

Marsh Mail

We ended the summer term with glorious weather and, as per tradition, sports day. This was the final inter-house competition with existing houses and Mandela was victorious. It was a poignant result for Mr Clarke, Head of House, on his last day at LVC.

There are two schools of thought in regards to competitive events such as this: it is the taking part rather than the winning that counts, and that winning is the only thing that counts. Like many things in life, it is arguably a combination of both.

Whilst the fulfilment of achieving first place is the ultimate goal of any competitive process, as England's performance in the World Cup demonstrated, there are many other values and virtues that are tested and demonstrated through team pursuit. Observing tutees support each other, persevere and commit to activities that stretched them beyond their comfort zones showed great community spirit.

As I write this, Year 11s await the outcomes of their GCSE examinations, a culmination of their learning and study during five years of secondary education. While they will reflect the achievements of individuals, the way in which the grades (9-1 across all subjects this year) are awarded depends on the relative performance of all candidates nationally entered for the qualifications. Students' positioning on the bell curve of results will determine whether they obtain a pass (grade 4), a strong pass (grade 5) or somewhere above or below these nationally prescribed benchmarks.

The release of Scottish exam results earlier in August sparked a flurry of social media activity with celebrities and past students sharing the successes that they achieved despite failing at school and consoling school leavers that exam results do not define you. While the sentiment of such messages is reassuring and sound, there is a risk that they serve to demean the efforts of our students and school staff that work hard to achieve the best possible educational outcomes.

Ultimately both credentials and character create opportunities and open doors in the future. I wish our outgoing students all the best for their next steps and future happiness.

Helena Marsh