



SOLIHULL

Solihull Preparatory School – New Beginnings

8 September 2020

Dear Parents,

Well, well – here we are; staff absorbed by the myriad practicalities that the opening of two fully merged campuses during a pandemic demands and parents juggling getting children to and from school after a hiatus of six months. Yet despite having a good excuse to do so, letting the significance of the occasion pass without recognition would seem churlish.

Solihull and Saint Martin's have been very near neighbours for longer than any of us can remember, so it's little wonder why the alumni of both belong as often as they do in the same families and friendship groups. And as days go, today is as momentous as any in a story that will continue long after we are all gone.

The proud and illustrious might of the merged school stretches back as far as 1560, the earliest known record of Solihull's origins. And ever since Saint Martin's School was founded by the visionary zeal of Miss Christine Tucker and Miss Zelig Bull on 24th November 1941, the fortunes of both schools have very much been intertwined.

Whilst some distinctions set us apart – most notably, Saint Martin's has never previously had boys and Solihull has never previously had infants – we now offer a combined 70+ acre, 3 – 18 co-educational union with landmarks ranging from a 1690 mansion house to the ultra-contemporary Copper Building. That gravitas, that solidity - in the face of the significant headwinds facing the independent sector in the UK - is all the more important than it used to be and, as it transpired, a beacon of resilience in the midst of an arresting downturn.

Blessed as we are that our campuses are now the glitter, it is unreservedly my colleagues who are the gold. If I could bottle the focus, dedication, talent and selflessness I have been privy to since the merger was announced, I would have a magic potion to cure all the disaffection that exists in the world. As parents I would want you to know that whatever aspirations you have for your children, we have absolutely the staff to make good on them.

You'll be pleased to hear that Prep School staff have made great strides in getting to know each other already, and we will make sure that your children will very quickly do so too. It is also my earnest hope that as parents you will also get to know each other very well, even while we wait for fortune and favour to lend us a hand in doing so.

Nestled amongst the steaming jungle hills of northern Laos, bejewelled in Buddhist temples and flowering trees, is the ancient city of Luang Prabang. A short north westerly stroll through its cobbled streets, would have you emerge at the expansive confluence of the Nam Khan and the Mekong rivers. At the height of the rainy season, it's a magnificent sight. Two vast, deep flowing rivers in cahoots, merging so naturally they make a mockery of all things manmade. Within metres their destinies are sealed, as the river meanders south towards Vietnam and the delta beyond – two now indiscernible as one.

Mr M P Penney Solihull Preparatory School Malvern Hall Brueton Avenue Solihull West Midlands B91 3EN

Tel: 0121 705 1265 www.solsch.org.uk

Solihull School is a limited company registered in England and Wales No.6337650 Registered Charity No.1120597 Registered Office 793 Warwick Road Solihull West Midlands B91 3DJ

A
M
B
I
T
I
O
N
-
O
P
O
R
T
U
N
I
T
Y
-
C
O
M
M
U
N
I
T
Y
M
U
N
I
T
Y



SOLIHULL

As Head of the Prep School I have very many aspirations for your children and the school you have chosen for them. I also have them for you our community – most importantly perhaps, or at least most fundamentally, is that from this point forwards we talk only of ‘us’. One school, one community - flowing inexorably in the same direction.

Today is the day in history that Solihull Preparatory School drops onto a map, not from the sky but from the confluence of two great schools. As parents and staff, we know why we are here and we know the task ahead of us – to work together to give every one of your children the best, broadest and most beneficial start possible to their young lives.

Thank you for joining us on our journey. Together we have an incredible opportunity to do something, and be part of something, very special.

Kindest regards,

Mr Mark Penney

Head of the Prep School