

Every school has an ethos peculiar to itself. In our case this is informed and nourished by the ideals of this Cathedral Church. In these days when private schools are being questioned by the powers that be, as to their charitable status, and faith schools for their justification, Prebendal's mission Statement is our answer. We offer a distinctive formation and we offer an education, which seeks, to bring out the very best in each boy and girl. But in addition we strive for a strong moral and spiritual dimension, in a community that reaches out to the world with a genuine concern for the disadvantaged. Our ethos must permeate all we do. It is not like the icing on a cake or simply something 'you are good at', but it is, I believe, part of the warp and weft of our everyday life. Incidentally, not only do I think this must be the case with a Cathedral school - but I believe that as all independent schools, under the understandable pressures of inspections and regulations, increasingly offer the same thing, it will be the uniqueness of schools, which will be critical to their future success.

So what really matters? I would like to touch upon just a few of those things that are important, each beginning with the letter 'P'.

Principles matter. The story is told of a President who had an hour long audience with the Pope. An hour passed. Two hours passed. Three. Finally, the president emerged, triumphant, and spoke to the assembled reporters. 'I am delighted to announce', he said, 'that after much discussion, the Pope and I agree on 70% of what we talked about'. Soon after the Pope emerged, looking crestfallen and upset. 'Why so upset, your Holiness?' 'We were told you and the President agreed on 70% of what you discussed'. 'Yes', said the Pope, 'but we were talking about the Ten Commandments'.

Some things are non-negotiable. Whatever changes the government makes to education, however culture alters; as generations come and go, values do not change. As I read past Prebendalian magazines, as I meet many Old Girls and Boys, as I think about the prizes we are soon to give out, I think the school has always stood for certain things: for ambition, respect, kindness, awareness, sensitivity, spirituality and curiosity. Long may that continue. In the Marx Brothers' movie Duck Soup, Groucho's character, Rufus T. Firefly is appointed President of Freedonia and he concludes his stirring inauguration speech to the nation thus, "Those are my principles. If you don't like them I have others". I am pleased to say, we are not the same at Prebendal Principles matter.

Partnerships matter too. Gone are the days, when parents and school did not work together. Partnership is essential and not merely an optional extra. The School needs to communicate well and so do parents. Partnership does matter, and as such this is one area that we will be developing further as we expand our central records system that will allow you as parents to log in to see amongst other things your child's reports and letters home. Partnership is central to the PTA. Please never underestimate the value of this Association, not just because of the funds that they raise over the year. These have allowed us to purchase numerous pieces of equipment for the school and to pay half the cost of resurfacing the tennis courts later this summer. But to me, the importance also lies in the way that the events bring the community together. Alongside our more traditional events, such as the Wassail and the BBQ there was a fun Quiz Night and for the first time a Summer Fete. This was an incredibly successful occasion. It was wonderful to see the energy of the whole school coming together to make such a

memorable afternoon – I cannot let this opportunity pass without publicly thanking the PTA as a whole but in particular Mrs Sprules as chairman, I would also like to extend my thanks if I may to Mrs Clayton, Mrs Hammond, Mrs Gent and Mrs Fountain for the hours of hard work they put in, along with many others to make the fete such a great success.

The final ‘P’ which I would like to explore today is ‘Product’. Product also matters. One question I am often asked by prospective parents is. ‘What sort of child does Prebendal produce?’ As I see the diversity of prize winners today and as I reflect on the achievements of our leavers who embody so many characteristics as a collective group in what has been a highly successful year. There is no monochrome answer to this question. Nor should there be. We do not produce clones. However, I do believe our young men and women should leave Prebendal confident without being arrogant; aware of their strengths and their weaknesses; knowledgeable and compassionate; able to ask the right questions; to be life-long learners; and to be ready for the next step.

As Head Master it always gives me great pleasure to see the children grow in confidence as they take part in the many activities that the Prebendal offers. It is a real joy to see our pupils on stage from the youngest to the oldest participating in drama. Whether it is the Pre-Prep Christmas play, the wonderful performance of Oliver by the senior pupils, the afternoon of entertainment by years 2 and 3, the junior plays or the evening of poetry by year 6.

Alongside this the children perform in numerous informal and formal musical concerts. The Christmas concert in conjunction with the NSPCC was a great success. The Lent Term concert, I think, was the best I have been to, the quality of musicianship and the musicality of our children was wonderful. I am sure that later today in the Festivities Concert we will be once again impressed by the professionalism with which Prebendal pupils will perform. The Choristers have had a tremendous year with perhaps the highlight being a short tour to Berlin at Easter and the Southern Cathedrals Festival being held here in Chichester next weekend. Performance, whether it is music, drama, reading in our Cathedral assemblies or participating in competitions, gives young people an opportunity to develop their skills, their confidence and their ability to work as a team, but above all to lead and to rely on one another.

The same is obviously true of sport and this last year was very successful in terms of enabling all pupils to represent the school at their own level and to have that feeling of companionship and fun that comes with being on the sports field together. We continue to punch well above our weight in sport. The senior girls hockey and netball teams had mixed seasons with some notable victories whilst the U11’s were particularly strong and were unbeaten in Rounders this term. The U10’s Girls Football won the Southborne tournament and 4 girls qualified for the West Sussex Girl’s Football development squad. In cross-country running, Sophia Perham, Honor Clinch and Mildred Maybury were in the top five in fields of over 80 competitors. The 1st XI boys’ hockey had a short but unbeaten season as did the junior hockey team. The U11 boys Football lost just one of their matches and qualified for the Portsmouth District Football tournament, and the U9’s Cricket team were unbeaten this term. This year we

were particularly strong in athletics with over thirty performances qualifying for the County Athletic Championships with Oscar Turner and Lewis Knott becoming county champions in high jump and triple jump respectively.

The Fathers' Cricket team has also gone from strength to strength with enough players now to field two teams. For the first time in the history of the competition the Prep school fathers beat the Pre-Prep fathers - mind you the Pre-Prep Fathers' made the mistake of calling on me to bat for them. I believe the scoreboard read - Cannell bowled Keoghane - not that I'm bitter but his school fees have just gone up by an extra 10%.

Academically, children throughout the school have made significant progress and results at both 11+ and 13+ continue to be excellent and it is lovely to see all our pupils being rewarded for all their hard work. Academic ability plays an important role in many of the scholarships that are achieved and following the wonderful foundations laid here many of our pupils go on to achieve excellent results in public examinations and attend the very top universities. This year, 67% of our Year 8 leavers were awarded scholarships, a mixture of art, music, sport, all-rounder and academic. This is a tremendous achievement and it is a great testament to the breadth and quality of the education on offer here at Prebendal. Beyond the classroom, I was delighted that William Futchter achieved 26th place out of 1700 entrants in the Junior Satips (Independent Schools) General Knowledge Competition - he joins an illustrious group of Prebendalians on their honours board.

Much of what takes place in the classroom is supported by the many trips out or visitors coming in to the school, including visits to local landmarks, museums, Geography Field trips, visits to and by local services including First Aid training for Year 8. It was on one such visit with the younger children to the fire service that a smile was brought to my face. The firefighter giving the presentation held up a smoke detector and asked the class: "Does anyone know what this is?"

One boy's hand shot up and the firefighter asked him to answer.

So the boy replied: "That's how Mum knows when supper is ready!"

There have been so many notable achievements this year by children throughout the school that it is impossible to mention them all individually here. Likewise when we come to the Prize Giving we can only recognise a few of the many achievements otherwise we could be here a very long time. However our new revamped Prebendalian Magazine, out early next term will be able to celebrate many more of these achievements.

Earlier in my speech I alluded to the importance of performance and how this develops confidence. It is also important that through the values that we share, we are prepared to give. To give of our time and our skills to help those less fortunate than we are. Here at Prebendal we are very conscious of the needs of others and as a school we have an excellent record for our support of charities. Once again, our Year 8 pupils investigated a number of charities and identified three which they wished to support. It was then up

to them as a group to choose and organise fund raising events. This year we had a disco, our first ever Prebendal's Got Talent and a sponsored walk - each of these events and others, often organised by an individual or a small group of children raised just under £3,500 for a variety of charities.

Prize Giving is also an occasion for saying thank you. I want to thank the Governors, for their support during the year. The Governors here are committed to ensuring that the school does not stand still but is able to move forward in a considered way that does not compromise our core values and beliefs. And it is with great pleasure that I can tell you that as we leave for our summer break the workmen move in. By September we will have a new Learning Centre comprised of two new computer suites allowing for greater use of technology in our learning. It will also include refurbishment of the dining room and the adjacent corridor, refurbishment of a number of classrooms which will be fitted with projectors that are linked to computers. We will also be moving to subject based classrooms for the older children, all this will have a positive impact on the teaching and learning within the school.

An even greater thank you must go to the staff. The Head Master is often pitied for having to be on the receiving end of the criticism that comes a school's way. But it is more than countered by also being the recipient of countless kind comments and compliments about what the school is doing. The criticism should stay at the Head Master's door; the compliments shouldn't: they belong to the staff and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them all, whatever their role, for their unrelenting hard work that makes Prebendal such a special place.

Today we say goodbye to some teaching staff.

Mrs Harbott joined us as Head of Pre-Prep in January 2009, she helped guide us through a very successful inspection and brought a wealth of experience to the Early Years. Unfortunately Mrs Harbott has not been very well this term and she has now decided to go back to college and take a post graduate dyslexia course.

Mrs Isgar has taught in the Pre-Prep for ten years and is retiring at the end of this term. The closeness of the way the teachers work in Year 2 means that many of the pupils here today would have been taught at some time by her. Mrs Isgar has always had high expectations not only within the classroom but in ensuring the children behave in an appropriate way.

Mrs Mannings, Head of Latin and a Year 4 Formteacher who joined us two years ago will be returning to Kendrick School in Reading as Head of Latin where she will be preparing her students for GCSE and 'A'Level.

Neil Redman one of our Boys Games coaches will be leaving us after a five years service. His knowledge and coaching of football in particular has been much appreciated by all those who have worked with him.

I am sure you all join me in thanking them for all that they have brought to Prebendal and wish them well in their future careers and retirement.

For September, Mrs Shingler has been appointed as Head of Pre-Prep, a position she has filled before and I know one that she is keen to do again. She has great experience and will ensure that the special atmosphere that has been such a fundamental part of the Pre-Prep will remain.

Mr Bromfield will be joining the prep department from West Hill Park, where he is currently Head of History and Religious Studies as well as being an experienced junior years teacher. Mr Bromfield started his teaching career here at Prebendal and will take up the position of a Year 4 teacher and a teacher of Religious Studies.

Finally, I would like to close by offering a few words of advice to the children that are leaving. You are ready to leave Prebendal, there are many opportunities out in the big wide world and I hope if nothing else, we have given you the confidence to seize the day - Carpe Diem. This has never been better expressed than by Samuel Langhorne Clemens, better known under his pen name Mark Twain and I leave you with his words: 'Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from safe harbour, catch the trade winds in your sails, explore, dream, discover'.