



# The Thomas Aveling News

December 2004



Dear Parents

As we fast approach the Christmas holidays I know both students and staff are looking forward to a well earned break. Despite a number of bouts of sickness, attendance rates for pupils have risen to 94%, this is a record high and we are grateful to parents for their continuing support in ensuring that children attend school regularly.

We say goodbye to **Mr Terry Scott** at Christmas after eight years of outstanding service as he moves to Deputy Headship at The Hayes School. We wish him every success in this new role. I am able to announce that **Mr Tom Neave** has been appointed to the leadership team of the school, with effect from April 2005.

I am pleased to record a number of successful developments and events during the term.

- o Our new Fitness Suite was opened for use earlier in the term and we have been pleased to see so many students in the upper part of the school make use of this top quality facility.
- o The Thomas Aveling School and Community Library has now been in operation for over three months and has been much appreciated by pupils and community members. Lending figures have risen by 300% during this time.
- o Our partnerships with local schools continue to strengthen. We are working closely with four Rochester and Walderslade secondary schools to offer a broader range of sixth form courses. Over the next year we will be consulting parents and staff to harmonise timetable arrangements so that students can easily move between our schools. We have been pleased to extend our joint work with Warren Wood Primary School and last week took delivery of a new minibus, to be used by both schools.
- o The school production "**The Accidental Death of an Anarchist**" was ambitious and challenging, extending both actors and the production team. Students and staff are to be congratulated for the quality of their performance. This production has coincided with our re-designation bid for Artsmark status and demonstrates our continuing commitment to supporting the arts.

Our annual **Presentation of Certificates Evening** takes place on **Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> December**. Our guest of honour is **Mr Peter Whistler**, Headteacher of Warren Wood School. The evening is an opportunity to award examination certificates and reward both excellence and endeavour over the past year.

## END OF TERM ARRANGEMENTS

As is usual, on the last day of term, **Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> December 2004**, 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 Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2005.**



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.

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

**Mr Richard Hart**  
**Headteacher**

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### SPRING TERM DATES

**Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2005**

Staff Development Day –  
Students should not attend school.

**Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2005**

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

**Monday 14<sup>th</sup> February - Friday 18<sup>th</sup> February** (inclusive) Half-Term Week

**Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> March**

Last Day of Spring Term

**Thurs 24<sup>th</sup> March – Friday 8<sup>th</sup> April** (inclusive) Easter Holidays

**Monday 11th April**

First Day of Summer Term

Please note that **Friday 14<sup>th</sup> January** will be an Academic Review Day for Parents of students in Years 7–10. Parents will be invited with students to examine and review books and have a discussion with your child's tutor.



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 **Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> January to Friday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2005** inclusive and students will return to normal school timetable on **Monday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2005**. 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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### APPLICATIONS FOR SIXTH FORM

The Sixth Form Opening Evening is on **Wednesday 19th January 2005** from 7 - 9 pm. 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** or **Mr Smith** if they need advice. The number of courses we run is determined by student interest, so it is important to apply early to avoid disappointment.

**Mrs S Whelan**  
**Director of Sixth Form Studies**

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### CHILDLINE – MOBILE PHONE AMNESTY

With this newsletter, you will find a letter from **ChildLine** from which you will see that The Thomas Aveling School is supporting their campaign to raise funds by asking students/parents to donate their unwanted mobile phones.

We have chosen the month of **January** to support this very worthy cause in the hope that following the Christmas period, any unwanted mobile phones can be donated. It is, however, important that every donated phone is **accompanied by a parental signature**, and the slip at the bottom of the

ChildLine letter should be completed and placed, with the phone, in an envelope which should be clearly marked "Childline Phone".

Any child who brings an unwanted phone to school should bring it to the **main school reception** (not student services) in order that it can be safely stored until collected by ChildLine.



Thank you in anticipation for your support.

**Richard Hart**  
**Headteacher**

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**YEAR 9 SUB PREFECTS**

One of the successes of the split lunch trial has been the introduction of Year 9 sub prefects. The interest and commitment from Year 9 has been outstanding. Over 70 Year 9 students applied to become sub prefects, volunteering to give up their own lunchtimes to help supervise the younger students. The applicants were short listed, and interviews were held with the Head Boy and Head Girl.



Very professional responses were given by the students, frequently expressing a wish to help the school and to take on more responsibility. A team of 40 sub prefects has been selected, and their approach to their new roles has been superb. The management and supervision of the duties has been efficiently co-ordinated and supervised by team leaders **Alastair Hutton** and **Kayleigh Turner**, supported by deputy team leader **Marie Ward**.

**Mrs Dodsworth** (Head of Year 9) and I are very pleased to be managing such a pro-active year group.

**Mrs B Brocklehurst**  
**Assistant Headteacher**

The Ironbridge trip was very good because of the places we went to. The museum called Enginuity was my favourite and we also went to a china museum, which was very fascinating too. We got to make a face out of clay. We went to a Victorian town, which was very good too. You could ride a horse which was 6d or 50p. They had an old sweet shop, which was very small. I would give the trip 10 out of 10 because it was so good.

**Jade Minchen 9G**

We learnt about how china was made, what equipment they used and what temperature it was fired at. We went to an Enginuity museum where we went around and found out about all types of engineering and how it is all done. We walked around a Victorian town and watched how iron was made. We saw a Victorian school where the children walked in a line of boys and a line of girls. We found out what life was like in the Victorian town.



**Daniel Johnston 9G**

Ironbridge was a really fun experience for me. I enjoyed the whole trip itself and would advise all upcoming Year 8s to apply to go on it. The trip was educational and exciting, the museums were good and taught us a lot. The Youth Hostel was very good and we all enjoyed staying there. The food was good too.

**Adiel Onumah 9G**

My favourite part of the trip was Blists Hill, a typical Victorian town with the Victorian buildings and smells. All of the people dressed up to suit what their role was in the village. There was everything from pubs to schools, funfairs to farms. It was an extremely enjoyable experience. I would rate this trip 10 out of 10 and definitely go again.

## WAR POETRY COMPETITION

**Amardeep Basi** in 9L won the recent Royal Engineers Museum War Poetry Competition. He visited their special First World War exhibition on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> November and received a book of War Poetry. He also gave a reading of his poem and an interview to Radio Kent which was heard on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> November as part of their broadcast for Remembrance Sunday. A book of Year 9 war poetry is on display in the reception area. Amardeep's poem is printed below.

**Mrs K Esland**  
**Head of Communications Faculty**

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### ***In a World That Once Was ...***

*The cry of orphaned children  
Echoes round my head.  
Another father dies today  
As a family mourn their  
dead.*

*The dirty streets are deserted,  
A stray dog wanders past.  
A distant sound of gunfire,  
The roar of mortar blast.*

*The lonely tears of sadness.  
A shell was once a home.  
A child now lives in poverty,  
Screams, "Please leave me alone!"*

*Sometime in the future,  
I hope it won't be long,  
We will live in peace and harmony  
And learn to get along.*

**Amardeep Basi 9L**

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## SCHOOL COUNCIL

Our school council is made up of two representatives from each year group. These students had a chance to take part in

two days training at the Arethusa Venture Centre in Upnor. The students that took part learnt a lot of useful skills and learnt how to work successfully in teams of people who they do not normally associate with. I myself can say that the trip was extremely good fun and I learnt a lot from it and about myself. I would like to say a massive thank you to Mrs Dodsworth for arranging the trip.

I have also recently become a member of the Medway Youth Parliament, as a representative for The Thomas Aveling School. I have been on a weekend trip where I learnt different ways to make the school a better place. I completed activities, which will help me to work with others in groups. I would like to thank members of staff for this opportunity.

**Chloe Slater 11T**

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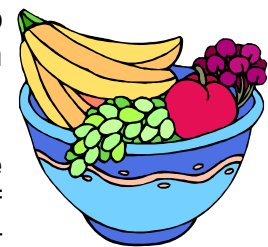
## HEALTHY SCHOOLS & CITIZENSHIP

So far this year, in Health and Social Care, we have been studying stress, well-being and exercise. We are now producing a project to find out how healthy a person's well-being is. The two teachers that we have asked to help us with this course are **Mr Martin and Miss Mawn**. The whole point of this course is to get people to eat more healthily, such as the five portions of fruit and vegetables a day, and also to drink 2 litres of water daily. This also includes more frequent exercise.

**Kerry Hamill 10I**  
**Bianca Austin 10I**

The Year 10 Council representatives had a meeting recently with the Head Chef **Peter Sellis** to discuss issues in the canteen. We raised different views about the food in the canteen and we had a heated debate. We made our views heard and the chef is going to take them into consideration when designing menus.

We did suggest that we wanted a wider selection of food such as 'junk food' but



we were informed that there has to be a balanced diet on offer in schools as instructed by the government. This is why we have chips only once a week. Terrible I know, but it's all for a good reason. So eat well and use the canteen more and there will be some more interesting things on the menu coming up. It will be worth your while!

**Paul Sherwood 10L**  
**Reece Holmes 10G**

In PSHE we have been looking at how we can keep really healthy and fit. We have been making leaflets and posters about smoking – which can harm us and others around us. **Mrs Taylor** is going to judge the leaflets that we have made.



**Shantel Jarrett 7M**

In PSHE we have been learning about living a healthy lifestyle. We have applied our knowledge to decide that we must exercise daily and take in the right amount of fruit and vegetables to keep in shape. We also know the full dangers of smoking and how it can harm you and others around you. We have also made leaflets and posters on these subjects.

**Matthew Jeffreys 7M**

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### ROYAL MARINES TRAINING

In PSHE recently, Years 10 and 11 were given the opportunity to do a training session with the Royal Marines to see what kind of activities they have to do. I volunteered and when the time came I didn't think it would be that hard. First of all we had to jog around the field and that was not too hard. Then they took us back to the gym where they had



set up a circuits course for us. We had to pull ourselves along a pole; pull our legs up on a rope; do wide arm push-ups with benches; sit-ups and over arm pull-ups. We

had to go around the course twice with a very short time for each activity. Then we had to do it all over again! By the time we had finished, we were very tired and didn't feel like walking ever again! It was really good and I would love to be a marine because it was so much fun.

**Bill Fleming 11L**

Recently we volunteered to do some circuit training with the Royal Marines. It involved some warm-ups outside which were tough but fun. We all enjoyed ourselves and met some people who did this for their job.

**Ian Routledge 11G**  
**Danny O'Connell 11G**  
**Chris Perryman 11G**

The chance to train with the marines seemed too good to miss ...

*Running around, out of breath.  
Must have a rest.  
Can't stop now we're running  
Down to the end of the field and back.  
Hurry back indoors, up to the gym now.  
Oh my, what have we got ourselves into?  
More puffing and panting,  
More muscles throbbing.  
When can we stop?  
Round again once more.  
Push-ups, press-ups,  
Pole climbing, rope climbing  
Anything else before we  
collapse onto the floor?  
We never knew how unfit we all were,  
But now we know we will  
do the exercises every day ...  
... Well maybe!*

**Natasha van der Tak 11L**

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### PREFECTS' BOWLING

This year's bowling night once again generated a vast range of styles, skill levels and excuses – 'eating crisps' being one of the most outlandish explanations for a short series of poor balls I think I've ever heard! Failure to let go of the ball, resulting in drops

rather than glides, also appeared more common this year; as did the number of times the ball hit the end barriers before they had lifted – we must learn to be a little more patient!



Despite this, good skills did show through, with us all having a most enjoyable time. There was an excellent turn out again this year, with everybody playing two games and sampling some light refreshments, including those 'tricky' crisps.

Thanks to **Ms Job, Mr Moss** and **Ms Randall** who supported the event not just with their bowling talent, but also their good humour and willingness to bowl, at times, without the use of barriers. Ms Job is particularly pleased at the result of her game with Ian!! I'm also pleased that my 'wave dancing' was received so well!

Well done to all, and once again, a big thank-you to the prefects for their hard work and professionalism in carrying out their duties. They have always been, over the years, a most rewarding and pleasant group of individuals with whom I have enjoyed working and socialising.

I wish you all great success and good fortune in the future.

**Mr T W Scott**  
**Assistant Headteacher**

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### CERAMIC TILE MURAL

As part of an "Out Of Hours Learning" activity a committed group of Year 7 students has been designing and making a ceramic tile mural to be displayed in the science concourse. The students' design was inspired by studying images from "under the microscope". Along with images of cell structures it also includes a



dissected frog and a very small skateboarder! All of the tiles have been produced; fingers crossed none go 'pop' in the kiln! The students are looking forward to glazing the tiles and seeing their work on display in the New Year.



**Mrs A Wilford**  
**Art Department**

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### CHILDREN IN NEED



Congratulations to **Ms S Seales**, Art Technician, who raised **£490** for Children in Need by having her hair shaved short!

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### PARENT GOVERNOR

We currently have one vacancy for a Parent Governor. Any parent of a current student would be most welcome to join the Governing Body. If interested, please contact Mr Hart at the



### EXAMINATION INVIGILATOR VACANCIES

We are seeking a number of parents/friends to act as **paid** Invigilators in our school examinations. Training will be provided.

If interested, please contact  
**Mrs D Van der Tak**,  
the Examinations Officer,  
on **01634 823127**  
for more information.

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**Working and Learning Together for Success**