



Dear Parents

Here's an interesting fact: Thursday this week marked the 100 year anniversary of the general election which produced the very first Labour government in Britain. As an historian, follower of current affairs and quiz fiend that's the sort of fact I love to learn. It is particularly interesting, though, because I learned it earlier in the week in a discussion with two Labour MPs who are likely to become Ministers in a Labour government if (and more likely, when) one is voted in at next year's general election. You will all be well aware of Labour's much-touted manifesto pledge to 'end the tax breaks enjoyed by private schools' from reading articles such as [this one in The Telegraph](#) this week, so I thought I would use today's Word from the Head to talk a little about what I am hearing about the political and economic headwinds which are likely to - and in some cases, already are - impacting the independent school sector.

Some background to start. I am (and by extension, Channing is) a member of the two largest independent school representative associations: the Girls' Schools Association (GSA) and The Heads' Conference (HMC). Miss Hamalis is a member of the Independent Association of Prep Schools (IAPS) on behalf of the school, and all three of these are part of the overarching Independent Schools Council, or ISC, which works in partnership with these associations to campaign on specific issues. We're also members of the independent schools' Bursars and Governors associations, ISBA and AGBIS. These organisations provide huge amounts of advice and guidance, and over the course of the year we attend multiple conferences, talks and webinars which means that we are firmly plugged into all the latest sector intelligence and best thinking about the future of independent schools.

A case in point is a recent HMC/AGBIS/ISBA strategy event which Mrs Leigh, our Chair of Governors, Mr Hill, the Bursar, and I all attended a couple of weeks ago. It offered a number of useful perspectives on the challenges ahead and the presentation by Professor Catarina Figueira, Professor of Applied Economics and Policy and Director of Education at Cranfield University, was a real eye-opener. In a series of devastating statistics she outlined the poor prognosis for the UK economy: slow (or no) growth, sustained inflationary pressures and the cost of living crisis are all projected to continue for at least the next year, although she offered the optimistic conclusion that with falling interest rates and increased investment both business and consumer confidence should improve.

She underscored how these economic factors are creating a number of challenges for our sector. With pressure on costs and financial reserves, schools are looking for ways to manage their costs and sadly dozens of schools, particularly small prep schools, are closing their doors each year. Changing demand is also leading to increased competition and all of us need to ensure that we are offering the best possible education for our students, whilst also being affordable for our parents. At Channing we are not immune from this and that means making some difficult decisions.

This alone would be plenty to think about, but added to it is political uncertainty with the expectation of a new Labour government in 2024. I listened to some fascinating analysis from Jonathan Simons, Head of the Education Department at the think tank Public First, whose view was

not so much whether there would be a Labour government - he was predicting a 95% chance of a Labour victory - but rather how large its majority will be, and therefore how fast and how confidently they might be able to make radical policy changes. And of course, one of their flagship policies is to 'end the tax breaks enjoyed by private schools' - which in practical terms will mean ending business rate relief for schools run as charities, like Channing, and imposing 20% VAT on all independent school fees.

The ISC is making a positive case for independent schools with politicians to highlight the potentially negative consequences of the proposed VAT policy. They are talking to a wide range of people including Ministers, civil servants, opposition spokespeople and MPs, schools groups and bodies across education more widely. In their messaging they are highlighting the diversity of independent schools and the potential effects of the proposed policy on them, including smaller schools, SEND, faith provision and those offering a different educational ethos. Their key message is that Labour should not assume that schools and parents could simply absorb VAT increases, or that imposing VAT on fees would have no other consequences.

I'm doing my bit too: contacting our local MPs to explain the positive work we do in our local community, and how we might be impacted by VAT on fees. I highlighted the specific nature of the consequences for our very local school in an [article for the Ham & High](#) last year. I am also using my role as GSA representative on the Council of the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL), the largest trade union representing school leaders, to help our state school colleagues understand the threat we are facing, and the potential consequences for them if large numbers of pupils leave the independent sector to join them. In a system which has been chronically underfunded for over a decade there are plenty of reasons for them, and for parents, to be concerned.

There is a lot of speculation about what exactly this might mean for individual schools and the sector as a whole, but until the next Government is in place we will not know for certain the details of any legislation. The sad fact is that VAT is a consumer tax and will be added to fees, rather than a business tax, such as corporation tax, which would be levied on the school. We will of course seek to mitigate some of this impact if and where possible, and the Governors and Senior Leadership Team are already considering some difficult choices. As a charity we are a not-for-profit organisation: we are also a well-managed school with tight control of our finances. We recognise that there is a fine balance between the priorities of providing a broad high quality education and providing value for money. Most importantly, ensuring that we continue to offer a first-rate education and enable girls to enjoy success at Channing is our top priority.

Next week we head into the final week of term and all the excitement that Christmas at Channing brings. We are looking forward to the Carol Concert on Monday afternoon, Christmas lunches on Tuesday and Wednesday and Christmas Classroom on Thursday afternoon before we go fully festive on Friday morning. It is very busy, ever so slightly chaotic and quite exhausting - but a huge amount of fun! I look forward to writing to you next Friday to round off the term and in the meantime wish all our Jewish families *Chanukah Sameach*.

With warmest wishes for the weekend,

Mrs Lindsey Hughes
Headmistress

Notices

Parking

As the end of term approaches, please can I remind you of the need to park considerably around the school. In particular, we have had several complaints about parents parking at the junction of Bisham Gardens and Highgate Hill. This creates a real risk to all those parents and pupils as well as members of the general public who cross the road at this point. Please can I ask for your support in this matter

We want your food and coats!

As part of Partnerships Week, we are asking pupils to bring in non-perishable food items and second-hand coats for us to donate to local food banks and charities. We are accepting women's, men's, and children's coats. Pupils can bring their donations to the pink bins that are located in front of the AC or under the Christmas tree. If you have any questions, please email Mrs Hillier.

Harington Christmas Fair

You are warmly invited to the Harington Christmas Fair and Open Day, which will take place on Saturday 9 December from 10.00am to 2.00pm and entry is free - Harington at 54 Cholmeley Park, Highgate, London N6 5AD.

The Harington Students and Staff have been busy planting a wonderful selection of seasonal bulbs and plants for sale at the Christmas Fair. Their Students will be looking forward to visitors coming along to the Christmas Fair and Open Day to view their work at the Harington Horticultural site.

You will also be able to enjoy:

Christmas decorations, art and crafts, gifts and cards.

Beautiful Christmas wreaths.

Seasonal bulbs and plants.

Live music and Christmas carols by our good friends the London Metropolitan Brass.

Delicious refreshments, cakes, chutneys and jams - Homemade by the Friends of Harington.

Fantastic Raffle Prizes organised by the Friends of Harington.



Photographs

Gillman & Soame took portrait photographs in September. If you haven't already, please order these photographs as soon as possible (especially if you would like them for Christmas). If details have been mislaid, please contact Gillman & Soame directly at action@gillmanandsoame.co.uk or on 01869 328200 with your child's name and quoting the security password **channing374rbd2023** and they can assist.

Parent Volunteers needed for Careers Event

On Tuesday 16 January 2024 from 4.00 - 5.30pm the Careers Department is seeking volunteers to help us run our Sixth Form interview and assessment skills event. Sixth Formers will hear from experts beforehand and then complete a carousel of recruitment and assessment activities

including psychometric testing, group exercises and a short face-to-face skills-based interview, with feedback.

We need many parent volunteers from all year groups to act as interviewers. You will be provided with example questions to use - or can use your own - and will interview and give feedback to several students. You do not need to have any particular recruitment expertise - being an 'unknown adult' to the young person is the most important requirement!

If you can help on Tuesday 16 January 2024 at the school, between 4.00 and approximately 5.30pm (or 6.00pm if you would like to stay for a drink and nibbles) please respond here:

[Interview and Assessment Skills Event responses](#). Alternatively get in touch with us at careers@channing.co.uk.

Thank you very much for your help. We will be in touch with volunteers before the end of term.

Upcoming TooledUp Events

[Expert online conference: Reaching Girls Early: Proactive Approaches for Mental Health, Appearance Anxiety and Body Dissatisfaction: 26 April 2024, 9.30am](#)

Guest speakers include Dr Sophie Nesbitt, Dr Lucia Giombini, Dr Amita Jassi, Dr Helen Ringrow and Dr Karri Gillespie-Smith.



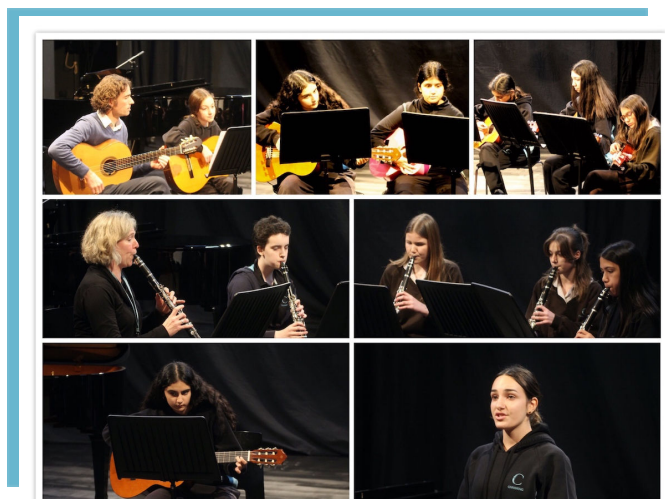
CHANNING

Girls Enjoying Success

Music News

Music at Lunchtime

Friday's Lunchtime Concert started December in a musically merry way! All of the performers gave a show that really put us all in the Christmas spirit. The concert began with Guitar Ensemble, playing 'Gymnopedie no.1' by Satie. It was performed with excellent musicianship and the ensemble was engaging and enchanted the audience. Next, Clarinet Crew gave a riveting performance of 'Monster Mash' by B Pickett and L Capizzi; it was presented very well and filled the audience with excitement. Returning to the stage, Zaina D from 9GHA played 'The Trout' by Schubert on the guitar. She demonstrated her skill exquisitely and proved



herself as a great soloist as well. Leila A H from 8LV then performed 'The Fountain Statue' by Cesar Cui. Her musical talent was evident as she wowed the audience with her vocal ability. Do listen [HERE](#).

ABRSM Success

Our congratulations to Alexa L-B for gaining a distinction in her recent Grade VII Violin examination, to Mei-Xing L-C who also gained distinction on her recent Grade VI Piano examination and to Emma F on achieving a Distinction in her Grade V Theory examination. Well done, Alexa, Mei-Xing and Emma!

History News

Dr Lisa Pine Lecture - Life in Nazi Germany: Volksgemeinschaft and women/family

Year 10 and 11 History students had the pleasure of listening to historian Dr Lisa Pine on Tuesday. Dr Pine is an Associate Fellow of the Institute of Historical Research, University of London and a member of the Royal Historical Society. She is an experienced author and historian who specialises in the history of Nazi Germany, the Second World War and the Holocaust. She is one of the most notable scholars on everyday life in Nazi Germany and is a frequent guest on documentaries, including the recently released 'Hitler: The Lost Tapes', 'Hitler's Secret Missions', and 'The Dictators'. Students learned about how the Nazis tried to reengineer German society on racial lines, their successes and the limits of their effectiveness.

History Society Debate

On Thursday, in the first of a tri-annual competition between History societies, the GCSE History Soc took on the A Level History Soc. The topic for debate was: '*Circumstance is the largest determinant in what makes someone in history 'great'.*'

The debate was well attended and in the end students saw the GCSE Soc beat the A Level Soc in a close-run contest. Individual awards for presentation went to Maria K (Year 13) and Lulu C (Year 10). Notable presentations were made by Darcy G and Lillia H (Year 10) and Cressida A-L and Caitlin S (Year 13).

Mr Raine and Mr Martini-Phillips thank all students for their enthusiastic participation and look forward to a rematch in early 2024.



LAMDA News

This week the LAMDA Students shared their Duologue scenes with a larger peer audience. Wonderful inventive choices were in evidence, as well as bravery, as they rose to the occasion and conveyed their creative ideas with panache. They enjoyed watching and learning from each other's performances. They also supported each other and developed evaluation skills by giving verbal and written feedback.



A useful resource to watch together over the holidays is [Everyone Gets Stage Fright: A Chat with Dr Anna Colton by Dr Kathy Weston](#). This Tooled Up webinar explores causes and offers simple solutions suitable for 'everyone doing anything in public'.

English News

Year 9 Jane Eyre

As they approach the end of Charlotte Brontë's classic bildungsroman *Jane Eyre*, 9GHa paused to reflect on the character of Bertha Mason. Madwoman in the attic or victim of colonial and patriarchal structures? To tackle the question, the students wrote a dramatic monologue for Bertha, to be spoken just before she falls to her fiery death from the roof of Thornfield Hall. Needless to say, 9GHa did not let Rochester off lightly!



Chloe in 9GHa performing her monologue.

Sweet Beatrice,

When you yell from heaven, did it hurt? Sorry I
wasn't there to catch you. Before I met you, I felt
a hole in my heart, but now it is full. For St. Valentine's
Day, I would give you my heart, but you already
have possession of it.

My world would be silent without your dulcet tone
constantly criticizing me. Your voice is a balm to
others, but to me it's a soothing lullaby, putting me to
sleep.

You are my cheese and my wine, improving with age.
You always smell like a lemon grove and your skin
is like a radiant peach. Lemons wither and peaches
bruise, but in my eyes, you will be eternally perfect.
To others, lemons are sour but to me, their tartness is
perfectly balanced with their sweetness, in the
same way that your wit and sharp tongue is the
ideal foil for your lovely nature.

My beloved Beatrice, I do love you so. Will you be
my Valentine?

With my whole heart,
Benedict.

Year 8 Much Ado About Nothing

8LV created their own Valentine's Day cards from Benedick to Beatrice. Here's Sonia's heartfelt and poetic message.

Young Enterprise News

Many of you will have met our two Young Enterprise Teams, **tealightful** and **All About The Bow**, already at the Junior School Winter Fair last Friday. **Tealightful** is our first joint partnership team and we are already benefiting from the use of the St Aloysius kitchens. They both have enterprising business plans and beautiful, well researched products. Thank you to all of you who have already purchased a candle or a bow! There will be many more opportunities in person or online over the next 6 months so watch out for our regular news.



The teams would like to introduce themselves and ask for your help:

Hi, we're **tealightful!** We are a sustainable candle company that creates unique candles using preloved teacups. We are a joint group between Channing and St Aloysius working together to make calming candles with relaxing scents and beautiful colours. At the junior school winter fair we sold all but one of our candles, so we would really appreciate donations of cups or mugs. We will be selling candles next Tuesday and Wednesday at the senior school! Follow our instagram for updates **@tealightfulthings**



Hi, we are **All About The Bow**, selling handmade hair bows. We absolutely loved selling our bows at the Winter Fair at the Junior School last Friday. To make our brand as sustainable as possible we are looking for any donations of ribbons that you might have or collect over the Christmas holidays and there will be a box in the Sixth Form Centre foyer for donations. Look out for us next week on Tuesday and Wednesday in the Senior School. Follow our instagram for any updates, questions or order request you may have **@All.About.The.Bow**

Mrs R Williams
YE Centre Lead

Sustainability News

On Wednesday 10 students from Years 11 and 12 attended a Mock COP 28 at Highgate School. Students from 6 different local secondary schools joined together to represent 14 different countries. They discussed the key issues and agreements surrounding the real COP28 and voted for what they felt should happen. The meeting was addressed and co-chaired by Zack Polanski, Deputy Leader of the Green Party.

STEM News

Maths Competition Success

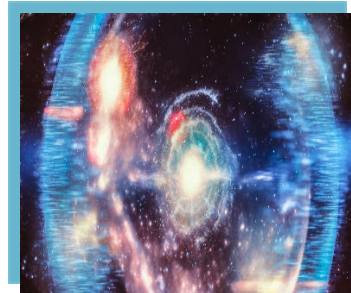
We played the last Hans Woyda match of the term this week, against Claremont School in our North London League. Our team of 4 surpassed themselves and got the highest score of the term. We took an early start in the individual rounds and consolidated it in the team round. Although the relay round started slowly we smashed it at the end and finished a strong 23 to 14 points. Well done to the



team: Zaina (Year 9), Haruka (Year 11), Scarlett (Year 12), Tessie (Year 13). They really enjoyed playing and we are really impressed with their grit and determination. A big thank you to Mrs Williams who practises with them in Athletics every week and to Mr Thomas who helped Mrs Wootton host the competition (her first time!).

Science Question of the week

This week for Science question of the week the pupils were answering the question 'What is the Big Bang Theory?'. This led to some very intriguing answers from the pupils. The winner this week was Scarlett C who gave a detailed and in-depth response to the question. The runners up this week who also had brilliant responses were Mariia S, Amandine C and Eliana H. Well done all!



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Talking about the Big Bang Theory, there's much to tell about the famous series, but I suppose it's not what you wanted to hear. In science, the Big Bang Theory is the most popular explanation of how did the Universe appeared, firstly proposed by Georges Lemaitre as an answer on a question "How did the Universe appear?" It's main idea is that if the universe is constantly expanding, it was much smaller before and was put in a tiny ball that exploded 13.8 billion years ago and still didn't finish expanding its borders. Since the Big Bang, the universe has been expanding. In the early years, everything was made of gas. This gas, mostly hydrogen and helium, expanded and cooled. Over billions of years, gravity made gas and dust to form galaxies, stars, planets, and more.

Sports News

Fitness Club

This term over 200 students have joined Fitness Club with Miss Gibbins and Miss Weston across a number of different sessions to work on their pull ups, cardiovascular endurance and overall fitness. Some of the students have created their own gym routines, others have worked with their peers on end of school workouts! We look forward to you signing up and joining us next term!

U13 & U15 Football

On a cold and drizzly Monday afternoon the U13 & U15 football teams travelled to New River Leisure Centre to play in a match against Alexandra Park School in the Haringey league. Both Channing teams



played with determination and resilience and upheld the Channing promise both on and off the pitch, constantly supporting and encouraging each other and being good all round sports people - qualities that we are so proud of them for. Both teams lost their matches on this occasion but walked away being able to reflect on how they can approach their game in future matches and an even stronger drive to develop as players and as a team.

We are so proud of them for their efforts on Monday and would like to congratulate each and every student who played. Special mention to the two players of the matches, in the U13 team Ayla A-K and in the U15 team Grace G. We look forward to seeing both teams play again in the new year.

U13 and U14 Netball vs Godolphin and Latymer School

On Tuesday 5 December the U13 and U14 A teams made their way to Godolphin and Latymer School to play a fixture. The students played well and with perseverance. Both games ended with a loss, but the girls played with grit and determination until the very end and have some clear learning points ahead of the next game.

U12 Netball Training

The U12 had their last netball training session of the term and came very festive. They played a round robin tournament and were coached by the Year 9 DofE volunteers. Their commitment to netball this term has been amazing. They are very excited to start training and playing again in the New Year!



Volleyball

Congratulations to the following pupils who took part in a 4v4 Volleyball Tournament last weekend. Gary, our volleyball coach said they played very well as a team and finished in 2nd place. Well done to Ester K, Ruby C, Anna R-B and Jeyhan M.

MFL News

Year 12 German Trip

On Wednesday 30 November we had the privilege of visiting the British Film Institute in South Bank to watch the film 'Goodbye Lenin', which we will study next year in our German A level lessons. We began with activities based on thematically similar films and learnt how to analyse characteristics of cinematography such as camera angle, colour imagery, and dialogue. After lunch, we watched the film and applied what we had learnt prior while watching. Overall we found it very enriching and it heightened our knowledge of the film to prepare us for next year. Wir freuen uns darauf!



Mr Grossman's Digital Digest - Reducing Screen Time for a Refreshed Break

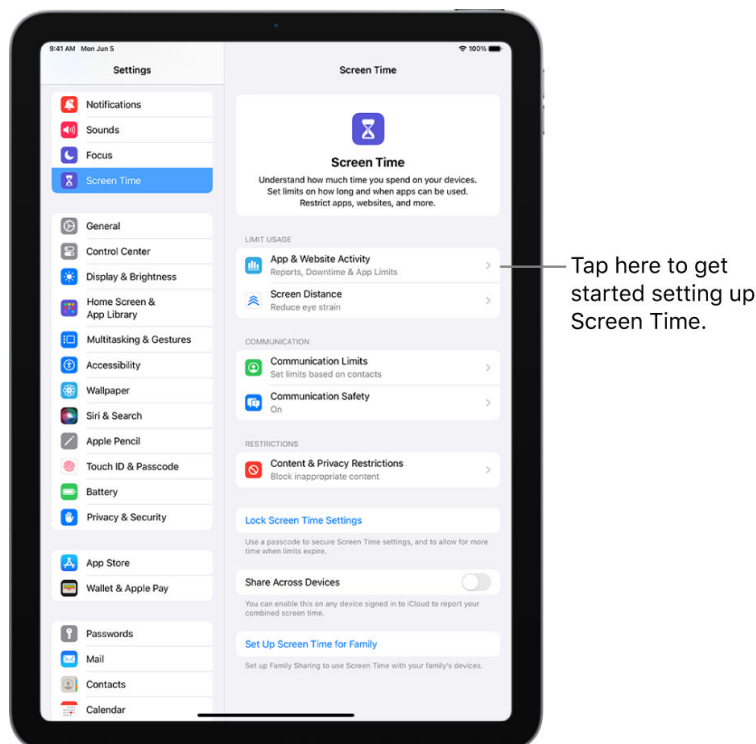
As we approach the upcoming school holidays, it's crucial to encourage our young learners to take the opportunity to step back from their screens whilst at home and engage in activities that foster a balanced lifestyle. The [UK Chief Medical Officers' Physical Activity Guidelines](#) emphasise the importance of reducing sedentary behaviour, including excessive screen time, among children and adolescents.

I have previously shared with you some of the research surrounding screen time and in particular time spent on social media, but whatever your own personal rules and views on screen time, there's no question we should all be aiming for a balanced approach.

Persuading our children to reduce screen time might initially pose a challenge, but employing certain strategies can make this transition smoother:

- **Lead by Example:** Parents play a crucial role in setting boundaries. When parents model healthy screen habits, children are more likely to follow suit.
- **Engage in Alternative Activities:** Encourage activities that don't involve screens, such as outdoor sports, board games, or creative hobbies like painting, cooking, or gardening.
- **Create Incentives:** Consider incentives for reduced screen time, like allowing extra time for activities they enjoy or planning a special outing.
- **Open Communication:** Discuss the importance of balance with your children, explaining the adverse effects of excessive screen time in a non-confrontational manner.
- **Designate Screen-Free Times:** Establish specific times during the day where screens are off-limits, such as meal times or an hour before bedtime

To assist you with designating screen-free times, we have recently updated the management software on our Channing school iPads to be compatible with the Screen Time function.



For more information on the Screen Time function and detailed instructions for how to set it up on your child's iPad, [click here](#).

It's vital to understand that technology isn't inherently detrimental, but excessive and unmonitored usage can lead to issues. Striking a balance between screen time and other activities is key to nurturing well-rounded individuals and as educators and parents, our collective effort in guiding and supporting our children toward a healthier relationship with technology will undoubtedly contribute to their holistic development.

Alumnae News

As we near the end of the Autumn Term and head towards the festive season we, naturally, look toward our family and friends with whom we often spend this time with. That's why we thought it especially fitting to share this picture of the Channing (teaching) family from the tenure of former Headmistress, Miss Lloyd Thomas (1952-64). Wishing our Channing Family, far and wide, a wonderful weekend (and penultimate week of the Autumn Term)!



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