



St. Paul's School

MANIBUS POTENTIA STUDIUM ANIMIS

22nd January 2015

Dear Parents,

Happy New Year!

I hope that you had plenty of quality time with your children over the holidays, and that they have returned to school refreshed and ready for the start of term. I know that many of you have had wonderful trips overseas in the holidays and that your children have had some great opportunities to learn about cultures and people far away. This is hugely enriching for them and I know that it really helps to support their learning in many ways.

I am very grateful to parents of the Form 5 and 6th form pupils who had mock examinations last week. The attendance was excellent. I appreciate this enormously; the examinations are incredibly important for the school and for your children and will help us to prepare the pupils effectively for the public examinations in May and June. They creep up very quickly indeed so this period of preparation is essential.

In November Form 4 took their English as a second language IGCSE with 92% passing and 37% securing an A or A*. In Form 5 Luke Nolan has been studying for his IGCSE in ICT in his own time and gained an A* too. This is an excellent achievement and typifies the can-do attitude of so many of our pupils. My congratulations go to all pupils who took these examinations especially those who achieved the highest grades of A and A*. We hope to see even better grades in the future especially from those in Form 5 taking their IGCSEs at the end of this term.

As you will see, the builders have started the academic centre, as planned, over the Christmas break. The scale of the work is significant and as a result the front of school has been remodelled with the turnstiles being moved. This means that, for the time being, the tuck-shop will not operate at the front of school and parents will not be able to enter school premises in the mornings unless they have a specific meeting arranged. The only exception is for parents of Pre-Prep pupils, who need to deliver them to the classrooms. We would be grateful if you could do this as quickly as possible in order to reduce congestion on the site as far as we can. In the afternoons, again, if you can avoid entering the site we would appreciate it, though we recognise that for families with children in two or more sections of the school, this might be difficult. We will monitor the situation and keep you updated if we feel that any changes need to be implemented.

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ESCOLA BRITÂNICA DE SÃO PAULO
Rua Juquiá, 166 – Jardim Paulistano – CEP 01440-903 – São Paulo – SP – Brasil
Tel.: (5511) 3087-3399 – Fax: (5511) 3087-3398



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I would like to take this opportunity to thank our bursar, Mr Sapsezian, and his team, for their excellent work in managing the contractors over the holidays. They have done a brilliant job.

The New Year brings with it news of changes and developments on the staffing front. We welcome a number of new colleagues:

Mr Kyle Cannon joins us from Campinas to teach art in the Senior School. Mr Ben Carvell, joins us from the British School of Brussels to teach maths and Ms Patricia Castro Vargas, an Old Paulean, joins the Prep School team of teachers in P2 from St Francis College.

We welcome the following new teaching assistants:

Miss Sarah Gamez, Miss Amanda Santinin Cortez, Miss Flavia Fernandes Belletati and Mr Daniel Nacarato Pisciotano. I wish all the new staff members every happiness and success at St Paul's and hope that your children enjoy getting to know their new teachers and assistants.

We said goodbye to some colleagues during the holidays; Miss Mayra Hatae and Miss Maiara Terra, both teaching assistants, left us for new opportunities over the break. Two colleagues rejoin us after their maternity leaves – Ms Helen Devine (Head of Sixth Form) and Mrs Lia Ribeiro from the Prep Brazilian studies department. Ms Carol Belmonte has been an excellent acting Head of Sixth Form whilst Ms Devine has been absent and I thank her for her hard work and dedication to all the pupils during that time. Over the holiday Ms Devine celebrated her marriage to husband Alex in the UK – we send them our warmest congratulations on this wonderful occasion.

We are lucky that we attract lots of very high quality candidates when we advertise positions in the school and over the holidays Dr Baldisseri and I enjoyed interviewing candidates for a new Assistant Head post in London. The post, Assistant Head (Enrichment) is a whole school post, and will be crucially important in leading all aspects of the co-curricular provision as well as the community service, trips and visits and the extension and challenge that is provided for pupils in their lessons. The time spent in recruiting staff is significant but is the most important thing that I do. Finding interesting, highly qualified teachers who are passionate about their subjects and can communicate this and enthuse the pupils is so important. Once we have completed the recruitment for August 2015, we will tell you all about these great new staff members.

Finally I am delighted that we have secured our first Cambridge University offers for many years. Dr Hallinan has worked very hard to prepare the candidates and Joao Pedro Ornelas and Oliver McDonald are both very proud indeed to have secured their

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offers. I wish them both my warmest congratulations. The offers for UK and US universities are flooding in at the moment and we have lots of very happy U6th formers in school. I could not be happier for them; it is such an exciting time for them all.

I look forward to another very busy and productive term:

As you may remember, 2nd – 6th February will be our e-Awareness Week. During this week we will have a visit from Cathy Wood, a leading specialist in staying safe on the internet, from the UK. Cathy is an investigative journalist and advises UK schools and young people's organisations on how to manage their digital tattoo. She helps schools develop a digital charter for effective and safe online citizenship. We hope that you will take the opportunity to come along and hear Cathy at one of the workshops that she is running for parents;

Tuesday 3rd February – 7pm

Wednesday 4th February – 8.30am

Thursday 5th February – 7pm

Friday 6th February – 8.30am.

To facilitate the parent workshops Cathy has designed an anonymous survey which can be accessed by parents at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/MatchstickMedia>

The building work will occupy our minds and our energies this term and as the new academic centre begins to take shape I hope that you will be able to join us for the presentation on the strategic plan on 23rd February and I hope that your children's education continues smoothly in the temporary classrooms.

I wish you all the best for 2015 and thank you for your continuing support,

Kind regards .

Louise Simpson
Head