



December 2011

Dear Parent,

*What shall we do tomorrow? What shall we ever do?*

The lights are going out across Britain, squeezed by budget cuts many councils across Britain do not have the money for Christmas decorations; 38% of England's villages will lack festive sparkle this Christmas. Obviously, the age of austerity has reached education budgets in Northern Ireland and there are tough times in prospect for all schools in the Province.

Thankfully, however, we are far from the experience of TS Eliot's post-war characters caught in a waste land with no idea how to approach the next day. In challenging times it is vital to hold to one's core beliefs; in essence at CCB we want to make available to the widest possible range of able boys an educational experience that is rich, diverse and exciting in an atmosphere that provides support and care for everyone within the resources at our disposal. We do want our pupils to love coming to Campbell and to go from here prepared for all that human life has to offer.

These words are not carelessly chosen. We are committed to making our school accessible to as many pupils as possible who seek this form of education; this year we offered both the GL assessment as well as the AQE test to enable all prospective pupils the opportunity to come into Year 8. In schools as in life it is not where you are coming from but where you are going to that really matters. Obviously, where you are going to is, partly, determined by the grades you attain at A Level. ALIS is an assessment product managed by the University of Durham that assesses whether a school has added value to pupils' performance based on prior GCSE performance. The ALIS cohort comprises 1800 schools, approximately 65% of all students sitting A Levels; across all qualifications (AS and A2 combined) Campbell finished in the top 2% of all schools and colleges in terms of Value Added at Post 16 in 2011.

Perhaps, an even clearer measure of a school's success is what pupils go on to do with their lives after they leave the College. The class of 2011 Campbell leavers encountered greater competition for university places than in previous years due to the government's impending changes to the tuition fee structure. However, the noble youth of CCB largely managed to buck national trends and secured coveted places in many of the top universities in the UK and Ireland. Whilst nationally only 69% of applicants were successful in securing a university place, over 80% of Campbell pupils were accepted for their chosen course, our best return in recent years.

Boys at Campbell are encouraged to be selective and discerning in their choice of career path and the attending university course; significantly, 50% of boys in 2011 gained places at the major Russell Group and 1994 Group Universities. Whilst Queen's University and the University of Ulster remain our most popular destinations, others this year included Bath, Bristol, Cambridge, Durham, Edinburgh, Exeter, Glasgow, Imperial College London, King's College London, Lancaster, Leeds, Leicester, Liverpool, Loughborough, Manchester, St Andrews and York , as well as Trinity College Dublin. Most notably, Peter McCourt, Patrick Todd and Chris Wilson gained places at Cambridge to read Medicine, Law and History respectively; however, it is universally gratifying that so many of our boys are choosing to widen their horizons and, furthermore, to find that they are thriving in these competitive environments.

In a world in which the lights are going out across many of the shires in Britain, it is now more important than ever to choose courses in key areas of economic growth. Under the thoughtful and assured guidance of Mrs Sarah Coetzee and her Careers team a significant number of Campbell pupils proceed to study in areas such as Biological Sciences, Physical Sciences, Mathematical/Computer Sciences, Engineering and the Creative Arts thus presenting themselves with greater opportunities in the labour market in the future.

Whilst ALIS, results, and university places convey a truth about this school; they, perhaps, do not entirely convey the excitement that boys locate in Campbell. There is another world at Campbell of sport and music and drama and societies and expeditions and camps and trips and laughter; hopefully, the College publications of *The Insider* and *The Total Curriculum* capture much of this experience.

Finally, within the landscape of excitement, passion and commitment a number of stars burned brightly in 2011. The School Play, *South Pacific*, with a cast of 60 boys and girls from Campbell and Strathearn School created enchantment and captivated their audiences; all who contributed to the production deserve considerable praise, in particular, I thank the Director, Eliz McIlvenny, Assistant Director, Kirstin Marshall and Musical Director, David Catherwood. In 2011 Mark Best, School House, became the first Campbellian since 1980 to achieve the distinction of being capped for Ireland Schools in both rugby and cricket in the same year. Andy McCrea, Head of Technology and Design Department & Master i/c Cricket, attended an awards ceremony in the Long Room at Lord's Cricket Ground where he was presented with the English Cricket Board, Cricket Coach of the Year Award 2011; he is the first coach outside the ECB and England to receive this top award.

With such talent and stars to guide us, the lights at Campbell remain brightly illuminated this Christmas.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year,

