



8 March 2019

Dear Parents

My heart always sinks when I hear or read those words: “We wish to make a complaint.” Any organisation worth its salt takes complaints very seriously and it is right to respond to those who seek reassurance.

I was made aware of several complaints this week in a letter to the Chair of Governors.

As a Head, I have always considered myself to be approachable and available..., to my colleagues, pupils and parents, but on this occasion, the author(s) chose to remain anonymous, so my only way of responding is via Word from the Head.

Before I do, might I just say that anyone who wants to raise a concern or to complain should feel able to come and speak to me. Any suggestion that, as a result, there might be negative consequences for pupils is so far-fetched and contrary to our ethos, I can only assume the letter has come from parents who are very new to Channing. This simply would never happen! Cast out your memories from your own school days! We actively encourage parents to communicate, and whilst, of course, I’d rather have applause (and who wouldn’t?) complaints are often justified and need dealing with.

There was a complaint that I don’t know the girls: I do! I was the one who decided to offer her a place at Channing!

That the food is terrible: it really isn’t! Come and have lunch!

That I don’t smile: I do! At everyone! I have the wrinkles to prove it! Even when leaping out of a plane for Channing (see photo at the top of this letter)

There were other matters too, and I thank whoever wrote the letter for raising other concerns. I share them. You have been heard. And we are listening.

There was one final complaint that I simply must put right: a swipe at a headteacher who has time to write weekly letters but does not “spend time encouraging and talking to the majority of Channing students (or their parents)”. I hate to disillusion anyone, but it takes me very little time on a Friday to write this part of the Word: the vast majority is written by my fabulous colleagues and/or their pupils, and my very efficient, PA Hanna and the School Secretary, Elaine do all the hard work, proofreading and editing!

This has been one of the busiest weeks ever at Channing, from World Book Day to a conference on Artificial Intelligence hosted on behalf of the Girls' Schools Association. There have been so many "transformative technology" events that we are going to produce a special Future Technologies Newsletter so that you can read about and applaud (I hope) the great variety of activities right across the school. Many thanks to the parents and government minister, Margot James MP, amongst many illustrious guests, who gave so generously of their time and expertise, and to our Assistant Head (Science, Technology and Engineering) Mr Dan Grossman for "engineering" such a great week!

This morning, our Year 13 Senior School Officers gave an inspirational assembly to mark International Women's Day. I am so proud of the young women they have become. I hope all their dreams will come true.

[video](#)

Wishing you all a good weekend.

Best wishes
Mrs B M Elliott
Headmistress

Girls Enjoying Success

Sports News

Well done to Alice Metcalf in Year 9 who has been invited to compete in the Junior Sculling Head, which is a major rowing competition in which more than 4000 school age children compete. It is an annual event, and this year Alice will be competing against some of the best athletes in the country on the Olympic rowing course.

TeenTech News

Another exciting week for the TeenTech Awards club. A group of students went to visit FDM Group, a professional services provider with a focus on IT. The students spent the day learning about what FDM Group do, they got valuable feedback on their TeenTech ideas from professional mentors, took part in hands-on activities and learnt about presentation skills for the future workplace.



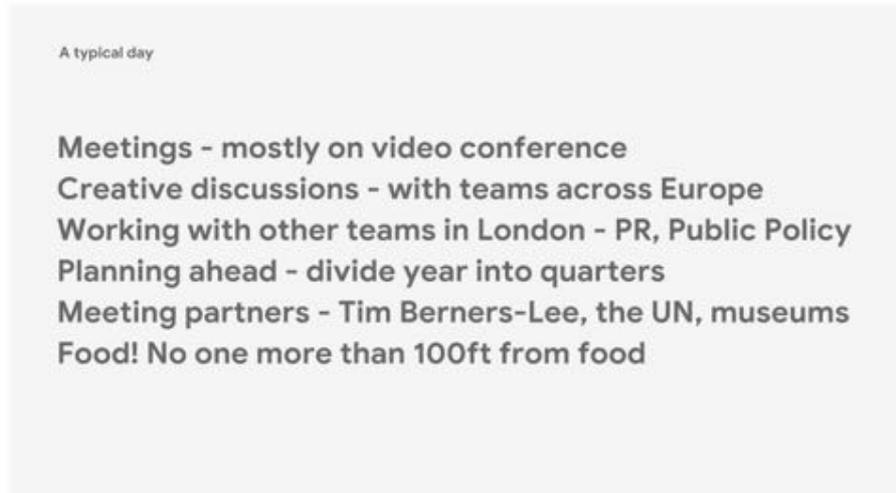
Careers News

Goldman Sachs

The Goldman Sachs A Level Girls Event during half-term was an inspiring programme that taught everyone in the room that we could all be successful. A multitude of speakers explained their career paths and their current role. I was inspired by the number of strong and confident women that we met. It was a useful experience for networking. My favourite part of the event was the talk on “self-branding”. This concept was really interesting and helped me to clarify my strengths and weaknesses. Gresa Madjuni Y13

Coding, Marketing and Everything In Between

Year 12 students thoroughly enjoyed a fascinating careers talk by Dr Ben Malbon and Saskia Owens from Google. They are working on developing Googliness (a mixture of curiosity and collaboration) as a result of the talk.



Sociology

Professor Elaine Unterhalter of UCL Institute of Education presented a clear and insightful introduction to sociology, social policy and related careers to Year 10, giving inspiring examples of the research she is doing in order to ensure that girls in all countries benefit from effective schooling.

Music News

Channing at St Joseph's Thursday 14th March 7.30pm

There are tickets still available for next week's 'Channing at St Joseph's'. The main work features the highlights from Handel's iconic oratorio, 'Messiah', including the well known 'Hallelujah' chorus. With a cast of over 220, that includes the Conabor Choir, Cantemus Chorus, Chamber Choir and Channing Community Choir this concert WILL be exciting and memorable and not to to be missed! So do please book you tickets using the link below. (If the link does not work, please paste it into your browser). I look forward to seeing you in St Joseph's at 7.30pm on Thursday.

<https://www.channing.co.uk/events/channing-at-st-josephs/>

Music at Lunchtime

Music at Lunchtime today was a real musical medley of pieces and instrumentalists beginning with a light-hearted arrangement of *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* played by the Intermediate Flute Ensemble. Other delights included Sophia Baum (Voice) with a memorable *Amazing Grace* and a Year 8 group comprising Katherine Sarfaty, (Piano) Amelia Frohlich, Caitlin Steers, Sophia Bremen and Cressida Anness-Lorenz (Voices) rehearsed themselves and gave a fabulous rendition of Zach Sobiech's *Clouds*. Clio Harwood's violin literally fizzed with excitement during her superb performance of the 1st movement of *Bruch's Violin Concerto*, Rose Marshall (Alto Saxophone) gave a haunting performance of Ravel's *Habanera*, Maddy Napier's (Cello) *Romance* was as romantic as you can get, with gorgeous tone quality and to finish Natasha Gough's (Piano) beautiful *Nocturne by Paderewski*. Remind me girls - don't you have a huge concert next week....I am in awe.

Do listen to the audio by clicking on the link to Soundcloud below:

<https://soundcloud.com/channing-school/sets/lunchtime-concert-8th-march-2019>



News from the Junior School

On Thursday 28th February 6E took Fairseat back in time to the 1940s. They shared the things they have been learning in their History topic this term, such as evacuation and rationing. They even sourced a map of Highgate, showing the damage done in the area during the Blitz! The audience were treated to information about the music, followed by a dance to Glenn Miller's *In the Mood*. They rounded off their performance with a full rendition of *We'll Meet Again*, with a nod to our famous Forces Sweetheart - Dame Vera Lynn.



International Women's Day

To celebrate International Women's Day, **Year 3** learnt about Frida Kahlo. They created this display in honour of her very colourful life!



In Library time today, the girls in **Y6M** discussed the importance of International Women's Day and this year's theme: 'balance for better'. They have each committed to 'balancing for better' – helping to build a more gender-balanced world and encouraging others to balance for better too. Together, the girls discussed and shared inspiring female role models from their own lives, sports, politics, science and activism. They also

shared their future job aspirations, which included all sectors of industry. Watch out world... these girls are already vocal about challenging the status quo; they are helping to forge more equality for women. Go Y6M!

Sports News

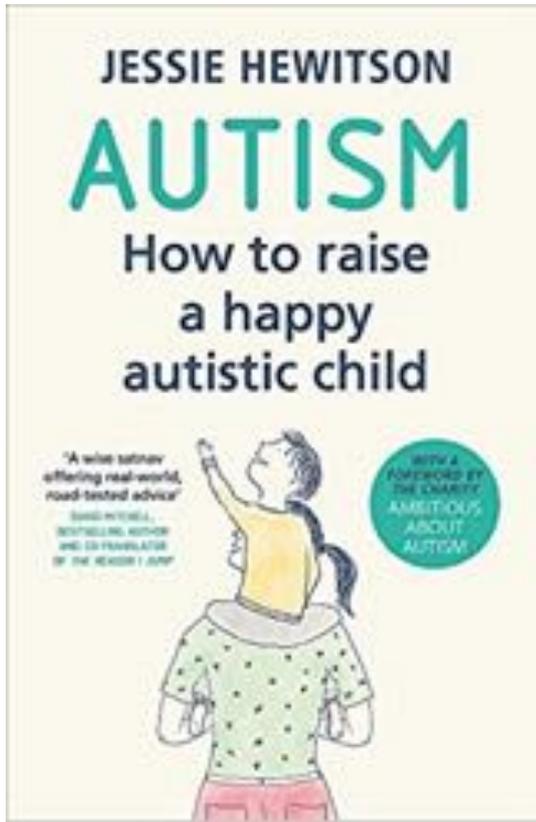
Congratulations to Francesca Poulton who represented the Haringey Borough and placed second in the London Youth Games indoor cricket finals at Lords at the weekend.

On Tuesday, two Year 5 teams ventured to St Christopher's to play football. The girls showed true Channing spirit, battling on till the end of the game. Unfortunately, both teams lost but well done to all of the girls who represented the school.



Alumnae

As part of [@WorldBookDayUK](#), [@ChanningSchool](#) is very proud of alumana Jessie Hewitson [@jessiehewitson](#) and her recent book 'Autism: How to raise a happy autistic child.' [#GirlsEnjoyingSuccess](#) [@GSAUK](#)



Curry (Net)Ball

A big thank you to all of the Channing mums got involved in a friendly game of Curry (Net)Ball, at Channing Senior School on Tuesday 5 March 2019.

It was such a fun evening, even the referee, our wonderful PE teacher/Netball Guru joined in, as did the Alumnae & Development Secretary (yikes!). It was a real example of sportswomanship and women enjoying success! So if you missed this one, there is no need to fret, as we will be organising another one next term!



Healthy Schools Week

Next week is Healthy School Week which, this year, focuses on Self-Esteem and Wellbeing in the Senior School. There will be a range of assemblies, seminars and interactive theatre workshops covering topics such as mental health, nutrition and cultural awareness. The following Wednesday we are also very pleased that Natasha Devon, one of the country's leading speakers about teenage mental health and wellbeing, will be talking to the Sixth Form and, in the evening, to parents in the Arundel Centre. I understand that this event is almost full, but there are one or two seats still available if you are quick.

Teaching and Learning

Today in their T&L Briefing Senior School staff were looking at the Science behind Retrieval Practice.

Did you know that every time a memory is brought to mind, it is reconstructed and reinforced? When our students take a quiz, they are not just checking their memory - they are enhancing it.

While tests are often used for assessment purposes, a lesser known benefit of tests is that when students take them they are practising retrieval, which causes learning. The act of retrieval is thought to strengthen memory, making information more retrievable (easier to remember) later. In addition, practising retrieval has been shown to improve higher-order, meaningful learning, such as transferring information to a new context or applying knowledge to new situations. Practising retrieval is a powerful way to improve meaningful learning of information, and it is relatively easy to implement as part of your daughter's revision. Attached is a helpful summary from learningscientists.org which you might want to look at with her.

Week Ahead

Healthy Schools Week

Monday 11 March

Commonwealth Day

18.00 - 18.30 Senior School Parents Information Evening for Classic trip to Bay of Naples, FH

Tuesday 12 March

Year 12 Higher Education Fair, SFS/NSH

16.30 - 19.00 Year 8 Parents Evening, NSH

Wednesday 13 March

Senior School Year 7 PE, Football Coach Miss Baker, Football Workshop, NSH

18.00 - 19.15 Senior School Channing Community Choir, Messiah Rehearsal, FH

Thursday 14 March

14.55 - 17.00 Senior School Music Rehearsal, Choir/Orchestral Concert, St Joseph's Church

18.15 Senior School Year 7-10 PE Trip to watch Arsenal Women's Football Match at Borehamwood

19.30 Senior School Music Choir/Orchestral Concert, St Joseph's Church

Friday 15 March

13.00 Music at Lunchtime

Join the conversation



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