

Bus Drivers Prayer

Friday 25 November 2022

Dear Everyone

Thank you for the very many kind notes sent to me since Monday's announcement. This is an extraordinary school, and what really makes it special is the quality and commitment of the teachers and staff here. Our senior team is the best it has ever been, the collaboration and care for children across the whole school is palpable, and children thrive here. And it is a school with an exciting future, too. With the Cathedral's commitment to establishing a choral foundation for girls, the school's next leader will inherit a great place that is forward looking. And a lot of that strong sense of community is down to our parents, too. I visit very many schools for one reason and another, and I am always struck by the comparisons I naturally make. At SPCS we are a cosmopolitan, vibrant, creative and liberally minded lot, parents, pupils and staff alike, diverse in origin, profession and outlook, yet cohesive. I will miss all that very much. In the meantime, there is Christmas and the year ahead.

In other business: Government consultations became particularly popular with the arrival 25 years ago of a certain sofa management style. Yet as the *Centre for Public Impact* comments, consultations can be useful for policy makers, a form of public engagement that is now "grafted onto our basic electoral process". True political sovereignty, argued Diderot, remains in the hands of the people if the rule of law is properly maintained by a democratically endorsed government. Nowadays we are all "consultees" and ministers "parade their listening credentials" on the BBC's Today programme every morning.

From time to time, evidence-based policy making can be really effective, as was seen recently in the *Central London Bus Review 2022* (attached separately). The good news is that the No 4 Bus, a crucial route for very many of you, has been left intact. This is a great relief, and thank you to those who contributed to that consultation.

Last weekend, while the front pages of almost all media were dissecting Hunt's tax plans, the weekend FT ran a summit report which made for more hopeful reading. While not promising world peace any time soon, the diplomatic route offers a glimmer of a better global future and puts into context our local challenges. A companion piece by Yuan Yang was persuasive, too, encouraging greater understanding of China. As the Quakers say, first seek to understand, an idea that can be enhanced by consultative policy making.

We hurtle towards the light, and this weekend we will enjoy the majesty of Advent services. For me they are some of the most wonderful and life affirming services in the liturgical calendar, filled with hope and beauty. Many of you will be there with your children for the Sunday service. Even if your child is not involved directly, do come as a family to one or other of the services if you can.

In the meantime, a reminder of the dark days of the three-day week in the 1970's made more endurable by the now unwatchable TV comedy of the day, *On the Buses*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d55a6EDxqAA>

Have a good weekend

Best wishes,

Simon