NICHOLAS ROBSON  
ASSOCIATE HEAD



## EMOTIONAL HISTORY

During the half-term break, thirty-two students studying GCSE French enjoyed a four-day visit to Normandy. Accompanied by a French tour guide who spoke exclusively in French, we explored the history of the region. This encompassed: the medieval town of Bayeux and its legendary tapestry; remembering D-Day at the Arromanches 360° cinema through a documentary on the landings and the battle to liberate Europe from Nazi occupation; visiting the allied landing museum at Arromanches and; the American and German Cemeteries in Colleville-sur-Mer. In the cemeteries in particular, it was striking to see the extent to which students were visibly moved, particularly when reflecting on the ages of the soldiers. In addition we visited the Chocolaterie du Drakkar, watched caramel-making in Isigny-sur-Mer and partook in a bread making workshop in a traditional Norman boulangerie *Les Co-Pains*. Co-pain is a play on words: *copain* meaning friend, *pain* meaning bread. Eric, a Dutch baker, who now lives in France, taught us how to make bread using traditional artisan methods. The fruits of our labour were consumed for lunch - c'était délicieux. Films in the Château cinema room and table tennis tournaments in the games area occupied our evenings and it was, as ever, hugely satisfying to see students enjoy an experience where classroom learning comes to life in a wider world context.

MR SIMON DOBSON  
ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER



## THIRTY YEARS LATER

In preparation for their study of the origins of the Cold War next spring, wrapped up warm and prepared to brave the bitter cold of a Berlin winter, GCSE history students travelled to Germany on the weekend of the 16<sup>th</sup> November to discover what life was like behind the Iron Curtain. Just a week after the thirtieth anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, roses were still visible on monuments around the city, a reminder to students that the conflict is within the living memory of most of its inhabitants. Visiting exhibitions at the Museum in the Kulturbrauer and Checkpoint Charlie gave glimpses into the audacious escape attempts made to cross the wall, from kayaking across the North Sea to being smuggled across the border inside a piano. The National Museum of History provided a deeper look at Germany's past with an opportunity to revisit *Treaty of Versailles*, alongside exhibits that charted the country's descent into 1930s dictatorship. Students had time to reflect at the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe and consider the steps that led to the Holocaust at the Topography of Terror. As night fell, a trip to the Reichstag Dome offered an opportunity to view the city from above and appreciate the rich history that it has to offer. Perhaps the most significant location in the Cold War, certainly within Europe, our three days in Berlin offered students the opportunity to 'live' history outside the classroom.

MR ROBERT ORR  
DEPUTY HEAD



## IN EDIE'S FOOTSTEPS

Assembly on a cold wet Monday morning about an octogenarian who climbed a mountain, may not seem like the most enthralling of subjects to capture the imagination of two hundred and forty 'damp' students but capture their imagination it did. The tale was told by Mr Hall through the actress Sheila Hancock and illustrated by extracts from her recent film *Edie*. Eighty three year old Edie, following the death of her husband, believes that it is never too late for adventure. Packing an old camping bag, leaving her life behind and embarking on an adventure she never got to have in her youth with her long gone father, she embarks on climbing the imposing Mount Suilven in Scotland. This glorious life-affirming adventure captured the imagination of students. Fast forward a few months and a couple of home-made

lemonade on a couple of hazy summer Saturdays to raise money for the John Thaw Foundation) and we find ourselves captivated in the hall with Sheila Hancock in front of us regaling tales of the struggle of filming *Edie*. "There were no body-doubles, despite the Director's best guidance; I was determined to do it myself", so the scenes of Hancock heaving herself up scree and fragile rock are real, breath-taking and inspiring. But what is the point of inspiration if we don't turn it into a reality? So, in true Holland Park style, Mr Wilson and Mr McClelland (our very own Bear Grylls) have gathered together 30 students who have begun a training regime in preparation for their own attempt to climb Suilven, supported by the very same guides that assisted Sheila to the top. Amazing - more news next term.

MR DAVID CHAPPELL  
ACADEMY HEAD



## ONCE MORE UNTO THE BREACH!

'Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more; Or close the wall up with our English dead. In peace there's nothing so becomes a man. As modest stillness and humility' cried Alexandra Foti's Henry, as she rallied the English troops for one final attack against the French at Agincourt (or in our case the Pleasance Theatre). With her crutch raised aloft, it would have been hard to imagine a more charismatic leader to rouse the crowds around her; resilience and fearlessness personified. Accompanied by the bawdy Falstaff and Pistol (Emma Alexander and Delina Abraham) and the wonderfully Welsh Fluellen (Clarice Macdonald-Brown) Henry leads his men to a decisive victory. The devilish Dauphin (Josh Greenslade) and King Charles VI (Dhalya Harris), their tennis-ball moment having backfired, forced to surrender and offering the hand of the most bashful of princesses,

Katherine (Rudy Morales), to the English King. A triumph from all angles, our students stole the show and the applause that reverberated around the theatre was a testament to the hard they had work put in over the course of the term. *Henry V* is one of Shakespeare's history plays and tells the story of King Henry V of England, focussing on the events immediately before and after the Battle of Agincourt during the Hundred Years' War. As the applause died, two of our young actors had caught the eye of the Shakespeare Schools Festival organisers, and a mere two weeks later, Omar Ait El Caid and Alexandra Foti, rehearsed by Mr Jack May, found themselves performing with aplomb alongside Dame Harriet Walter at the festival's annual gala.

MR ROBERT ORR  
DEPUTY HEAD



## PRAYERS, PSALMS AND CANTICLES

Our choir singing Evensong in St Paul's Cathedral is a majestic and glorious affair. An obvious statement to the many who have attended and evidenced by the fact that this year was our third invitation to return and lead the service; approval indeed. Conducted with all the passion and brilliance of the cathedral's own Choirmaster, by Nicholas Robson, Associate Head, this is a moment of joy in the life of a busy and hard-working school. As a member of school staff, I am given the privilege of sitting in the splendid Gothic choir stalls, carved by the sculptor Grinling Gibbons (who was also responsible for the organ case and the bishop's throne), that culminate in a huge rose-window. Our students' voices soar high and wide into this glorious space, creating a sense of profound calm and tranquillity. Designed by Christopher Wren, he embraced the opportunity for a fresh start after the Great Fire of London destroyed its predecessor in 1666. The present building was completed in 1715 when Wren's vision of a major dome (something he had proposed adding to the medieval building before the fire) was finally realised. In 1941, during the Battle of Britain,

civil defense brigades protected the structure from fire. Although it was hit directly by bombs, repairs were carried out following the war to preserve Wren's masterpiece. Choral evensong itself, is a centuries old daily service which brings together words and music, usually sung by the Cathedral Choir. Taking place as the day draws to a close and lasting around 45 minutes, evensong is an opportunity for people to take a moment to pause from their busy lives and reconnect with their spiritual lives whatever they believe. The rhythm of speech and music works together with the awe-inspiring space under the Dome to create a slowing of one's heart rate and breathing, and a quietening of the mind. For many it is a calming and deeply personal experience. From the early 1700s sung evening prayers were held at St Paul's Cathedral at 3pm. The first service to be held beneath the Dome was an evening service held on Advent Sunday, 28<sup>th</sup> November 1858.

MR DAVID CHAPPELL  
ACADEMY HEAD



## THE GHOSTS OF CHRISTMAS PAST

We don't all find learning easy and 114X, a class of nine charming students, would be the first to admit that Dickens isn't the 'easiest' of reads. Still, like most learning challenges, it depends who you have in front of you. So the arrival of Mr Hall carrying a steaming hot cooked goose and a Christmas pudding, indicated that *A Christmas Carol* might be about to get a little more exciting. Heady aromas wafted around the classroom as the Cratchits came to life. Students were transported to the family's impoverished Christmas Day and watched as the goose was 'eked out' and Tiny Tim beat on the table with the handle of his knife, and feebly cried 'Hurrah!'. Students quickly understood the family's humility and gratitude despite their circumstances and that Dickens had cleverly used their joy to counter Scrooge's self-centred bitterness and meanness. Students described Scrooge as curmudgeonly and cantankerous. One lesson easefully led to the next and the students were soon writing extended passages of prose that pondered the deep meanings within this complex

tale. The fascinating thing I find about working with my Head and observing his practice is just how alive he becomes. His determination is clear but what is more striking is his affection and ambition for students. Every page of their books marked, no new word left undiscussed. The goose was just a gimmick, the real joy lies in the progress students make. As I observed the lessons, what was my learning journey? Quite profound actually; quite moving - like staring into Christmas future. The desire of students to please was as palpable as Colin Hall's desire to be with them. There were stunningly skilled pieces of writing from Riga Sylva, Taj Burnett and Adam Boujettef and these were matched, for example, by the peerless endeavour and good cheer of Adam Elsidawi. Approaching the end of my first decade in the job, I can see what the next three could have in store. We all learn all the time.

MR JOE HOLLOWAY  
DEPUTY HEAD



## WORKING IN LEIGHTON HOUSE : PART TWO

The 'Work Experience Programme' at Leighton House Museum continues apace. This academic year sees three new classes benefit from the weekly tutorials at the museum, led by myself, the Leighton House team of staff, trustees, and specialist practitioners in Art and Design. A new cohort of year 8 students have enjoyed weekly workshops in art, history, and aspects of museum work including, de-accessioning, public speaking and debate, storytelling and writing, all of which support their core curriculum learning. In addition to the year 8 workshops, the programme has been extended to GCSE art students who are enhancing their portfolios with bespoke art workshops led by award winning artists, including portraitist Clementine St. John Webster and textile artist Lora Avedian. Students are also developing their life drawing skills using a professional model and deepening their knowledge of art history, with visiting lecturer Dr Melanie Gibson from London's School of Oriental and African Studies. This additional practical work is being captured in a portfolio that will supplement the core coursework and extend the students appreciation of art, beyond the classroom, and into a 'Private Palace of Art'.

We are now preparing to take a new class of year 7 students to the museum for a bespoke programme supporting and extending their learning. Charlotte Villiers, Learning Officer, commented, '*we are delighted to be continuing to cement our link with Holland Park School, and work with such impressive and enthusiastic students over an extended period of time, getting to know them as individuals, and tailoring learning opportunities in the museum to their particular interests and development*'. The museum staff have been so impressed with the talent of Holland Park students, that our partnership has developed further to include weekend and holiday work experience opportunities, for example working on the family fun programme of activities and bringing the opportunity to earn some extra pocket money! '*A museum thrives when it is truly embedded in the local community surrounding it. Our collaboration with Holland Park School – staff, students and their families – brings a vigour and a relevance to Leighton House which is exciting and rewarding for everyone at the museum*', said Daniel Robbins, Senior Curator.

MS MAXINE EMERSON  
LEADING PRACTITIONER

## THE PORTER'S LODGE

I wonder what Montagu Norman, the Lodge's previous owner (and the Bank of England's longest serving Governor (1920-44), who was instrumental in overseeing the Bank's transition from a private bank to what is now recognised as a modern central bank), would make of our new Porter's Lodge? Located at the 'rear' of the house, it was, during his ownership, the place of servants and scullery maids, and so possibly he would have considered it a little ornate and 'unnecessarily' grand. As we approach the end of this autumn term, our arrangements for returning the school's entrance to Airlie Gardens are well underway. The beginning of the spring term will see students once again entering and exiting the site via our main gate, and our visitors will enter through our new roadside door into our splendid new reception. In every detail the space has been realised to be sympathetic to Norman's contemporary late Victorian vision and style, from

the 'Harrogate' pattern with 'Kingsley' border tiling floor, to the art deco plaster ceiling coving. Like the building itself, School House white is the choice of colour; a perfect setting for the 'well-worn' leather button backed wing armchair and mahogany pedestal desk. The rest of the Lodge, including the new gallery extension, is also nearing completion. Internally the house is looking magnificent. Its wooden walls, sourced from across the globe by Norman, are restored to their original natural finish and beauty and have brought the house 'back to life'. Now 'modernised', there is little or no evidence of the new wiring, heating pipes, or fibre cables; all have been skilfully hidden and concealed to ensure that the Lodge retains its original appeal and appearance.

MR DAVID CHAPPELL  
ACADEMY HEAD

# GUYS AND DOLLS

Finger snapping, toe tapping, ear warming musical comedies do not come in better forms than this. There are few evenings that affect you so much to negate any inhibitions to whistle in public, to laugh raucously without restraint, and to smile widely, madly with joy - this was one such rare occasion. The manifest glee of those in the auditorium has left a residual sparkle in the fabric of school that is, even now, traceable. An ensemble piece, the production showcased the skills and talents of such a wide range of performers and was a delectable testament to our most extraordinary students. Though there were some exquisite performances from individuals, the most absorbing feature of *Guys and Dolls* was its sense of collective endeavour and excellence: this was a show that

was more than the sum of its parts - but, boy, those parts were something. Oscar Barnham Hyatt's swaggering Nathan Detroit exuded comic timing, roguish charm and marvellously malleable facial expressions. His lines were delivered with flair and a palpable dead-pan insouciance. His absence from Holland Park's stage for the last four years has been most keenly felt, but his return roundly celebrated with this exquisite performance. Alongside him was the glamorous Rose Gol Mohammadzadeh, whose Adelaide combined exquisite humour with touching humanity. As Detroit's long-suffering fiancée, her laments and elegies for her fourteen-year long engagement - with no marriage - were heartfelt and hilarious. She boasted an impeccable 'Janice'-style New York

accent, and whilst her character acting made *Take Back Your Mink* startlingly funny, revealing her to be needy, petulant and infantile, it also was piercingly tragic. Omar Ait El Caid's performance as Sky Masterson was another heartthrob on stage, as his gravelly bass voice - strangely reminiscent of Jamie Cullum's alluringly rustic, deceptively controlled tones - won over the audience in *Luck be a Lady* and *I've Never Been in Love Before*. Allegra Zeier's Sarah Brown boasted purity and integrity (until her excess of Bacardi released her competitive and untrammelled dancing); alongside Catalina Zeier, playing Avride Abernathy, this was an upright, virtuous duo in a setting of skulduggery, both of whose top vocal range soared supreme. Alex Perez' performance as Big Jule was unrelenting, unabated hilarity: the gargantuan gangster, making threats and issuing demands from the first moment he walked (or rather shuffled) on stage. Alex played this part with enormous stage presence (and not

just because of his fat suit), barely speaking a word that did not have the audience in stitches. There were even moments of ad lib that caught a couple of the cast unawares. Joshua Greenslade and Valeria Lebedeva-Alexopoulou, pairing as Nicely Nicely and Benny Southstreet, was another stroke of casting genius, with the two charismatic comics comparing the evening with their rapturous repartee and suave staging. They took the audience under their wing. Grace Holness' Lieutenant Brannigan, as the officious and looming presence of the law used physicality to great effect. As ever, the orchestra were a professional outfit, giving gusto to the musical numbers; the set and staging gave an enormous sense of atmosphere to this distinctive setting. In all, this was a show that fizzed with frenzied fun and fabulous frolics - delightful, delectable joy.

MR NICHOLAS ROBSON  
ASSOCIATE HEAD



## 800 PLUS, YEARS OF EXCELLENCE



Oxbridge is a portmanteau of Oxford and Cambridge and this year we have twenty-two applicants pursuing a place in an array of subjects that is characterised by the diversity of the students as they seek a subject that evermore suits their personal interest. Indeed, the most common degrees sought are joint honours courses such as English and French, Philosophy and Spanish and more. Each student has now been through a rigorous process of personal statement drafting that incorporates extensive personal reading and work experience, and in some cases has amounted to at least ten drafts in order to attain the most

concise clarity of expression! Towards the end of October, these students sat subject-specific admissions tests ranging from the HAT to the MAT, to the ELAT and BMAT, and their scores will doubtlessly play a central role in the admissions process. We are now eagerly awaiting requests for interview and, as such, conducting our own interview preparation. Last month, we were delighted to welcome Jeremy Caddick, Dean of Emmanuel College Cambridge, who kindly agreed to not only provide our applicants with a seminar on the interview process, but also to conduct a number of practice interviews. In these, we consistently saw students' own thought and expression challenged to its limit, and personal reading interrogated gently but with a razor-sharp precision: everything students can expect in a learned office on a mid-December afternoon! Students will now sit a number of additional practice interviews, both general and subject-specific, in order to prepare them as rigorously as possible for one of life's great challenges.

MR BENARNOLD  
ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER

## A WORLD BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Teachers sometimes cannot give a sense of the excitement, challenge and variety of experiences available in careers outside of education. That is why our BBC studios presentation and our Medicine presentation by Dr Peter Hill each opened a window to worlds unknown and hitherto unexperienced. Collecting a classroom full of enthusiasts on each occasion, these talks were both practical studies of the necessary skills and experiences required for entry into these careers, and richly illustrative examples of the kinds of encounters and challenges one might face when entering them. Visitors from BBC studios shed light on the benefits of working with such a world-renowned, prestigious and large company, from viewing previews of David Attenborough's *Seven Worlds One Planet*, to attending live recordings of programmes with a television audience. This three-person panel articulated their very diverse

backgrounds and experiences that led them to their work, and took students through the multiplicity of work that can be undertaken in such a large organisation. Less than one week later, Dr Peter Hill's account of life as a junior doctor - before he became a consultant - was a potent caution to any who enter this ancient career for prestige or wealth! The exertion and exhaustion was laid bare - but also its enormous reward and excitement. Questions about impartiality, legal obligations and client relationships (either with viewers or patients) made these fascinating forays into two contrasting worlds of work and the pressures on all to uphold professional standards. More such programmes are planned for later in the year, which will continue to whet our students' appetite for the careers open to them.

MR NICHOLAS ROBSON  
ASSOCIATE HEAD

## A WORLD CHALLENGE

Passports are being renewed, vaccines are being injected and leach-prevention socks are in high demand from all major London retailers; it can only mean that Holland Park School's expedition to Borneo is creeping ever-closer. This summer 35 students will be boarding a plane for a three-and-a-half-week long adventure in Borneo and Malaysia with World Challenge. Composed of several key phases, the first will see students take on a five-day trek through the deep Bornean jungles, where they will be sleeping in hammocks, cooking for themselves (and their teachers!) over open fires and pitching themselves against the humid conditions by hiking for hours and many kilometres each day. Phase two offers no respite; students will be working with TIC (Turtle Information Centre) to promote the conservation of vital Malaysian habitats and species, helping to clear beaches of debris so that bales of brand new hatchlings stand a better chance of making their way to the ocean unscathed. To support this work, students will engage in a responsible tourism initiative to help them to evaluate their impact on the world as they travel and learn how they can undertake community interactions that are both ethical and effective, touching upon significant issues such as orphanage tourism, sanitation, deforestation and animal poaching. In amongst these key phases, students will have the opportunity to visit Semenggoh Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre to see the famous 'man of the forest' (better known as the Orangutan) in its natural habitat, wander through the lush vegetation of Kubah National Park, sightsee in Kuala Lumpur and discover the Batu caves, white water raft in the Kampar River and explore the 'Pearl of the Orient' - better known as Penang island famous for its delectable Malaysian dishes in Georgetown. The World Challenge organisation seeks to develop young leaders by ensuring that students are responsible for all aspects of the trip - from securing accommodation and transportation to managing the budget and cooking for all 35 group members! Pushing students beyond their comfort zone, students will have to learn to manage themselves, work as a team and cope with difficulties and inevitable setbacks - all vital life skills and when better to cultivate them than over the course of a once in a lifetime voyage to Malaysian Borneo.

MS FAYE MULHOLLAND  
DEPUTY HEAD



## TWENTY NINETEEN RESULTS

The government's publication of its league tables places us in a very strong position: we stand as the 204<sup>th</sup> of 3,488 state schools in England. Twenty nineteen's results still contained some legacy qualifications so we will look to do even better next year (2020).

## OFSTED'S NEW FRAMEWORK

There is nothing like putting one's house in order! This term has seen us make the first strides to be ready for any future inspection. In early December a soon to be HMI of schools came and gave us a very thorough and helpful health check.

## UK MATHS CHALLENGE

November saw Holland Park School mathematicians from year twelve and thirteen take part in a national competition designed to test students' mathematics at the highest level. The Senior Team Challenge is a competition giving students the opportunity to tackle a variety of engaging mathematical activities while developing teamwork and communication skills. Ms Wen Shi, our maths extraordinary teacher, took four students, Oluwatomi Fasasi, Jasmine Frijters, Roman Bloch and Kendra Chuah to the Kings Maths School. Students competed in three demanding rounds. We are delighted to report that our student team came second only five marks behind the highest team from Kings, a specialist mathematics school. Oluwatomi impressed the Head of King's College Maths School to such an extent that he has offered support with his application to study mathematics at King's College University.



Designed and produced by  
HOLLAND PARK SCHOOL



Suprabhat Rayamajhi, Year 10 | The Lone Pheasant | digital photograph | 2019