



6 September 2023

Dear Parents and Guardians

Welcome back to the new school year and I hope you had a beautiful summer break.

Can I begin by congratulating our students on some fantastic examination results.

As you may be aware, the UK Government decided to significantly reduce the percentage of higher grades given this year, pulling it back in line with 2019 levels. However, even in this context, the girls did brilliantly, achieving the best results in the island.

At A-level well over a third of the results were A\*/A and two thirds A\*/B. 87% of our students are heading to their chosen university to study courses as diverse as Architecture, Law, Medicine, and Marine Biology through to Musical Theatre, Motor Sport Management, Sport Science and Illustration, a testament to the breath and diversity of our students' voices.

The GCSE results were similarly strong, with 46% of all results at an A\* level (grades 8 and 9) and 98% of results were A\*-C. And the departmental results demonstrated just how wide the skills set of the girls were, from the 75% single science results at A\*/A to the 92% A\*/A at English Language.

What makes me particularly proud of the girls' achievements is that there isn't a culture of spoon-feeding at the College. The girls have developed their own voices, their own drive, and their own independent study skills. Sometimes GCSEs can feel like being bludgeoned over the head with facts and exam techniques, but that genuinely isn't the case at the College! Our teachers bring alive their subjects with research and conversation and competitions outside of the classroom, and the girls throw themselves in to all those opportunities. It's a delight to watch and the results of that education are much more profound than simple grades on a GCSE paper.

This wider skill base is particularly important in the fast-changing context in which we find ourselves. As you are aware, the College is taking very seriously the need to develop our provision to equip the girls with the skills they are going to need for a rapidly changing world. We have already begun that work with our Future Ready Skills Programme, being a Microsoft Showcase School and implementing a range of other initiatives and this year we will be conducting a review of Melrose' curriculum and launching a new parallel curriculum in the Sixth Form for 2024 (more details on this to follow).

In line with these changes, we have decided to update our admissions process to ensure that we are offering places to girls who will most benefit from this provision. Thus, starting with the intake of September 2025, we will be implementing a more selective admissions approach that seeks to identify students who are

best positioned to benefit from our unique educational offering. It is important to note that we will not be simply focusing on a narrow skill set but instead considering wider areas such as curiosity, passion, and intellectual and emotional flexibility, seeking girls we think will thrive within our provision.

This new admissions approach will only apply to incoming students from September 2025 onwards. For the students who are currently enrolled at the College this change will not have any impact on their journey through the school. As is currently the case, we would usually expect both Upper Five and Melrose students to automatically transition into the next academic stage. We remain dedicated to nurturing the growth and development of all our existing pupils, and our commitment to their success remains unwavering.

Our primary goal with this change is to create an even more dynamic and engaging learning environment for our students. We believe that by selecting students who are aligned with our educational values and goals, we can maximize the impact of the educational experience we provide.

Penultimately, I would like to thank the parents who gave feedback at the end of last term. There was a breadth of positive feedback on areas such as pastoral support, the culture of the college, the quality and dedication of the teachers and the opportunities in sport and co-curricular. The key points from the 'even better ifs' were around exploring more opportunity for trips, communication systems with parents and homework in the Lower School in particular. We will have groups of staff explore each of these issues in the coming year.

Finally, can I take this moment to welcome our new staff to the College for this term:

Mrs Mary Lawson, Head Teacher of Melrose  
Mrs Amy Gaudion, Catering Assistant  
Mrs Joanna Hann, Teacher of Junior Remove  
Ms Helen Lakin, Head of Psychology  
Mr Sandy Lawson, Teacher of PE  
Mr Sam Ray, IT Manager (joined shortly before the end of last term)  
Mrs Katie Sweeney, Office Assistant  
Mrs Lucy Waldrom, Teacher of Middle Preparatory

Here's to a fantastic academic year.

With best wishes



Daniele Harford-Fox  
**Principal**