



'Learning is the only thing the mind never exhausts, never fears, and never regrets.' Leonardo Da Vinci

Dear Parents,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome everyone to St Hilda's for the start of the 2016-2017 academic year. It is especially good to welcome all the new girls and their parents to the School community and I do hope that your time with us will be both purposeful and positive, and most of all happy. This is a particularly important year for our Form VI girls who will be taking their place at the top of the School and will find out their new positions of responsibility tomorrow. I am sure that everyone is very excited at the prospect of a fresh start and a new chapter ahead and I look forward to seeing you all.

Learning is what we are all about in all its forms; whether becoming acquainted with new ideas and concepts, taking one's place in the line, the first steps towards reading or participating in a discussion; these are all intrinsic parts of a school day and I hope the quote by Da Vinci will be inspiring to us all, whatever age and stage of life we are in. It is important that we never feel that we have finished our learning journey and everyone should feel inspired by this new year, to grasp every opportunity to broaden horizons, gather knowledge and to set personal targets for endeavour whilst aiming for success. We are so fortunate to be part of an inclusive and caring community where everyone seeks to pull together. I hope that this will be our overarching aim for the forthcoming year at St Hilda's and all that it will bring.

A very warm welcome to Miss Alice Harding, who will be taking up her position as Form III Form Teacher and Head of RE. I hope she will be very happy here. Mrs Wallace is commencing her maternity leave this term and her place is being filled this year by Mrs Addis, who we welcome back to St Hilda's. Miss Smith will be teaching Computing this year in addition to her role in Reception.

Beginning of Term Matters

The School gates will open at 8.20am as normal tomorrow. Breakfast Club will be operating as normal. Please can your daughter take all her kit and bags to her new classroom where it can then be checked and sorted. The cloakroom will be locked until the necessary time.

Email etiquette

All staff endeavour to answer emails within a 24 hour time period. As some staff work part time and are not always able to access their email during the working day, you may not receive an immediate response. Whilst I appreciate that some parents are only able to respond to or send emails in the evening, it should not be assumed that you will receive an answer after School hours. Most importantly, please can I remind parents that the first port of call regarding any matter relating to your daughter's welfare should first be sent to the Form Teacher, who will then direct it to more senior staff as appropriate.

Winter/summer uniform

We are happy for girls to return in summer uniform if the weather proves to be as warm and sunny as in recent days. Girls may wear winter uniform if desired. Once the weather turns cooler we will ask for all girls to wear winter uniform. Please can all uniform be clearly named and labelled.

Performing Arts Studio

We are delighted that the top floor of the new building has been transformed over the summer into a superb new performance and teaching space. It is amazing to see the impact of moving a few walls to create so much space, which will give the girls such a fun experience. We are also very grateful to the outgoing Form VI class who donated a new Clavinova for the room, which is already in situ. You are most welcome to come up to the top floor on Wednesday after you have collected your daughter, who I am sure will be pleased to show you the new facility.

Leavers' Service collection

Thank you for the very generous collection raised at the end of year Leavers' Service, which raised £500 for the work of The Daylight Club, a local charity providing social activities for physically disabled people of working age who live in the St Albans District. Based mainly in Harpenden, they meet two days a week and this year is celebrating their 20th anniversary. I am so pleased to be able to support this worthy cause.

125th Anniversary Booklet

There are some spare copies of the 125th Anniversary Booklet available. If you would like a copy, please call in at the School Office.

Nits

There have been some reported cases of headlice in various year groups. Please can I ask all parents to check their daughter's hair ahead of the return to School, as often the holidays are a time when they can spread.

Harvest Festival

Our Harvest Festival will take place on 30th September in St Nicholas' Church, to which all are most welcome. Details of the service and charities will be issued in due course.

Drama Bag

The new drama bags have arrived and will be distributed on the first day. They will be named and placed on pegs.

Stevenson's Uniform

I understand from some parents that there have been some logo issues with new Stevenson's uniform. Please do check carefully to see if you have any items without the St Hilda's logo. Stevenson's have offered to correct any uniform with this issue.

Drama Summer School

A huge congratulations to the girls who took part in the Drama Summer School, which was once again very popular and of a very high standard. I would encourage as many girls as possible to take part in future years.

Summer Play Scheme

The inaugural Summer Camp was a great success and thoroughly enjoyed by all participants. A big thank you to Mrs Bishop, Mrs Radgman and Miss Radgman who organised everything so beautifully.

Homework Club

Homework Club will commence next week and will run on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday between 4pm and 5pm, for Form V and VI. This is an excellent opportunity for girls to develop independent learning skills and to manage their homework allocation, especially when they are busy out of school curricular activities.

Summer Holiday 2017

We have revised our summer holiday dates for 2017, to bring our end of term in line with other local independent schools. Our term will now end on Friday 7th July.

The next newsletter will be issued on Friday 16th September.

With best wishes

Mr Sayers
Headmaster