

## Headteacher's Newsletter– September 2022

Quote of the month:

*"The fact is that given the challenges we face, education doesn't need to be reformed – it needs to be transformed. The key to this transformation is not to standardize education, but to personalize it, to build achievement on discovering the individual talents of each child, to put students in an environment where they want to learn and where they can naturally discover their true passions."* Sir Ken Robinson

This first Newsletter to you all is an opportunity to reflect on the first month of the academic year and to look forward with renewed optimism and anticipation to the year ahead. Many of you will have begun, I am sure, to adapt once again to the routine and have (in the words of one colleague) begun to approach 'match fitness' in returning to the daily rigours of school life, hopefully with enthusiasm and a sense of optimism. This, my first month at the Senior School, has been, as would be expected, extraordinarily busy, but at the same time exhilarating. I have enjoyed immensely the inevitable challenges which have arisen and have been at the same time in awe of the maturity, confidence and ambition of so many of our students. It has been a pleasure to meet such a range of interesting and talented individuals with a real sense of pride in their school. And, I would be remiss in not mentioning my colleagues – teaching and non-teaching – who have been wonderfully supportive and professional in these opening weeks. I would, in these lines, like to congratulate the staff for their dedication in aiming for the very best we can in support of every child and young person. Indeed, it has been heartening to hear of the benefits already being reaped of our new approach to form tutoring whereby every child will be having regular 1-1 mentoring conversations with their Form Tutors in an effort to maintain oversight on their progress as well as to allow opportunities to share concerns or clarify targets for the coming weeks and months. I would also like to thank our newly appointed Principal, Mr Peter McMurray, for his invaluable support along with a wealth of experience and insight. We are both excited and driven to build further on the school's strengths in a way that unlocks the potential of all of our students as academically successful and resilient future leaders.

This newsletter, of course, also allows me to convey to you some of the past months' activity in school. Inevitably, the news below is not exhaustive, but it will allow you to enjoy a flavour of the past month of Senior School life:

### Greek creative writing success!



First of all, impressive news from the Greek Department, with the success of our students as creative writers. Our students, Iliana Skordi in Year 10 and Christophoros Kadis from Year 9, were awarded the first prize in the short story competition, In memory of the teacher Fotini Ioannidou – Polyviou, organised by the Cyprus Board on Books for Young People (CYBBY). Students were honoured and received their awards at a ceremony that took place at the Strovolos Municipality's Cultural Centre. Iliana's story "Το θυμωμένο ποτάμι" (The Angry River) and Christophoros's story, "Ειρήνη τον καιρό του πολέμου" (Peace while at War) were guided and supported by their Greek teachers. Our warmest congratulations to Iliana and Christophoros! And well done to their Teachers, Ms Demetra Thrasyvoulou, Ms Anna Kyza and Ms Lysimachi Vasiliou

### The Sports School – Up and running!

Sports have always been at the heart of Senior School activity and it is, therefore, appropriate that we make reference to the Sports School which has started successfully with a number of



students - seven Year 7, two Year 8 and one Year 9 - who are all following a rigorous training programme in Tennis and Track and Field that will prepare them for upcoming tournaments. Both students and coaches are enthusiastic in working towards achieving outstanding results. Indeed, it has been encouraging to witness the commitment of our young sports people with their early arrivals at school and their self-discipline in maintaining a rigorous regime of training and practice before re-joining their classes. Well done to all!

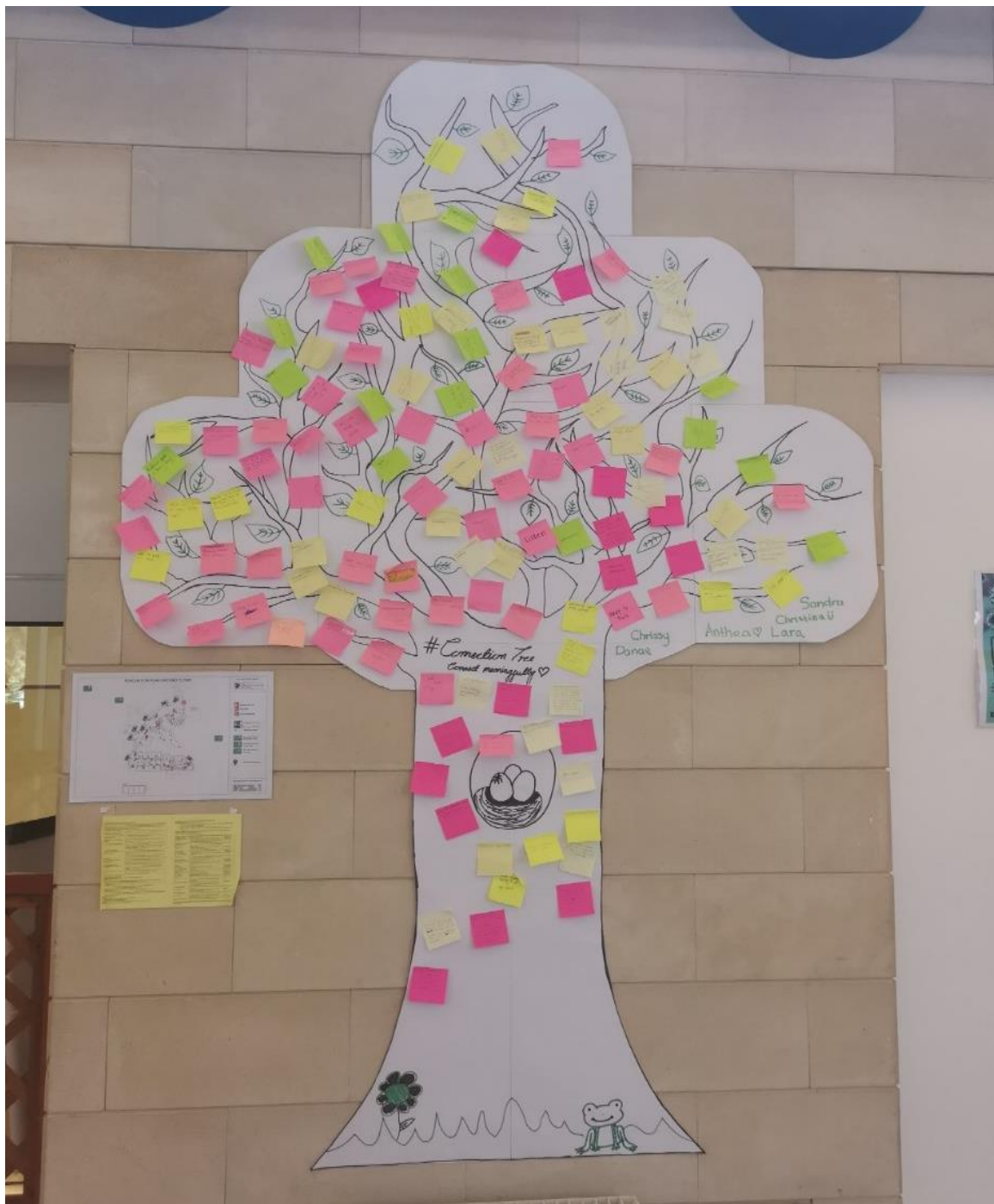
#### Young People's Mental Health – Building resilience

One of our main focuses this past month has been on developing mental health within the theme of 'connecting meaningfully'. In light of the difficulties faced by so many young people around the world during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Pastoral Team have been delivering assemblies on the ways we can connect with each other both in and out of school. Other areas of focus have included mental health awareness and overall wellbeing for young people and ideas related to self-care, where and how to seek support, planning physical, emotional, social and practical activities, dealing with stress and anxiety. The main aims are clearly to generate a greater sense of awareness as well as what to look out for in both themselves and others in the community who may need our support. Ultimately, we hope to engage our students even further in this important area of concern but also to maintain the matter of emotional and mental wellbeing as a constant in school life with a view to enabling our young people to have confidence in moving forward and to understand and adopt the tools they will need to develop resilience and overall mental health along with care for others both now and in their future lives. Many thanks to all Form Tutors, Heads of Year/KS Leaders and our School Psychologist, Ms Artemis Theophanous for their hard work in supporting this strategy.



In addition to the above, it is also important to mention our Year 12 students, Lara Baghdjian, Christina Orphanidi, Danae Aletra, Chrysi Mavromati and Anthea Damali and their much appreciated contributions. These students volunteered to prepare and design a display for the *Connection tree* as part of an initiative put forward by Ms. Theophanous, for **Youth Mental Health Day**. This display is related to the theme mentioned above, "Connect meaningfully". It

has gone up in a location where students from all year groups are able to share their messages or thoughts on *Post-it* notes prepared during form time.



*The Connecting Meaningfully tree now carpeted with positive post-it messages!*



*Some of our ESL Greek students getting to grips with their Greek vocab!*

#### Other news:

Already this term we have been hosting parent meetings and events. The New Parents evening was organised early in the term where we were able to present to our Year 7 parents and carers the essentials regarding expectations and advice for their children as they begin their Senior School careers. Key Stage 4 parents were able to attend an event at school to gain some insight into the challenges of Year 10 and 11 as their children embark on IGCSE courses or, in the case of Year 11, begin the rapid approach to completion of courses and readiness for Mocks in January and public exams next summer.

We were also delighted to communicate with parents regarding an exciting collaboration with the University of Cyprus. Our Year 8 students will have the opportunity to join the Multipliers Project where they will be part of a real-life scientific research project and will interact with science professionals as well as carrying out data collection. Via open community events, they will share their findings and publicly reflect on implications for the local community and European society as a whole. Year 8s who volunteer to join the Multipliers Project will be involved in laboratory activities, field-trips to laboratories and science-related institutions to interact with experts, science outreach and communication activities. The project is funded by the Horizon H2020 programme of the European Union. Many thanks to Ms Iordanou for leading this initiative.

Our school's Mathematics Department has been actively participating in the International Mathematics and Science Competition "Euromath - Euroscience" for the past two years with great success.

In 2021, Elisaveta Bobrova (Y12), Carolina Pastella (Y11) and Josephina Pastella (Y11), managed to win second place in the Euromath Presentation Competition making us all very proud!!



In 2022, Iliana Skordi (Y9), Evdokia Deftera (Y9), Angelos Koutentakis (Y9) and Nestoras Panagiotou Ioannou (Y9), managed to win first place in the Euroscience Presentation competition and Stephanos Artemis (Y8) managed to win first place as well in the Euromath Presentation Competition!!

Much appreciation to their Mathematics Teachers, Ms. Niki Demetriou and Mr. Nikos Papadopoulos for their support and guidance.



For expressions of interest in this year's competition or for any further information that you may require, please contact Mr. Nikos Papadopoulos at [npapadopoulos@tjss.ac.cy](mailto:npapadopoulos@tjss.ac.cy)

Great news from Accounting. All of our Y10 students who took the LCCI Level 1 – Certificate in book-keeping exams last June managed to pass with some impressive results. Congrats to Rodothea Galazi, Andreas Diakopoulos, Giannis Stylianou, Kyriakos Pelekanos and their teacher, Mr. Nicolas Demetriou

I am happy to note that our School Planners have finally arrived after an unspecified delay! Many thanks to our own Danae Panayiotou (Y13) who designed this year's Planner!

Our art teacher, Ms Marion Paschali, will be having her work exhibited at Gloria Gallery (October 5-21). Opening of the exhibition is on October 5<sup>th</sup> at 7.30pm. We hope you can attend in support of our teaching colleague.

Microsoft Schools:

We are delighted to report that for the 5<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, our school has been formally designated a Microsoft Showcase school. This means that we are officially recognized as making real contributions to transform education through the use of technology with the aim of preparing our students for the future by equipping them with the skills they will need to

succeed in this data and electronic driven world. 60 Microsoft Certified Educators and 17 Microsoft Innovative Educator Expert make our school a flag bearer in Cyprus in support of both local and international schools in the development of their own education transformation journey. A great achievement, and well done to Mr Paphitis for his leadership on this.



*Year 13's banner to mark their final year...The road is long...*

And finally...A renovated canteen, new lockers (generously donated by the Koulermos family) and a brand new library facility have significantly enhanced the provision for our students! Of course, we are always seeking ways to further develop and improve and look forward to enhancing the school's facilities that will make real differences to both the environment and the amenities enjoyed by our students.

Wishing you all a productive and safe academic year.

*Y. Georgiou*

*Senior School Headteacher*