



The Thomas Aveling News



December 2003



Dear Parents

As we approach the Christmas holidays I know both students and staff are looking forward to a well-earned break. We have suffered from considerable bouts of sickness during the second half of term and we are grateful to the many staff who have struggled in to teach when less than 100% fit. This has nevertheless been another very successful term and the continued confidence and contribution of parents is much appreciated.

I am pleased to report a number of successful events during the term.

- Our new **Recording Studio** was opened by **Rose Collinson**, Director of Education for Medway, in the presence of guests, governors and student representatives. It has already proved a popular and well-used resource that will benefit students and the community for years to come.
- The **Presentation of Certificates Evening** on Wednesday 3rd December was a resounding success. Our guest speaker **Mr Richard Dunnill**, reflected upon the vital role of parents and gave a lively and interesting speech. It was a delight to see so many students receive their certificates and awards and we were especially pleased to welcome back students who have either moved onto university or who have entered employment. The evening was also attended by representatives of the business community, past members of staff and friends of the school. It was the first official function for our newly elected Chair of Governors **Mr Dave Stoddard**, who presided over the evening's events. We wish him well in this important new role.
- The school has been awarded the **NAACE quality mark for excellence in ICT**. We are one of only half a dozen schools nationally to receive this award and offer our congratulations to **Mrs Hellyer** and her team for their hard work.

The Performing and Creative Arts Faculty have supported students in our annual Christmas performance: **Dracula Spectacular**, performed in the penultimate week of term. We would like to congratulate all students and staff involved.

Planning for Bad Weather



I would like to ask you to make plans for your children in the event of extreme bad weather. Please always assume that the school will remain open unless informed by the school or through messages on Radio Kent. It is very important that you make clear to your child what to do should the school be forced to close.

End of Term Arrangements

As is usual, on the last day of term, **Friday 19th December 2003**, we shall be extending morning school until 1.15 pm. Years 10-13 will be dismissed for the Christmas holidays at 1.10 pm and Years 7-9 at 1.15 pm. Students may remain in school for lunch if they wish.

Students should return to school on Monday 5th January 2004.

May I take this opportunity to wish everyone a peaceful Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Mr Richard Hart
Headteacher



Spring Term Dates

Monday 5th January 2004:

All students return to school (with exception of Year 11 students on study leave)

Friday 20th February:

Staff Development Day –

Students should not attend school.

Monday 23rd February –

Friday 27th February (inclusive)

Half-Term Week

Wednesday 7th April

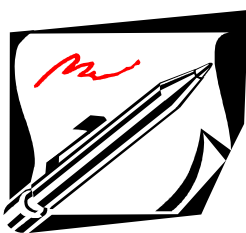
Last Day of Spring Term

Thurs 8th April – Fri 23rd April (inclusive)

Easter Holidays

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Mock Examinations for Year 11

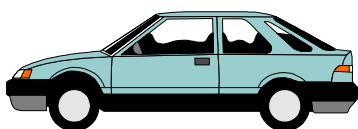


Year 11 will return in the New Year to sit their mock examinations. Students need only attend if they have an examination, otherwise they may remain at home to study.

Year 11 Study Leave will be from **Monday 5th January 2004 until Friday 16th January 2004** and students will return to normal school timetable on **Monday 19th January 2004**. All students will have a copy of their timetable for the mock examinations. For those students who would prefer to study in school, rooms will be made available. Years 12 and 13 do not have study leave and will follow normal timetable.

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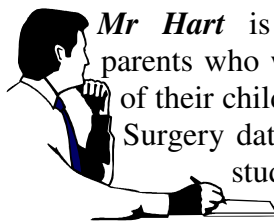
Health & Safety



We continue to be concerned by the potential risk caused by parents driving cars onto the school site at the end of the day. To improve the situation the school gates will be closed to all traffic from 2.50 – 3.05 every day.

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Headteacher Surgery: Meetings with Parents



Mr Hart is available to meet with parents who wish to discuss any aspect of their child's education. Headteacher Surgery dates are as published in the student calendar.

Please contact *Mrs Akrill* if you wish to make an appointment.

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Parent Governor Vacancy

We have one vacancy for a Parent Governor. If any parent would like to take on this important role they should contact *Mr Hart* at the school for an informal discussion. The role does not require any formal qualifications and anyone who can spare just a few hours per term to support the school in this way would be most welcome.

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Applications for Sixth Form

We have a wider choice of courses than ever and the largest sixth form in the school's history. Year 11 students who intend to apply are urged to do so promptly and should see *Mrs Whelan* if they are unsure. The number of courses we run is determined by student interest and so it is important to apply early to avoid disappointment.

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School Uniform/Jewellery

Please ensure that your child comes to school in the correct uniform. We have kept this straight forward, even down to the number of stripes to be visible on the tie ! (5). Please note that visible body piercing (eyebrow/nose) is forbidden and that earrings should be restricted to a single stud worn in the lobe. Thank you for your co-operation in this matter.



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Prefects' Bowling

As a thank-you for the Prefects' much appreciated hard work, a bowling session was arranged for mid-November. There was an excellent turn out this year, with everybody getting two games.

Despite a range of styles from the almost professional to the most unusual, there was a surprisingly high strike rate! The 'slowest bowling rate' competition was hotly pursued by at least two teams – I thought they would never finish at one point!! Most importantly, all had a most enjoyable early evening.



Thanks to the professionals who supported the group and provided the outstanding example of how to bowl for the evening - *Ms Mawn*, and *Mr Cleave*!

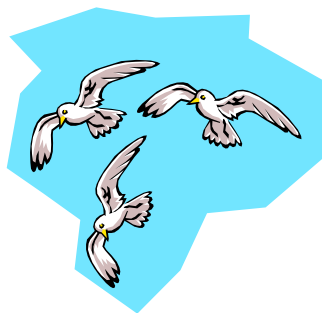
Well done to all, and once again, a big thank-you to the prefects.

Mr T W Scott
Assistant Headteacher

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Sixth Form Textiles Workshop

The Sixth Form A Level Textiles students travelled to Gillingham Library to meet *Anna Falcini*, where she was holding an exhibition of her current work. Anna is a textile artist and designer who has been working in the local area. She introduced herself and invited us to explore her exhibition called '*Flight and Myth*'. We evaluated her work, and it transpired we had different views about it. I found Anna's work really inspiring. Her exhibition included photography, video and sound effects, making it exciting and interesting. Anna explained the ideas behind her work, describing how she found Cliffe's



landscape strange. She also talked about how she wanted to introduce the theme of flight as the birds are a significant part of the environment.

Anna then took us to Cliffe marshes, so we could gather our own ideas. We collected driftwood and other objects from around the Cliffe area to use within our work.

Following this, we talked in groups and gathered our views and ideas together. We began designing and making our final pieces using objects we had found, and applying previously learnt skills and techniques such as free machining and silk painting.



The two days working with Anna were inspiring and enjoyable. It was good to work with an artist and study outside school within the local environment.

Stacey McCormack
Year 13

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Art and Design Department Christmas Card Competition



Year 9 entered the spirit of Christmas as they prepared designs for the annual Christmas Card Competition. After careful deliberation the panel of judges decided the winning entry was that of *Michael Edney 9D*, followed closely by joint runners up, *Kerrie Maguire 9A*, and *Joshua Courtney 9A*.



The winning entry showed a mature idea, clearly influenced by the work of the futurist artists. It depicted the sound of Christmas bells.

All winners will receive Certificates of Achievement and prizes of art materials. This will encourage the young artists to continue developing their talents, during the rest of Key Stage 3 and beyond.

Miss A Jones
Head of Art and Design

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Poetry Competitions

We are delighted to hear that 50 of our students have been successful in a local poetry competition and will have their poems published in a local anthology of poems in the Spring.



We have also held our own internal poetry competition in school. Many pupils worked hard in their own time to draft their own poems based on work they had been doing in English. Our Librarian and pupils who help in the library judged the poems.

First Prize Winners receive a £5 book token.

Mrs K Esland
Head of Communication Faculty

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PSHE – Talk to the Sixth Form on Drugs

During PSE, the Sixth Form were given a talk about the consequences of using different drugs, the media and the life long dangers. PC Spreadbridge illustrated this with examples of real-life situations that took place in the Medway Towns.



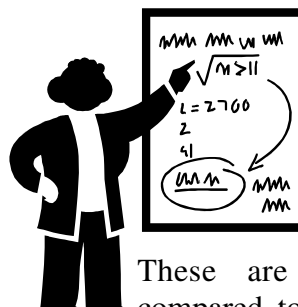
He demonstrated that not only do drugs affect you as an individual, but family members too. Although he deals with drugs in his job, it still concerns him and he finds it upsetting.

Hayley Oddy

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Year 11 Science Revision Classes

For all interested students, revision classes will be held after school (up to 4.00 pm) on a Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. They will start after the mocks and continue right through until study leave. They are not compulsory and you do not have to attend all sessions, but you are most welcome.



Revision booklets can also be purchased through the Science Department at a cost of £2.50 (payment with order please).

These are at a reduced rate compared to retail outlets. If you are thinking of purchasing them yourself, please make sure you buy the AQA syllabus books.

Have an enjoyable and productive Christmas and Good Luck in the mocks.

Mr T Goodwin
Head of Science & Technology Faculty