



Newsletter

February 2021

Dear Parent and Carers

Firstly, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you and your family continued good health through this difficult period. Although restriction continue to be in place, it has been a busy time at the school.



This week ends a cold snowy term and with that, come changes in the land and the farm. The farm is an essential part of our curriculum, offering learning and work opportunities to students, RISE, and staff. Working together outside in caring for the land and animals has been key in bringing us together through these difficult COVID times.

We have enjoyed the new calves born in the summer, and caring for the kids and lambs has been part of our daily routine. When the school reopened in September, the students were able to look after the animals at the school site (pigs, hens, goats and lambs) and RISE looked after

the other animals at the Farm site (goats, hens, sheep and cattle). Once the winter came again, the barn has been a busy and warm place, especially during this last cold spell.

This winter the weather has been particularly challenging, always very wet, with quite a few floods in the lower fields and paddocks. The chickens are also currently in a 'lockdown' in a large covered area due to an outbreak of Avian Flu, but are still part of our daily timetable and routines. We hope that restrictions are likely to be lifted sometime around mid-March, so hopefully not so long from now.

As part of our School Improvement Plan, we have been working on a plan to redesign and develop the animal areas at the school site, so that the animals are at the centre of the site and the centre of the curriculum. We are working together with farm managers from the other Trust schools in Bristol, Stourbrige and Sheffield in further developing our land, animal and craft curriculum.

Staff Changes

As the school develops and grows we are also developing and growing our staff team. We would like to say a warm welcome to Alistair Burtt, who will be joining our teaching team in April. Alistair has a wealth of teaching experience and has worked in a number of schools.

Alistair has written a short introduction for our newsletter:

'I am really looking forward to coming to work at Clervaux. I walked past it when out walking early on after my return to the North-East of England. I was immediately struck by the landscape that I encountered, a very familiar landscape, one that was similar to the biodynamic farms of Plawhatch

and Tablehurst near Forest Row in Sussex where I had been working for the previous eight years at Michael Hall Steiner School. I taught Geography and History there, as my principal subjects, but was involved in a great deal more.

My years have taken me to university to study Geography, train as a teacher and go to work in Nigeria to teach with VSO (Voluntary Service Overseas). I went for two years but came back nearly seven years later as I took a job as field officer with VSO, first in Nigeria and then in The Gambia.

My work took me to India, Pakistan and Nepal. Since 2019 I have been working at Priory Hurworth House.

I feel myself to have been enormously privileged to work in very interesting areas of activity and to travel to many parts of the world. For me every day is a lesson - I love learning and I love to work with others to help them learn.'

We also welcome Lucy O'Neill to our teaching team, who will be taking on classroom responsibilities. Lucy is a qualified teacher and has been working within the Trust since November 2020.

Sadly, we will be saying goodbye to two of our teachers. Sally Adams and Cat D'Arcy will be leaving the Trust at the end of term, we thank them for their time and dedication to Clervaux and wish them all the best with their future endeavours.

This term we have also had confirmation that a number of students have achieved OCN qualifications. These are the first formal qualifications achieved at Clervaux, which is a great achievement. We hope to continue to offer the young people at Clervaux a range of opportunities, and this is a positive outcome of our land and craft-based curriculum.



Our new pottery tutor and blacksmith have settled extremely well into the school, working with the pupils and students on a number of projects and linking these into the maths, English and science curriculum. We hope to be able to display the craft work for parents to see when COVID restrictions allow.

Covid - 19

The School continues to remain open throughout the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, and has a number of protocols in place to ensure our pupils/ students can continue to learn in a safe, responsible environment. Whilst maintaining these strict safety protocols, the School also has in place policies and procedures for the testing of both pupils/ students and staff, including those in our residential houses.

For any other queries regarding our policies and procedures please contact the school on 01325 729860 or by emailing enquiries@clervaux.org.uk

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all stakeholders a restful break and I look forward to seeing all learners at the start of next term on Monday 15th March.

Rob Grice

Interim Head Teacher, Clervaux Garden School