



# PARKGATE HOUSE SCHOOL UPDATE

Autumn 2013



## FROM THE STUDY

Welcome to the autumn edition of Parkgate Update. I am delighted to report that the academic year has got off to an extremely energetic and positive start. Our youngest pupils from Nursery and Reception have settled into school life really well; they are thoroughly enjoying all the exciting new activities on their timetable, French, music and movement, ballet sport and swimming lessons.

Joshua Seigal, well known children's poet and author, visited the classes to read exciting and humorous poems and hold workshops with the pupils. The shrieks of laughter from our pupils were of pure joy. All of our pupils really enjoyed meeting Joshua and I am sure his visit has inspired the entries for our poetry competition which coincided with

National Poetry Day on 3rd October. For those of you visiting our Open Day, we have a treat in store for you as the pupils' wonderful poetry will be available to read in the classrooms.

Our Prep pupils spent an exciting weekend in Ross-on-Wye on a residential trip. For some of our pupils it was their first experience away from home. Diary entries written by the pupils evoke the atmosphere and excitement enjoyed over the weekend. The PGL weekend was a great success for both pupils and staff.

During the summer holidays, the school was delighted to receive the girls' ballet exam results from the Royal Academy of Dance, this year's result were outstanding with Merits and Distinctions achieved by all pupils. Music exam results from ABRSM were also outstanding this year. Pupils proudly received their certificates

at the first school assembly of the year. I am extremely proud of our pupils' successes.

This term holds a variety of trips and workshops designed to complement the projects on the curriculum; you can read about the Pre-Prep 1 trip to the Tower of London on page 5, a wonderful humanities based trip, exploring Castles. You can find reports from recent sports fixtures on page 10. There is also a full programme of cultural and sporting events this term, details of all of these events can be found in the school calendar and on the website. I know your support on the touchlines or in the audience is always appreciated; I look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events.

**Catherine Shanley**  
Principal

*"Develop Confidence - Provide Opportunity -  
Realise Potential - In every single child."*

[www.parkgate-school.co.uk](http://www.parkgate-school.co.uk)

## CHRISTMAS ACTIVITY WEEK 12TH-19TH DECEMBER

At the end of each term, Parkgate House run an Activity Week. This is a popular event as it is a fantastic opportunity for children to participate in a variety of interesting and exciting activities.

The children experience a range of creative, physical and interactive workshops.

The children enjoy structured drama, sport and art sessions. They also enjoy visits from outside agencies and entertainers; these have included visits from the animal man and Sharky and George.

It is always a busy, fun-filled and enjoyable time for everyone involved!

Watch this space for more information on our Christmas Activity Week: Thursday 12th – Thursday 19th December 2013.

Booking forms and timetables will be sent home soon!



## PHONICS AND READING

It was wonderful to see so many parents at the Phonics and Reading Presentation on Thursday 19th September. This was a fantastic opportunity to discuss the way in which we teach children to read here at Parkgate and to also talk to parents about ways in which they can support their child with reading at home.

One of the strategies we use is the Phonetic system. This is a systematic way of learning the sounds that letters make and children are taught the skills to be able to blend sounds together to read words. Children in Reception begin by learning the sounds that single letters make and the pronunciation of these is key; for example they learn that the letter 'm' makes the sound 'mmm' rather than 'mur'.

Children learn that sounds can be represented by more than one letter such as 'th' in 'think' and 'ar' in 'car'. They quickly become confident at

recognising these sounds and blending them together to read simple words. Their phonic knowledge is developed throughout the Reception year and into Pre-Prep 1 and 2 until they have covered all of the sounds and the different ways of spelling each sound. As well as phonics, we also teach children about 'High Frequency' words; these are words that are very common and should be read through sight recognition rather than being phonetically decoded. This is to allow speed and fluency when reading, but also because some of these words are 'tricky words' such as 'said' which cannot be phonetically decoded.

The following website is a great place to find games, activities and information on phonics and reading: <http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/>

Follow the 'Reading' link and then 'Phonics made easy'; there is a very useful section called 'Say the sounds' which demonstrates how to pronounce the 44 different sounds.

To demonstrate how we teach the children to recognise the sounds in words, here is how we would blend the sounds in the following words:

shop= sh-o-p  
shower= sh-ow-er  
chair= ch-air  
star= s-t-ar  
coin= c-oi-n  
train= t-r-ai-n

Reading with your child regularly at home provides the opportunity for them to practise and apply their phonic knowledge. As well as working on word recognition skills in order to read the text, we also focus on language comprehension. Try asking your child questions about the story or text to encourage them to develop their comprehension skills.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's reading development, please do not hesitate to speak to your child's class teacher or Head of Department.

## MEET OUR NEW MEMBERS OF TEACHING STAFF

We would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to three of our new members of teaching staff: Miss Samantha Garland, Miss Sophie Blanchard and Miss Rebecca Swain.

### MISS SOPHIE BLANCHARD

I'm Sophie Blanchard, the learning support teacher at Parkgate House School, and I am thrilled to be working in such a creative and caring school.

I started my teaching career as a Montessori teacher and I truly believe that each child is unique. One of my favourite books is "Kensuke's Kingdom" by Michael Morpurgo because I love sailing. I also enjoy art and music.



### MISS SAMANTHA GARLAND



I am extremely excited to be taking on the role of Head of Pre-Prep at Parkgate House.

Prior to my appointment, I was head of the lower school at St Nicholas Preparatory School in Knightsbridge. I also taught for six years across both year one and year two.

I was particularly drawn to Parkgate as the aims and mission statement of the school are very much in line with my own philosophy on education in which each child must be treated as an individual and their needs met in order for them to get the most out of their time at school and reach their full potential.

Outside the classroom, I enjoy travelling and experiencing different cultures across the globe as well as cooking and visiting my family in the country. I look forward to meeting you all over the coming weeks.

### MISS REBECCA SWAIN

Hello, my name is Rebecca Swain and I am very excited to have started at Parkgate in Reception B this term.

I completed my teacher training degree in Derbyshire and have taught in and around that area. I have worked with children from Early Years through to Prep in a range of schools and contexts. During my training I specialised in the teaching of creative arts and it has been brilliant to join a school that promotes these alongside all of the other important subjects.

I have found meeting our new pupils in Reception and watching them settle in a very special experience and I can't wait to see them continue to develop over the next few months. I look forward to all of the exciting events and activities we have planned here for the year ahead and seeing and meeting many of you there.



### JOSHUA SEIGAL VISIT

On Tuesday 1st October, we had the pleasure of a visit from Joshua Seigal, an inspiring poet and performer, as part of our National Poetry Day celebrations. He performed many of his poems to us and the children revelled in joining in with lots of enthusiasm!

He also led workshops which were fun, interactive and creative. All of the children learnt that poetry can be anything: fun or serious, short or long, silly or thoughtful which is an important thing to understand. We had a magnificent day and it has set us up for a successful Parkgate Poetry Week!



## OUTDOOR LEARNING

Spending time outdoors to play and explore is an essential part of any child's learning. It allows them to discover different aspects of their world through movement, play and language, and gives them important sensory experiences to help develop their knowledge.

Outdoor activities such as Walking The Line, constructing with large wooden blocks and using the climbing and sliding apparatus, helps improve the development of gross and fine motor skills, co-ordination, balance and body awareness. Using magnifying glasses to observe natural objects and insects helps encourages new vocabulary and discussions and it also promotes awareness of nature in the environment.

Children build friendships by joining in with imaginative play, sharing ideas and learning to take turns and share resources.



## FRENCH IN THE NURSERY DEPARTMENT

As another term gets underway, I am so impressed with what our Nursery children have remembered from last year and how quickly our new starters are picking up the new language.

Nounours the teddy bear's visits are a popular part of the Nursery week and many of the Nursery 2 children also enjoy the weekly French club.

The children develop confidence in verbalising new words and sounds by taking part in songs and acting out familiar stories such as Little Red Riding Hood (Le Petit Chaperon Rouge) and Goldilocks and the Three Bears (Boucle D'or et les Trois Ours).

## PRE-PREP 1 TRIP TO THE TOWER OF LONDON

On Monday 23rd September, Pre-Prep 1 went on a very exciting trip to the Tower of London. We are studying castles in Humanities this term and thought that this trip would be a great introduction to the topic. It definitely lived up to expectations!

The main focus of the trip was an interactive talk, entitled 'Knights, Castles and Kings', in which we learnt all about the history of the Tower and the legends surrounding it. One such legend told us how there came to be ravens at the tower and if they ever leave 'London shall fall'.

As well as our talk, we also had the opportunity to visit the spectacular Crown Jewels, The White Tower (which houses military armour) and the Beauchamp Tower, where we saw graffiti carved by prisoners!

It was a wonderful day and has left us feeling very excited about our upcoming 'Castles' topic!



## PGL AT ROSS-ON-WYE 2013

On 27th September the Prep Department set off for their weekend away in Ross-on-Wye and had a tremendous time. As you will see from the pictures featured here the children really threw themselves into the activities on offer at PGL and not only showed enormous courage but also fantastic support and teamwork.

It was a wonderful opportunity for the children from the different year groups to work and play together and the sense of camaraderie was inspiring. The children enjoyed a host of exciting activities including abseiling, zip-wire and the famous mud course! The trip would not have been complete without visits to the tuck shop and the Parkgate talent show, which this year had some stunning entries, and on the final night the children enjoyed a camp fire all together. It was a lovely trip to be part of and the children should all be very proud of their achievements..



*"When I went to PGL I had lots of fun! I am so proud that I tried all of the activities. Some were so much fun I did them twice! But I found some tricky, like the trapeze. My target for next year is to reach the bar at the trapeze and to get to the top of the abseiling tower at rock climbing - I really enjoyed abseiling because I like walking down the tower! I also enjoyed the mud course because I like getting wet and muddy. I think I showed kindness at PGL because I helped Parker to not be scared."*

*Mia Abell (Prep 3)*

*"At PGL I was so excited! I was shocked when I went to our dormitory and saw the door moving, it was spooky! I really enjoyed the zipwire, orienteering and abseiling. At first the abseiling was scary but as I got used to it it became fun and the second time I did it I was really confident. My target next year is to be more confident from the start and to enjoy every activity first time round. I'm also going to try hard not to scream as I don't like screaming!"*

*"I think I displayed lots of virtues over the weekend but in particular I was responsible by looking after my belongings and I was kind as I reassured children who were scared or worried. One thing I noticed at PGL was how hungry I got and every morning I enjoyed a big bowl of cereal!"*

*Constantin Bizard (Prep 4)*

***"This was my first year at PGL and my goal this year was to get to the bar on top of the trapeze tower. It was hard work and it takes a lot of courage.***

***I learnt a lot about team work and the activity I most enjoyed was the climbing because I got to the top the fastest."***

***James Bunch (Prep 5)***



*"I have been going to PGL for four years now and each year has held new and exciting challenges for me. Now I feel content having done every challenge I set myself.*

*"This year was different though. I'm a Prep 6 and younger children come to me for help and asking questions about what will happen at PGL. I also felt a sense of protection because my younger sister, Emily, was at PGL with me for the first time this year."*

*Jessica Tabraham (Prep 6)*

## PRE-PREP MATHS

This term in the Pre-Prep, the children have been looking at a wide range of maths in many engrossing kinaesthetic activities, laying the important foundations for more complex concepts that they will encounter in the future.

In Reception, the children have been working on ordering units on a number line and quantifying, exploring different values of numbers displayed around the classroom. They've even been working on their recording data skills in a checklist!

The Reception classes have also been learning to identify the properties of 2D shapes as well as how to make patterns using people and musical instruments.

In Pre-Prep 1, the children have been getting hands-on experience with addition and subtraction, including working with money to purchase different items.

This has been extended in Pre-Prep 2, where the children have been creating word problems to do with money and challenging themselves to think of various ways in which certain amounts of money can be made.



## PRE-PREP 2 EXPLORE CLAPHAM COMMON

On Thursday 26th September, Pre-Prep 2 went on an exploration of Clapham Common. Although it is an area that we all know, it was a fantastic opportunity to improve our mapping skills and to see the area in even greater detail.

We completed two activities. Firstly, we looked at our own personal use of Clapham Common. The children made their own land use maps and

identified different activities and where they did them on the common. It was great to see a visual representation of all the fun activities the children enjoy, from flying kites to family picnics.

The second activity involved using sensory geography. The children used their ears to map out the common. We discussed how different places have different soundscapes and compared the sounds at the common to sounds you might hear at the beach.

Fun was had by all and it was great to spend time exploring the local area.



## HOUSE CAPTAINS CAMPAIGNS

The aim of the house system is to give the children at Parkgate House School a sense of responsibility, to promote academic excellence and to allow them to be 'part of a team'. It is also used to promote a sense of unity and to encourage proper conduct throughout the school.

At the beginning of every school year both Prep 5 and Prep 6 children have the opportunity to campaign for the role of Captain and Vice Captain. The children design a poster stating why they would be suitable for these positions and run their own campaign. After campaigning all the other classes in the Prep Department vote and results are announced. Below you can see the

Captain and Vice Captains voted in for this academic year and I would like to congratulate them all.

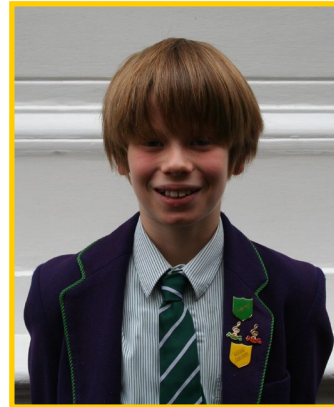
The Captain and Vice Captain are responsible for; encouraging team spirit, collecting merits and assist with distributing house points, awarding house members with certificates at assembly, attending house meetings and organising house events.



Romans' Captain



Romans' Vice Captain



Head Boy &  
Egyptians' Captain



Egyptians' Vice Captain &  
Boys' Sports Captain



Greeks' Captain



Greeks' Vice Captain



Aztecs' Captain



Aztecs' Vice Captain



Girls' Sports Captain



Head Chorister

## HEAD CHORISTER

Congratulations to our newly appointed Head Chorister for this academic year.

He has shown great commitment and focus in his singing, both in choir and as a soloist. He is very dedicated to all areas of music, in choir and in his music lessons. Head Chorister is an important role in the choir, with duties including supporting your fellow choristers and assisting Miss Johnston in choir rehearsals on a Wednesday afternoon.

## SPORTS REPORTS

It has been a good start to the term with some really encouraging performances. We have definitely taken a step forward from last year and, as is the way with sport, some of the results don't quite do us justice.

Congratulations to the Prep 3 & 4 boys for their comprehensive win against Fairley House. This is a school that has traditionally given us a tough test so to play the way we did against them was a real positive.

The A team's netball match vs the Roche could have gone either way, with five minutes remaining we were 3-2 up, conceding two quick goals in the final minutes. Performance is key, however, and the girls will get the chance to play again on 14th October against Hurlingham where we will be looking for a reaction from our girls.

We're also eagerly anticipating the netball match against Prospect House where we get to unleash our 5 & 6s into the fray for their first fixture this term, I know the girls' coaches have high hopes for the match.

From a personal point of view it has been great to see over 80% of the Prep children take part in a fixture this term, our all-inclusive ethos really makes a difference to our pupils' sporting education. For those of you still waiting to get on the field/court, it won't be long!

## RESULTS

### Monday 16th September

Prep 3 & 4 girls netball A's vs Roche - 5-3 (L)  
Prep 3 & 4 girls netball B's vs Roche - 2-0 (L)

### Wednesday 18th September

Prep 5 & 6 boys football vs Finton House - 2-2 (D)

### Monday 23rd September

Prep 3 & 4 boys football A's vs Fairley House - 9-0 (W)  
Prep 3 & 4 boys football B's vs Fairley House - 0-0 (D)

### Thursday 26th September

Prep 4 & 5 boys football A's vs Hall School Wimbledon - 4-0 (L)  
Prep 4 & 5 boys football B's vs Hall School Wimbledon - 2-1 (L)



## PARKGATE HOUSE PARENTS' COMMITTEE

The Parents' Committee will be organising some fantastic events over the course of this year for the parents, children and staff at Parkgate House School. Proceeds from these events will support six different charities: The Prince's Foundation for Children and the Arts, Trinity Hospice, Room to Read, Samaritan's Purse, Action Medical Research and Missionaries of Charity through our Spring Clean event.

Already this term, the Parents' Committee have been busy organising fundraising events. The second hand uniform sale that took place at the beginning of term raised a fantastic £1,456.50! The Committee are pleased to announce that we will now be arranging a second hand uniform sale at the beginning of every term.

The Parents' Committee will also be holding the annual charity Fun Run taking place on Monday 7th October (for Pre-Prep 1 – Prep 6). Pupils will be dressed in fancy dress outfits to represent their houses. This is in aid of Trinity Hospice, a local charity which Parkgate have supported for many

years now.

The annual Quiz Night, supporting The Prince's Foundation for Children and the Arts, is also fast approaching and will be held on Friday 18th October. This is an extremely popular event, so make sure you get your tickets soon!

Also this term, we will be holding a cake sale (Friday 25th October) as well as running the Samaritan's purse Christmas shoebox appeal. Leaflets including further details will be sent home soon.

We look forward to seeing you at the upcoming events.



PARKGATE HOUSE SCHOOL PARENTS' COMMITTEE presents

# Quiz Night

**IN AID OF**  
The Prince's Foundation for Children & the Arts

**DATE** Friday 18th October  
**PLACE** Battersea Arts Centre  
**TIME** 6.30 for a Champagne Reception

Fish and Chips from The Fish Club  
Raffle Prizes and Tree of Life

QUESTIONS SET BY QUIZ, QUIZ, QUIZ

**COST**  
£30 per person, including Champagne, Dinner and Quiz

**10** PEOPLE per CLASS TABLE

Tickets can be purchased from the school office from the 23rd September

## E-Safety Seminar for Parents

Date: Wednesday 13th November

Time: 6.30pm - 7.30pm

Location: Parkgate House School



Internet safety is a priority at Parkgate House School. This seminar looks at what our pupils are doing online: instant messaging, social networking and mobile phone applications and explores using them without taking risks. It also covers cyberbullying issues.

## Diary Dates

### Autumn Term 2013

SEPT		
Tu	3	Goslings, Ducklings, Ladybirds & Reception A Induction Afternoon – PHS, 2.00pm – 2.45pm
Tu	3	Cygnets, Pandas & Reception B Induction Afternoon – PHS, 3.00pm – 3.45pm
W	4	<b>Beginning of Term</b>
M	9	Second Hand Uniform Sale – PHS, 8.30am – 9.15am
M	9	Reception - Prep 6 Curriculum Evening – PHS, 6.30pm – 7.30pm
Tu	10	Prep Mouthguard Fittings – PHS, 9.00am – 11.00am
Th	19	Reception Parents Phonics and Reading Presentation – PHS, 6.30pm – 7.30pm
F-M	27-30	Prep 3-6 Educational Activity Weekend - Hillcrest, Herefordshire, 10.00am (Depart from BAC, returning Mon 30 <sup>th</sup> at 3.30pm)
OCT		
Tu	1	Nursery Introduction to Pre-Prep Meeting – PHS, 6.30pm – 7.30pm
S	5	Open Day & Harrods Uniform Sale – PHS, 9.30am – 12.00pm
M	7	Parkgate Charity Fun Run for Trinity Hospice (Pre-Prep 1, Pre-Prep 2 & Prep) – Clapham Common 1.30pm – PP1, 2.00pm – PP2, 2.30pm – Prep
F	18	Parents' Committee Quiz Night – BAC, Grand Hall, 7.00pm
F	25	Parents' Assembly "Mathematics" (PP2B, P3, P4) – BAC, Lower Hall, 8.50am
M-F	28-1	<b>Half Term</b>
NOV		
F	8	Headmaster's Coffee Morning with Prep 6 Parents – PHS, 9.30am – 10.30am
M	11	Individual, Sibling & Class Photographs – PHS, 9.00am
W	13	Parent Seminar – E-Safety – PHS, 6.30pm – 7.30pm
F	22	Nursery Christmas Concert – BAC, Grand Hall, 11.30am
F	29	Parents' Assembly "Science" (PP1A, PP2A, P5) – BAC, Lower Hall, 8.50am
DEC		
Th	5	Reception, Pre-Prep & Prep Christmas Carol Concert – Holy Trinity Church, Clapham Common 2.00pm
T	10	Goslings End of Term – PHS, 3.30pm Goslings Visit from Father Christmas – PHS
W	11	Visit from Father Christmas – PHS <b>End of Term, 12.00pm</b>
Th-W	12-18	Christmas Holiday Activity & Sports Week (Nursery, Reception, Pre-Prep & Prep) – PHS, 10.00am – 3.00pm -

### Term Dates

#### Autumn Term 2013

Commences - Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> September  
*Half Term - 28<sup>th</sup> October – 1<sup>st</sup> November*  
 Term Ends - Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> December (12.00)

#### Spring Term 2014

Commences - Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> January  
*Half Term - 17<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> February*  
 Term Ends - Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> March (12.00)

#### Summer Term 2014

Commences - Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> April  
*Bank Holiday - Monday 5<sup>th</sup> May*  
*Half Term - 26<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> May*  
 Term Ends - Friday 4<sup>th</sup> July (12.00)