



9 September 2022

Dear Parents and Guardians

How quickly the last week seems to have passed! It is a great joy to have everyone back in school and I had forgotten just how uplifting it is to hear the sound of laughing girls! While I suspect that no one is quite as excited to be back as I am, the rain doesn't seem to have damped anyone's spirits and noise levels are definitely back to normal! We have much to celebrate and be grateful for, and so much to look forward to over the coming year, as we celebrate 150 years at Mayfield.

A great deal has been packed into the first few days, especially for those who are new to the school – both girls and staff. The school roll is at its largest for many years and it is a pleasure to welcome so many new faces. I am delighted at how well they seem to have settled in, and look forward to discerning the unique offerings and perspectives each person will bring to our community over the coming years. Celebrating 150 years allows us the opportunity to mark the contribution of each member of the community: those who have given so much for us to be here today, and those who will build on this inheritance to ensure that the next 150 years are just as, if not more successful.

At this time, it behoves me to celebrate another excellent set of examination results. This year, perhaps more than ever, we are immensely proud of all that our Upper Sixth Leavers have achieved. Everyone holding an offer for this year, or deferred entry, has secured her place at University. At a time of uncertainty, they have shown a resilience and positive approach which has been rewarded by an impressive array of results. At a time when faith in young people is being questioned, I am confident that our Mayfield leavers of 2022 are well prepared for the next stage in their journey, whether that be Degree Apprenticeship with the Metropolitan Police or Natural Sciences at Cambridge; studying everything from Architecture to Veterinary Medicine throughout the UK and overseas. Not only have they confirmed that they can pass examinations, but more importantly, they know that they are part of an inclusive community providing a lifelong network of supportive friends and peers. The skills and talents which have been nurtured, not to mention the technical expertise, practised and honed over the lockdowns and 'COVID years', will allow them to make the most of the opportunities ahead of them. I would also like to pay tribute to the teachers who have walked with them and supported them since Year 7, but particularly through the last few challenging years. I am sure that our Mayfield girls will embrace the joys and challenges of the next stage of their education with their customary enthusiasm. As ever, we will follow their continuing progress with pride and I look forward to them returning in due course to share their experiences with younger generations. I think Cornelia would have been proud of them all and feel that her legacy is in good hands!

We are equally delighted by the performance of our girls in their GCSEs, after what has been a challenging few years for them. I am confident that the resilience and adaptability they have had to practise during their Middle School years helped them to achieve such outstanding grades across the board. Whether it be Drama or Physics, Ceramics or Classics, girls have worked hard and been rewarded by the best possible results. Again, all credit to the staff who have calmly supported and challenged them throughout the months of uncertainty. However, I do think it is important to reiterate: we do not measure the worth of a Mayfield girl by the grades she receives, impressive though they may be this year, but on how she uses her skills and talents for the good of others.

As new Lower Sixth Formers, the girls will have more opportunities to flourish and build on all their strengths and to take the lead in different aspects of School life: each girl can and is encouraged to make a tangible difference in her own way. Our Sixth Formers are the jewels in the Mayfield crown and the Sixth Form reflects the best of the Mayfield experience.

We are settling back into the rhythm of School life and want to ensure that we are back, more or less, to pre-COVID life or at least the best bits of it! Meeting together in person continues to be a novelty and a joy, so I look forward to seeing many of you at the evenings for parents of girls in Year 7 (**on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> September at 18:30**), Year 9 (**on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> September at 18:30**) and Year 12 (**on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> September at 18:00**). These evenings provide a great opportunity, not only for you to hear and understand more about how and what your daughter will be learning over the course of the year, but also to meet the parents of her new (and old) friends. I strongly encourage you to come along for what will be both an informative and jolly evening. Please don't worry if you feel you do not yet know anyone: this is your chance to make new friends, and there will be many who feel exactly the same!

This year we want to help girls begin to focus not so much on themselves, as on those who are less fortunate: providing more opportunities and encouragement for each member of the school community to be involved in action as well as words. As part of this, on **Friday 16<sup>th</sup> September** the Chaplaincy is hosting Debbie and Carol from the Sandra Jones Children's Centre and Malibongwe Primary School in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, (this year's Whole School Charity). The SJC is a sanctuary for young girls in crisis, and is currently home to around 90 girls, from new-born to 20 years old. From **18:00-20:00** there will be an opportunity to meet the ladies and hear their Centre's story, which I hope will help the girls better understand and determine how best we can offer support. For more information, please contact Ronan - [rlavery@mayfieldgirls.org](mailto:rlavery@mayfieldgirls.org)

Looking a little further ahead, The Friends' Michaelmas Fair will be taking place on **Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> October**. This year this will take place on a Saturday which marks something of a change, although we expect the same range of varied and interesting stalls. Many of you will know and love the Fair of old, but if you are new to the school I strongly recommend a visit. It is a great social occasion and you may just be tempted to buy a few presents... If you would like to help, then please contact Susie Pepper, the Chair of The Friends of Mayfield by email on [susiepepper10@gmail.com](mailto:susiepepper10@gmail.com)

As I write this, the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II has just been announced. Our thoughts and prayers are with her family and all those who mourn her passing. Her life of selfless service to her people – a life not chosen but inherited – is an inspiration. I hope that our prayers can be a celebration of her life and values amidst the sadness. However, this is a reminder that not everyone is looking forward to the coming weeks with the same eagerness and excitement as I am: there are members of our school community who are also coping with sickness and bereavement at this time. I hope that you will remember them, Queen Elizabeth and all those in need of our love and support, in your prayers at this time.

With my prayers and best wishes for you all as we begin a new, already momentous, academic year together.



Miss A M Beary  
Headmistress