

You are Enough

In this day and age, it can be tricky to be a parent and know what is best for your children when you have opted for a private education and all the opportunities it offers.

It is very easy to fall into the trap of 'FOMO', the fear of missing out. Faced with a wide range of activities within and outside school, it can be hard to decide which to pursue. Pupils are able to engage in a wide range of activities, ranging from Music or Speech and Drama lessons and attending after school enrichment clubs, to joining a sporting team or a committee such as School Council. In the wider community, children may be involved in church groups, choirs, Brownies, Guides, Scouts and Beavers, or weekly ParkRuns and sporting lessons or team practices, ranging from climbing and swimming to netball and hockey teams. Your child may be passionate about drama and attend weekend drama lessons, or perhaps they love dance, ice skating or martial arts. All of these activities are fantastic endeavours, however, they can become challenging to balance, and leave you wondering; How much is too much and at what point do these become counterproductive?

Yesterday, Year 5 were asked to reflect on the last 21 days of school. The pupils carefully considered how much we have packed in to our term so far, and how much they have grown intellectually and physically over these past weeks.

Every child has taken a step into a new year group, which comes with new demands, expectations and responsibilities, but also some uncertainty and questions; 'What will my class be like?', 'What will it be like to do a new subject?', 'How will I fit in with this new group of peers?'.

Yesterday, in Year 5 Assembly, I congratulated the children on how well they had done in the first 21 days, but I also reminded them that these may be some of the easier weeks of the year. The novelty of a new year and new opportunities, combined with warm weather, have helped to ease us into the school year. The pupils came back to school tanned, taller and well rested after a period of relaxation, and self-directed schedules and activities. On 3rd September the bell rang at 08:15 and children streamed into the classrooms keen and eager to find out what adventures lay ahead. At 08:15, many parents were logging into their computers at work or perhaps involved in daily chores and tasks all wondering about whether their children were going to make the most of their opportunities in the academic year 2026 to 2027.

This year, we are focusing on executive functioning and supporting the pupils to develop their organisation skills. This can be practised by building stronger routines within and beyond the classroom, including putting their bags on pegs, ensuring that they've written in their planner or checked on Teams for their homework, making sure that they use their Games cubby, and remembering to bring the correct equipment for their chosen sport or activity.

More broadly, we are continuing to encourage the pupils to be their best selves. I showed the Year 5s that they have collectively earned over 1,000 green TrackIt Lights entries, which translate into house points, for their excellent learning habits.

Another message that I gave the children was that they will not always get everything right. I reminded them that they need to be able to reflect and recognise when something has gone wrong and be prepared to apologise and make things right.

I asked them to reflect on their success so far this term, in several key aspects of their life at school:

- How good they are as a friend?
- How good they are as a teammate in sports lessons, matches and break times?
- How did they rate their organisation with their equipment, and regularly write in their planners to record their homework?
- Do they believe they are a good listener, not only when teachers give instructions, but also are they a good listener to other people around them?
- Do they notice when a friend might be feeling sad.

The children had to rate themselves out of five marks in each category and I explained that I would be taking in their responses. To my delight, the responses were extremely honest and reflected a strong self-awareness and a good level of honesty.

This shows that pupils really gain a lot from the opportunity to be their best selves, to recognise their mistakes and to try to make up for them, to be reflective and to recognise where they have strengths and areas for development. They will not be perfect and indeed we are not striving for perfection. We are all on a journey; teachers, parents, children alike, we all have so many opportunities, and while it is tempting to try to do everything, practicing being a good friend, a good listener, being organised, and to be supportive in a group activity are actually all that we would wish for our children. These habits will, in turn, support them in having a happy and successful year at school.

Your child is enough.

Mrs North

Head of Year 5

Head of Latham