



Dear Parents

Happy New Year! I hope that you have all enjoyed a wonderful holiday and the company of family and friends, wherever you were and whatever you were celebrating. Did any new traditions get made? I was really touched at the end of last term when the Head Girls gave me a new game to play with my family, knowing how much we like them, and I am pleased to report that it was a resounding success on Boxing Day! We'll certainly be playing it again (and again, and again...).

It has been a busy week already, and for some of our students term started on Tuesday when Year 11 PE and Art students did work for their GCSE exams and Year 12 were all here helping us with our interview day for the new Year 7s who will join us in September. I love interview day - it's busy, sure, and this year it was also freezing cold, but it's really lovely to meet all the girls who are thinking about joining Channing and getting to know them a little better. While Mrs Garrill and Year 12 are playing games in the Sports Hall and the interviews are taking place, I talk to the prospective parents about what I think school is for and why I think Channing is a special place - I was very pleased to see a number of you in the audience.

On Tuesday I gave the talk nine times to consecutive groups of parents and, interestingly, rather than getting bored of it, it had the effect of making me even more proud and invested in what makes us special. I was properly in love with Channing by the end of the day! It occurred to me, though, that our students don't always get to hear me explain what I think makes Channing so special and what I want them to get out of your time here - so I thought I would give the talk for the tenth time this morning in assembly. I hope you won't mind me repeating it here too.

Firstly, about my philosophy of education. It won't surprise you to know that I am passionate about the power of an all-girls education. I think it's just great for girls to grow into young women in an environment where everything is designed for them - the curriculum, extracurricular activities, leadership opportunities at Channing are all for them and they are free from stereotypes about what girls can and can't do. In an environment like this they have the freedom to find and develop their individual talents and interests by trying lots of new things.

The other thing that I think is really important - you have heard me mention it repeatedly in the past - is the importance of being 10% Braver. We know that girls, young women, even adult women, are held back by fear. We don't put ourselves forward or take opportunities because we are scared - of not being good enough, of failing, of what other people will think. I think that it's really important to be training our students right from the start to overcome that fear, not necessarily conquering it outright but asking themselves, if I were 10% braver could I do this? And of course the answer is yes. It could be as simple as offering an opinion in class, committing an answer to paper without checking it first, speaking to a new person, trying out a

new club - and from there they can achieve all sorts of things they might not have thought possible.

These were the ideas I brought with me to Channing when I arrived in September 2020, and they fit so beautifully with the ethos of the school. The Sharpe sisters and Reverend Spears back in 1885 gave us the motto Conabor - I shall try - which is exactly what we want for our students. They see that every day in their lessons when we talk about developing Fearless Learners: our teachers meet fortnightly to talk about what we do in our lessons and what the research evidence tells us are the practical techniques we can use to help them become brave, resilient, independent learners.

Our strapline is Girls Enjoying Success and you all know that I think enjoyment of school is just so important. We need to have fun - not to be all-singing, all-dancing all the time, but to ensure that school is a happy, safe place which enables our students to feel able to make the most of all the opportunities which they have here.

I also want our girls to develop two key characteristics: firstly, an understanding of their strengths and the ability to celebrate them; to acknowledge praise and accept compliments. We know that girls can be quick to brush off praise or achievement as luck or a fluke - but it's not. It's not boastful to blow your own trumpet, it's entirely right to take appropriate pride in a job well done, so I want them to be able to say, I'm good at this, I do this well.

Conversely I also want them to practice self compassion. Girls can be prone to beating themselves up when things go wrong and we know our students are sometimes really hard on themselves. But they are brilliant friends, and will be the first to say 'You're great, it's just a blip, you'll do better next time' when something goes wrong for someone else. I want them to be as kind to themselves as they are to others about the things they can't do so well and be happy to live with those imperfections. It may sound obvious, but it's not always explained explicitly or taught in schools.

You'll have heard before this beautiful sentence written by our namesake, William Ellery Channing, "Each of us is intended to have a character all our own, to be what no other can exactly be and do what no other can exactly do", which encapsulates what we are trying to do here. I think our students really do enjoy success - academically and across the board in all kinds of activities, whether that's in sport or science, Art, Music and theatre, debating, whatever it might be. We have great exam results and fantastic university outcomes. But the thing that I think makes us different is that we won't funnel our students along a particular path depending on what **we** think their ambition ought to be, based on their academic profile. Rather we are interested in them as an individual, to find the things that they are interested in, so that we can help them get to the best place to do what they want to do after school.

We talk about enjoying success without undue pressure - without wishing to sound too corny I really do believe that happy girls learn best - our students are ambitious for themselves, of course they are, and our teachers are right there to challenge and support them in their quest to do the best they possibly can, but they do it in a way that is mutually supportive, rather than fiercely competitive. I think that difference in atmosphere and attitude comes directly from our

Unitarian foundation, our focus on the importance of kindness, acceptance and inclusivity. It's written in the Channing Promise, which all of us, staff and students, live by, and it's palpable in daily life around school.

I think Channing is a really special place and you've heard me say before how proud I am to be its Headmistress, to get to share in our students' lives every day and to celebrate their achievements and successes. We sang the Channing hymn this morning and I reminded them of the first line of the second verse: 'Where hopes and dreams here clear and clearer grow': in 2024 they all have lots to look forward to, as well as the challenges ahead, and my hope for them is that they will make the most of every opportunity.

This week we are pleased to welcome some new staff to Channing. Mr Kirmani joins us from John Lyon School as our new Head of Economics, and he will also be teaching some Drama. In the PE Department Mr Garnett, Teacher in charge of Football, joins us from Elizabeth College, Guernsey. I am also pleased to say that Channing alumna, Miss Gibbins, who has been our PE Graduate Assistant for the last year, has become a student teacher as she starts her teacher training this term. As a result we also welcome Mr Burnett as our temporary PE Assistant. Finally Miss Cannell has become our Head of Classics and Ms Walker joins us as Teacher of Classics from Tiffin School for Girls in Kingston.

We have some additional internal changes of role with Miss Lindsay taking over as Head of Year 9 and Ms Nelson becoming Assistant Head of PSHE. Our new Heads of House are Miss Williams (Goodwin), Miss Vince (Spears) and Ms Walker (Waterlow) and Ms Mackie becomes our first Inclusion Coordinator. We are so pleased to have such excellent staff joining us and know that you and all the school community will make them warmly welcome.

From previous years' Words from the Head in January you will know that I am not a big fan of New Year's resolutions. Research suggests that the vast majority of those made will have been broken by tomorrow, which can lead to feelings of failure for having not managed to achieve whatever was desired. Instead, as I said to the school this morning, I am looking forward to 2024 with anticipation for all the opportunities it will bring and I wish all of you health and happiness in the year to come.

With my very best wishes,

Mrs Lindsey Hughes
Headmistress

Notices

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.

Extra & Co-curricular Timetable Spring Term

Please see here the [Extra & Co-curricular Activities - SpringTerm Timetable 2023 - 24.pdf](#) for this term. Activities commence from Monday 15 January.



CHANNING

Girls Enjoying Success

Sports News

Climbing Trip

On Tuesday 9 and Wednesday 10 January seven GCSE PE students travelled down to High Ashurst Climbing Centre to complete their GCSE Climbing practical assessment. In minus 1 degree weather the girls spent two days learning how to belay, climb on the traverse, climb on challenging overhangs and strategically approach difficult climbs with tenacity and drive under timed conditions. Well done to all the girls involved, and hopefully, they have all warmed up now!



STEM News

STEM clubs this term

We have a number of science, maths and computing clubs that are starting or continuing this term. You can click on the links to get more information and scroll down to read what is in store for this term.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Lunchtime 12:25-13:00	Year 10: Marine Biology Club Room C15 Lab	Years 10 - 11: STEM Careers Club Room LG3 Lab	Years 12 - 13: Medical Discussion Group Room LG2 Lab	Years 10 - 13: Science Journal Club Room LG2 Lab Years 7 - 11: Sustainability Club Room BH10
Lunchtime 13:00-13:30	Years 7 - 8: Puzzle Club C17 Years 7 - 9: Science Club LG3 Lab	All Years: Chess Club Lab 1 Years 7 - 8: Anatomy Club C15 Lab	All years: Mathletics C17 Year 9: TeenTech Room A7	
After school		(15:30 - 16:45) Year 11: Game Design Club Room A07	(16:00 - 16:50) Year 7: Robotics and Coding Club Room A07	(16:00 - 17:00) Year 9: CREST Awards B9 Lab

Anatomy Club (Y7/8)

The anatomy club restarts this term for Year 7 and 8 students. The club lasts for 6 sessions and we will be dissecting a lizard, starfish, eye, frog, mouse and a sheep's brain. We will be using microscopes alongside the dissections to explore the microanatomy of the animals. The anatomy club runs on **Tuesday lunch times from 1-1.30pm**. Interested students should contact Mrs Rao if they would like to get involved.



Science Club (Y7/8)

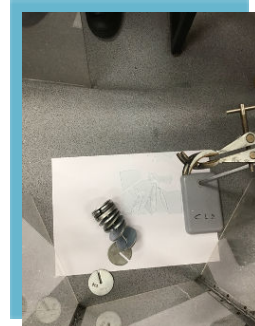
It is time for some physics in Science Club this term. Sessions take place every **Monday lunchtime from 1.00-1.35 in LG3 Lab** with Mr Daw. There are some exciting activities planned; Building Towers! Building Bridges! Testing Helicopters! Making Electric Motors! Designing Submarines! Investigating distant planets/stars! Bring your pencil case, your brain and a competitive spirit!

CREST Awards (Y9)

The two Year 9 CREST awards teams were very busy today. Caye B and Ekta A finalised their fizzy drink recipe and began their testing in earnest. They were very focussed on how to make their experiments fair tests and took care to choose identical equipment and to use the same quantities of ingredients.



Isla M, Georgina V and Isobel B finally had suitable sized pieces of hardboard, perspex, glass and ceramic to test the strength of all of their chosen materials. Sourcing these had been harder than



anticipated and they displayed impressive patience and resilience when adapting tests and doing preliminary investigations in previous weeks.

Marine Biology Club (Y10)

Following on from last term, alongside continuing to care for our new fish tank and fish, this term we will be:

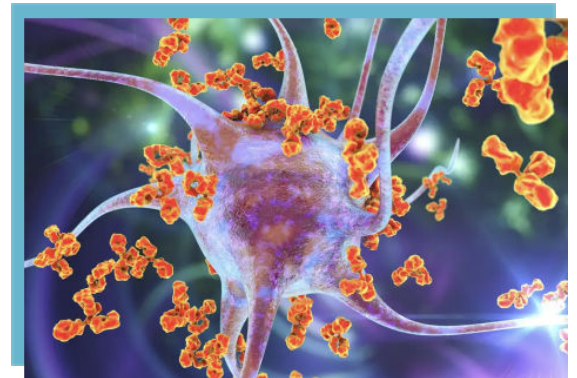
- furthering our fish studies by dissecting a larger fish (not any of ours, don't worry!) and therefore learning more about their anatomy
- exploring some of the environmental considerations around fishing and fish farming with an aim to create a display in C15 informing others of the ecological importance of fish
- purchasing more fish to add to the aquarium, including a Siamese fighter fish (top) and a Pleco catfish (bottom) to join the gang!
- examining our budget to see what remains, and deciding what other purchases might be needed
- exploring the possibility of a cross-curricular project with the Art department to design and create our own ceramic decorations and ornaments for the tank



Marine Biology Club is open to any Year 10 students with an interest in fish, water, or Biology, and takes place on **Mondays in C15 Lab from 12:30-1:00pm.**

Science Journal Club (Y11, Y12 and Y13)

Science Journal Club continues this term with students from Y11, 12 and 13 invited to discuss a short article from New Scientist each week on **Thursdays in LG2 Lab from 12:30 - 1pm.** This week Dr Spinks chose an article on genetics that looked at some genes associated with medical conditions. In the article they suggest that the genes that cause multiple sclerosis may have protected nomadic herders from catching infections from their animals thousands of years ago and that this might be why they are still prevalent today. Scientists are thinking about the selective pressures that existed at various points in time in history and how these might have influenced our genetic make-up. We discussed the challenges of looking at the history of genetics and thought about the limited sample sizes available. We also wondered what genes would be selected for in the future; what would future humans find strange about the genes that had been passed on? What about if there was a zombie apocalypse? How would that influence the gene pool of future humans?



Maths News

As part of the maths department welcome back, students were given 10 questions about the new year 2024^[1]. How many of them can you get?

1. What is 2024 written as the product of its prime factors?

2. How many factors does 2024 have?
3. List the factors of 2024.
4. What is the sum of its proper divisors?
5. Therefore, it is an abundant number. What is its abundance?
6. What is 2024 written in binary?
7. What is 2024 written in Roman numerals?
8. Express 2024 as a difference of two squares.
9. Harshad numbers are multiples of the sum of their digits. Is 2024 Harshad?
10. Adding 2024 to its reverse, we get a p _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _.

KS4 Maths Challenge

Over Christmas, some KS4 challenge questions were posted on the students' Maths Google Classrooms to introduce and launch the KS4 Maths Challenge which will start next week.

Students can collect a challenge booklet from the maths office and will need to complete two thirds of the questions in the challenge booklet to gain a prize. There will be an additional prize if students manage to complete the entire booklet. Merits will be awarded and there will be a display board and leaderboard to showcase the student's mathematical talent. The question below gives an idea of the level of challenge, so have a read and if it gets your brain ticking why not have a go at the challenge this half term!

Two dice game



Two players are playing a dice game which involves rolling two dice.

Player 1 wins if the highest dice is any of the numbers between 1 and 4 inclusive.

Player 2 wins if the highest dice is 5 or 6.

The dice are rolled again if they are equal.

A) Would you rather be player 1 or player 2? Justify your answer.

B) What are the respective probabilities of players 1 and 2 winning after rolling the dice a sufficient number of times for the game to end?

[1]

https://www.linkedin.com/posts/edward-matthews-33b7b531_lovemaths-happynewyear-maths-activity-7147489130086633472-GXsc?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_ios

English News

Literary Society

Lit Soc kicked off 2024 by sharing their top reads from the Christmas break. Students recommended a range of award-nominated fiction, including *Hamnet* and *The Marriage Portrait* by Maggie O'Farrell and *This Other Eden* by Paul Harding. It was *Trespasses* by Louise Kennedy that came out on top. Set in 1970's Belfast, the novel tells the story of a young Catholic woman as she enters into an affair with an older, married, Protestant man. Students were particularly struck by the detailed texture of Kennedy's prose. This is a novel that comes highly recommended!



Channing Archive

Happy New Year from the Channing Archive!

As we acclimate to the change in season and welcome the new year, and all the exciting experiences it brings, we would like to share this picture and write up of a Gold Duke of Edinburgh expedition published in the School Magazine from 2009-2010.

On 20 October, the Hairy Hikers set off on the biggest challenge of their lives. Having enjoyed the Duke of Edinburgh's Gold Award practice expedition in Exmoor in June, we were well prepared and very excited for the challenges we were going to face walking in the Brecon Beacons.

The Gold expedition involves an acclimatisation day, walking around 10km to become used to the weather and terrain, followed by a four-day trek of 80km, camping for three nights. We had spent the weeks running up to our expedition planning our route, making our menu, practising first aid and preparing ourselves for the physical and mental challenge of the expedition.

The acclimatisation day walk gave us fantastic views across the Welsh countryside and we were all shocked at how steep and tiring the hills were! After a final pub meal, we finished any last-minute packing and enjoyed our last night's sleep in a bed before heading off into the wild!

The first day was eventful due to Welsh farmers tending to divert footpaths and keep any walkers well away with stinging nettles and barbed-wire fences. After getting very lost and running about two hours late, we arrived at our campsite in the dark, where we enjoyed a well-earned dinner of ravioli and hot chocolate. We woke up at 5am the following morning, and by 7am we were well on our way to checkpoint 1. Day two took us along Offa's Dyke Path, where we were spoilt with stunning views and beautiful weather. However, the sunny morning did not last long, and we were soon trudging through clouds, rain and hail, experiencing authentic Welsh weather.

Emma Layard-Roberts, Year 12



CHANNING



channing_school



@channingschool



ChanningSchool



020 8340 2328



info@channing.co.uk



The Bank, Highgate, N6 5HF