

THE BRITISH SCHOOLS



Founded 1908

November, 2020

Dear Year 6 Students,

We have come to the end of 2020, a year which is almost impossible to believe is almost over. It is extraordinary to think how much the world has changed since March 2020, when you returned to School for your final year. If this was a usual year, we would be meeting for either the Graduation or the Final Assembly. Sadly, we can do neither.

2020 was the strangest of years. Many will remember it as the year of 'Zoom' or 'Google Meet' and we were fortunate to have less time with this than most countries. However, it proved its usefulness, and enabled you to keep learning. When we offered you the opportunity to have a final meeting in which we would award prizes, it was completely understandable that as a group you did not want any more Google Meets! In a similar way, this letter is not a written version or replacement of the speech I had planned, for I am saving that for March or April. I do believe that at some stage normality will return, because it has to. And, like everyone, I hope it will happen sooner rather than later.

I wish to congratulate you, on behalf of all the staff, for getting to this point. You have finished your time at School, and hopefully you will all leave with the qualifications you need to start the next part of your lives. I have always said that exams are stepping stones that enable you to enter the next stage. IGCSE's lead you to the IB Diploma; all your school years in the Uruguayan national programme lead you to Year 6; the IB Diploma leads you to university and then university leads you either to a job or further studies. What is important is that with each stage, or challenge, you do as well as you can in order to give yourselves more options for the future. I was talking to some recent leavers in the past weeks who all felt that the school gave them these options. You will be the same as them.

Some of you I knew a little before the year started, but others I never got to know as well as I hoped I would. This is not surprising as I am relatively new in a big school, but I still want each and everyone one of you to know that everything we did this year had two requirements. The first was to keep everyone as safe as possible within the boundaries that were set, while the second was to provide the best education we could give you within those same boundaries. Putting the two together was not easy, as you know from having to attend classes half a day, half a class, six hours only and all the others, but that was our challenge. Yours was to do the best you could under these circumstances, and you did that. Was it difficult for you? Was it stressful? Did you finish all the necessary exams and assessments? The answer to all three questions is 'yes'.

I do not really want to repeat how difficult this year was, because we have been having the same conversation for nine months now. I want you to recognise it was difficult, but I want you to recognise that you came through and overcame those difficulties. You succeeded because you completed your School year, you completed your Diploma exams and you are now ready to move on. And if this year has taught you anything, it should be that in order to do well you need to be resilient, Life will constantly throw up challenges. Some of those you will overcome, some you

might not. But you will learn from all of them. You must be resilient and bounce back when you have setbacks. Many of you will go into careers in business. Some years ago, research was published of a study looking into the backgrounds, qualifications, personality traits and careers of all the leading CEO's in the Forbes 500. There was only one thing that they had in common, and that was that every one of them had been unsuccessful in one of their first jobs. But they learned, showed resilience, and got better. Do not let setbacks throw you off course. And do not believe that everything in life comes easily or that life owes you something. Have confidence in yourselves, make your own choices, make good ones and then trust those choices.

When you look back at 2020, you might think that it was a year wasted, or a year that you missed out doing various activities. The second comment is true, the first one maybe not so much. You share a past with many generations of students. During your time at The British Schools, you acted and sang in musicals. You took part in MUN. You played rugby and football and hockey and other sports. You went on the rugby tour last year or rugby and hockey tours when you were younger. You went on the UK trip. Yes, your last year was very, very different, but at some time, you will look back on it and you will realise that you overcame the challenge. You have each other. You have your families. You will be well remembered by myself, the Senior Management Team of Andrew, Vicente, Cecilia and Florencia, and all the staff here. When I next talk to you, in either March or April you will be one of a growing number of former students, ready to take your place in adult society. Now go and enjoy the summer, and get ready for that next challenge.

Take care all of you.

Mark Rosevear
Principal

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