

News *letter*



ISSUE NUMBER 110 FEBRUARY 2011



It is really great to have got through a term without being interrupted by the weather! It has meant that students have had the chance to catch up with work missed through the enforced break and are now on track again to meet the targets set for them at Academic Tutoring Day.

It seems that we don't have a term anymore in school where exams are not taking place. This term has seen our Sixth Form take many Advanced Level exams and results for these are out in March. We also received results for our Year 11 English Exams and I was really pleased to see that already, with five months to go, we have more students passing English with a grade C or higher than we have ever had before. Congratulations to those students and a big thank you to all of the English staff who prepared them so well.

We are really pleased with the response we have had from our current Year 11, as well as many Year 11s from other local schools, who have applied and been interviewed for places in our Sixth Form from September 2011. In being interviewed for a place in the Sixth Form, not only is a student's academic record looked at, but also their behavioural record. If a student has disrupted the learning of others or has shown a disregard for school rules, then they will not be offered a place – it is a privilege not a right to stay on. It is never too late for students to change their attitude or behaviour and be considered for a place. We hope to replicate the great success of last year's Year 11, all of whom found places in education, training or employment – the only school in Medway to achieve this.

Over the last couple of months, Mr Minchin, together with a group of staff and students, has been looking at the prospect of us moving to a Vertical Tutoring system within the school. This is where students from different year groups are in the same tutor group to share their experiences, help with advice and provide a feeling of family within the group – an extension of the House system which has been so successful over the last two years. If you wish to find out more and contribute to the debate, please watch out for a letter inviting you to a meeting to hear more about this plan and to add your views.

Recently we have had a crackdown on student uniform to ensure that the very high standards we expect of our students are maintained. I am really pleased that the vast majority of them dress and behave appropriately every

day. Just a reminder for the very few that, if not properly dressed, they will either spend a day in the zone or be sent home to change. We appreciate your help in making sure that your sons and daughters leave your home in full school uniform, with minimal or no make up on and certainly no nail varnish.

Finally, many of our Year 11 and 10 students will have science exams on their return to school after the break – some time spent revising during the holidays will pay dividends in improving grades and earning success. I wish them well and look forward to seeing their outstanding results later in the year.



Paul Jackson
Headteacher

PARENTS' FORUM

Parents/Carers are cordially invited to attend the next Headteacher's Parents' Forum on:

**Wednesday 2nd March 2011
6.00 pm until 7.00 pm**

We have listened to your views with regard to the most convenient time for parents/carers to attend and hope that as many of you as possible will be able to come along, join in discussion, and help review key policy and practice on this important topic.

If you would like to attend and to assist us with seating arrangements, please contact Mrs Akrill at the school on 01634-844809 or e-mail* yakrill@thomasaveling.co.uk

*(please mark your subject header "Parents Forum")

IMPORTANT TERM DATES

Mon 28th Feb	Start of Term 4 (Week A)
Thur 8th Apr	End of Term 4
Fri 22nd Apr	GOOD FRIDAY
Mon 25th Apr	EASTER MONDAY
Tues 26th Apr	Start of Term 5 (Week A)
Fri 29th Apr	ROYAL WEDDING
Mon 2nd May	BANK HOLIDAY
Fri 27th May	End of Term 5
Mon 6th Jun	Start of Term 6 (Week B)
Fri 1st Jul	Staff training day
Fri 22nd Jul	End of Term 6

YEAR 8 OPTIONS EVENING

THURSDAY 3rd MARCH 2011

6TH FORM PARENTS' EVENING

THURSDAY 17th MARCH 2011

YEAR 10 PARENTS' EVENING

WEDNESDAY 30th MARCH 2011

HEADTEACHER SURGERY DATES

WEDNESDAY 30th MARCH 2011
From 3.00 pm – by appointment only



LET'S STOP BULLYING! ADVICE FOR PARENTS & FAMILIES

Pointers to a bullying problem

Your child may display one or more of the following:-

- Becoming quiet and withdrawn
- Anxiety
- Insomnia
- Doing less well at schoolwork
- Aggression with siblings
- Wanting to avoid leaving the house
- Being moody and bad tempered
- Falling out with previously good friends
- "Losing" dinner money
- Asking for stolen possessions to be replaced
- Torn clothes
- Coming home with cuts and bruises

The best advice as a parent is to trust your instincts.

If you are worried discuss your worries openly and honestly with your child.

ACTION POINTS

If you establish that your child may be a victim of bullying at The Thomas Aveling School in the first instance you should contact his/her appropriate Year Team Leader by telephone on 01634-844809 or email your concerns to www.bullying@thomasaveling.co.uk.

You will be contacted by the appropriate Year Team Leader.

- Year 7 : Mrs Dodsworth
- Year 8 : Mrs Cross
- Year 9 : Ms Chew
- Year 10: Ms Job
- Year 11 : Ms Gray
- Year 12 : Mrs Whelan
- Assistant Year Team Leader: Mrs Massey

Make a note of everything you know about the bullying before you speak to the Year Team Leader so that you do not forget to mention any important points.

The Thomas Aveling Anti Bullying Policy can be viewed on The Thomas Aveling School website. It is located within the statutory policies contained in the Governors section.

ADVICE FOR YOUR CHILD!

The key to helping young people deal with bullying is not only reporting the behavior (ESSENTIAL!) but also providing strategies that deal with bullying on an everyday basis and – crucially- helping restore their self-esteem and regain a sense of dignity.

It may be tempting to tell your child to fight back. After all, you're angry that your child is suffering and maybe you were told to "stand up for yourself" when you were young. And you may worry that your child will continue to suffer at the hands of the bully. But it's important to advise them not to respond to bullying by fighting or bullying back. It can quickly escalate into violence, trouble, and someone getting injured. Instead, it's best to walk away from the situation, hang out with others, and tell an adult, Peer Mediator or Mentor. The more self confidence your child has the better they will be able to handle any incidents of bullying. A sporting, drama or music club will provide new friends and new confidence.

Here are some other strategies to discuss with your child that can help improve the situation and make them feel better:

- **Avoid the bully and involve your friends.** Use a different toilet or changing room if a bully is nearby and don't go to your locker when there is nobody around. Make sure you have someone with you so that you're not alone with the bully. Buddy up with a friend on the bus, in the hallways, or at lunch time — wherever the bully is. Offer to do the same for a friend. You can arrange to meet an older Peer Mediator at lunch or break on a regular basis.
- **Hold the anger.** It's natural to get upset by the bully, but that's what bullies thrive on. It makes them feel more powerful. Practice not reacting by crying or looking red or upset. It takes a lot of practice, but it's a useful skill for keeping off of a bully's radar. Sometimes kids find it useful to practice "cool down" strategies such as counting to 10, writing down their angry words, taking deep breaths or walking away. Sometimes the best thing to do is to teach kids to wear a "poker face" until they are clear of any danger (smiling or laughing may provoke the bully).
- **Act brave,** walk away, and ignore the bully. Firmly and clearly tell the bully to stop, then walk away. Practice ways to ignore the hurtful remarks, like acting uninterested or texting someone on your phone. By ignoring the bully, you're showing that you don't care. Eventually, the bully will probably get bored with trying to bother you.

- **Remove the incentives.** If the bully is demanding your lunch money, start bringing your lunch. If she or he's trying to get your phone leave it with Mrs Massey for the day.

- **Talk about it!**

Cyber – Bullying

Always print out anything offensive and contact the police who take cyber-bullying very seriously. The site provider can and will block or remove cyber-bullies.

Homophobic Bullying

We take this very seriously indeed and have an in school support group where students can discuss gender based issues. Please advise your child to talk to Ms Cross – head of Year 8 – or she will be happy to discuss issues with you.

Racist Bullying

Racism is illegal and is treated as such at The Thomas Aveling School. All incidents are dealt with very seriously and reported to the Education Authority. Students are encouraged to report all incidents. Where appropriate Restorative Justice is offered but this is always the choice of the victim. If you need to discuss a racist incident that your child has not reported please contact Mrs Nyangon.

THE MOST IMPORTANT PIECE OF ADVICE HOWEVER IS TO TALK TO SOMEONE!

MANY DOORS ARE ALWAYS OPEN AT THE THOMAS AVELING SCHOOL!

Woodies Soccer School

Where? The Thomas Aveling School

When? 23rd February 2011
(10am until 3pm)

Who? Boys and Girls aged 8-16

Cost? £3 per player

Please can you all wear shin pads and bring trainers as this will be held on the astro turf. Also can you all Wear something warm as the soccer school will be run in any weather.

Book now to avoid disappointment!

Each player will need to fill in a consent form before they can participate and the money can be paid on the day.

For more information please email
woodiessoccerschool@hotmail.co.uk



Football Foundation
football's biggest supporter

Creative Arts

Come to the Brook Theatre on the 16th of March for a Creative Arts Festival in which schools over Medway will be participating and contributing work as part of a display that promotes people places and culture within Medway. The event commences at 6:00 PM and ends at 9:00 PM. You can come to see the acts at any time between then as all of the acts will be repeated several times! So come along and support members from TA!



Lonnie Daly



Reminder, you may use your mobile phone when **OUTSIDE** at break or lunchtime. You may never use it, unless instructed to by your teacher, for making recordings/videos or taking pictures. Your phones will be confiscated if you fail to follow these rules following a warning!

Phone Mail Safari iPod

YEAR 10 IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM

A group of top set year 10 English students recently went to the imperial war museum, as their focus day. The students are currently studying Heroes for their English exams and experienced numerous expeditions to help them understand the historical context of the novel, and to relate to the main character in the novel, consequently gaining educational knowledge.



The students ventured up to the museum by train, and suffered a very cramped journey on the way back, but behaved appropriately and were a credit to our school.

It was a great opportunity for those students, and all that participated really enjoyed the visit. Perhaps now their knowledge will expand and aid them in their exam.

Lucy Mullan.

YEAR 8 ARCHAEOLOGICAL VISITOR

In preparation for their forthcoming Field Study Trip to Ypres in Belgium, Year 8 students were very fortunate to have a visit from Mr Brockman a Conflict Archaeologist. Mr Brockman has extensive knowledge and experience of the area and was able to enlighten the students with his experiences. We hope that what the students learned from this session will enable them to have a greater understanding and appreciation of what actually took place at the time when they visit the sites for themselves.



SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE

Our A Level Dance group arranged & attended Sadler's Wells Theatre on 18th January 2011; to watch a dance performance of 'Cinderella' by Matthew Bourne.

During the performance, many of us were able to take movement ideas for our own choreographies as well as gaining a better knowledge of how Matthew Bourne creates a dance.

We all had a very enjoyable evening and would like to say a huge thank you to Miss Mash, Mrs Williams & Mr Allman for accompanying us!

Yasmin Pataria



POETRY LIVE

This is an opportunity for GCSE pupils in England and Wales to see and hear live performances from a great selection of the poets they are studying. The line-up includes three of the 'key poets', Simon Armitage, Gillian Clarke and Carol Ann Duffy, plus Imtiaz Dharker and the incomparable John Agard.

The readings were (20 minutes the longest, many just 5 or 10 minutes) and there were question and answer sessions, which always add an interesting and unpredictable element to the day.

Everyone received a well-produced and informative magazine with articles, interviews, examiner-based exercises, additional poems and advice on writing poetry. Students have the opportunity to go on this trip every year, it's a fun and exciting way to learn the poems in depth. Attending the trip previously I can say it really helped me to gain the best knowledge for my English exam.

The group of students that went were fantastic and had a really good day and would like to Thank Miss Gillespie and Miss Sparkes for the smooth running of the day!

Lucy Mullan

YEAR 8 BATTLEFIELDS VISIT TO YPRES

On Friday 11th February 37 Year 8 students set out on a mission to bring to life what they have been studying in the classroom about the conditions during the First World War. They visited Sanctuary Wood Museum and Hill 62, an original section of Allied trench system that has been preserved. The students were able to appreciate how the soldiers would have felt living in the trenches especially as it was very muddy!

They then visited Tyne Cot Cemetery, the resting place of nearly 11,954 Commonwealth soldiers. The largest number of burials contained in any Commonwealth cemetery of either the First or Second World Wars. Of the 11,954 burials 8,367 are unidentified servicemen. The students were genuinely shocked at the size and number of burials but appreciated how peaceful and serene the site was. Many students took time to try and trace relatives who were lost during the war.

In contrast the next visit took us to Langemark Cemetery, the burial ground of 44,234 German soldiers of which the remains of 24,917 unidentified soldiers are buried in a mass grave. 16,940 of these soldiers have since been identified and their names have been inscribed on granite blocks surrounding the grave. Despite the sun shining, the students could still see for themselves how dark and dismal this site was. Grave stones were made of dark granite and laid flat on the ground. The statue of four mourning soldiers overlooking the graves added to the feeling of 'gloom'.

Our final visit was to the town of Ypres, the scene of some of the worst fighting of the war. The town was totally devastated during the four years of warfare but has been completely restored to its former glory. The students spent time in the town comparing 'bargains' purchased from the many chocolate shops around the market square.

Although a long day we hope that the students acquired some understanding of the conditions during the war



which will help them in their studies but also enable them to empathise with similar situations taking place today.

In Ypres, we went to see a little museum where there were pictures in little boxes of soldiers in the First World War. They were quite shocking and gruesome. Then we went to the Commonwealth graveyard, some people were looking around for their relatives. Most of the graves had Unknown Soldier written on them which I think is quite sad. After that we went to the German graveyard. The graves were flat on the ground, quite dark and I learned that they got buried standing up in the ground. Lastly, we went to the town to buy Belgian chocolate and other gifts for our family and friends. Everybody really enjoyed themselves.

Chloe Le Lannou-Scutt 8T

LANGEMARK CEMETERY, YPRES

The German cemetery was very small compared to the Commonwealth cemetery. In each grave lay more than one man, sometimes up to fifteen. If you looked forward you would see four men who looked down on the graves each day. If you walked up a hill you would see a bunker each with metal windows but not accessible. Near the entrance of the cemetery there was a flower bed which was a mass grave and around it was huge blocks with thousands of names on it. The names were very small and hard to read.

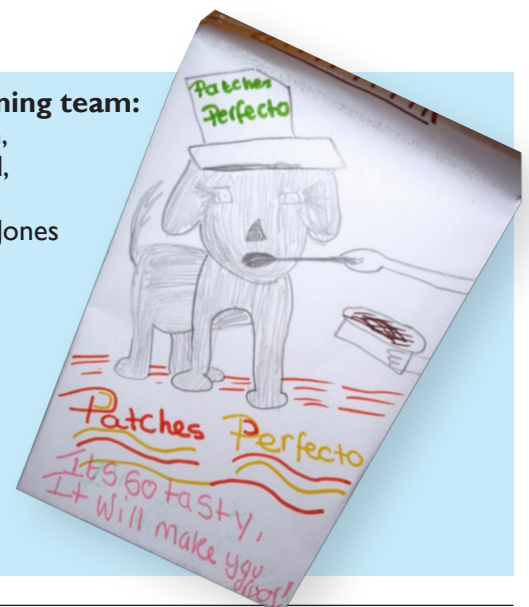
Paige Hope 8N

FOCUS DAY

On the focus day we had to design a new cereal and it's box. Our cereal was called **Patches Perfecto**. It was called this because our character was called Patches. Patches is a dog who had a patch over its right eye. Our cereal had Coco Pops, Corn Flakes, Coconut, dried apple and wholegrains guaranteed to be in it. We were chosen as the winning group because our cereal had a mixed variety of healthy ingredients. Mr Allman said he thought we had a special box and he liked our character.

By the winning team:

Beth Watson,
Sarah Ireland,
Ethan Bailey
and Bradley Jones
from 8G



PROJECT CATWALK!

High street fashions at low costs. That was the theme of the night; Organised by year 10s and year 11s and run by the company Travelling Trends it was a fabulous fundraising event. Travelling Trends have been running for 13 years by buying the surplus clothes from the manufacturers who would normally send them to the stores.



They had clothes from all major stores; from Next, Wallis, Debenhams, M&S and Topshop. Knocking off the in store prices for prices that are affordable for all, an example was a silk “going out top”. The price was £78 and they were selling it for £40.

But why are they fundraising? In 2012 a group of year 10 and 11 students are going on the trip of a lifetime – spending a month in Kenya; helping local communities, helping to conserve wildlife and their biggest challenge of all – climbing Mount Kenya. It truly was a wonderful night, and a big thank you to Miss Mawn and the students who organised the evening.

Louise Pearson

YEAR 8 OPTIONS

Well it is that time of year again when spring begins and the year 8's take on the challenge of deciding what subjects they are going to be taking in the following years of their education, deciding whether they are more artistically talented and would rather take music, art, media and creative media. Or whether they are more academic and would rather take humanities subjects and languages, like geography, history, RE, French and Italian. There are different subjects across the board that will be available to the students and it is all about careful thinking into what subjects do they enjoy and what subjects are they good at and even where they want to be in the future. At the end of the day the students will know what they want and will always make the right decision.

Written by Bradley Peachey

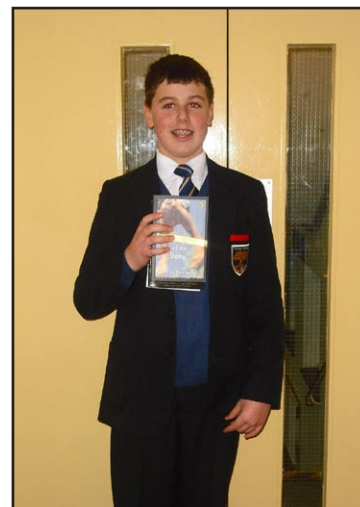
SPELLING BEE

This term Key Stage Three students have been involved in a School Spelling Bee! The competition was run in four rounds with one person from each house in the Year 8 Grand Final. The four finalists were:



Aaron Hover – Victory
Ife Famoriyo – resolute
Reece Sargent – Cavalier
Sean Fuller – Achilles.

Aaron Hover was the winner followed closely by Sean. Congratulations to everybody who took part, the event raised awareness of Literacy across the school and year 7 and year 9 are both training for their competitions next term!



Miss Gillespie

ATTENDANCE MATTERS!

Research shows that there is a clear link between high achievement and good attendance in school. Therefore it is really important that students attend school every day. Nothing is more depressing than having to catch up on missed work and it is very easy to fall behind. We have a number of support strategies in place to help ensure that all students can achieve their full potential, including:

- If we have not been given a reason for absence the Attendance and Welfare Officer, Mrs Shephard (contact her through the school switch board), will text or telephone a parent or carer. Please let her know if there are issues that are impacting on attendance so that we can support you and your child. If we do not hear from you Mrs Burnett, our Home School Support Worker, may visit your child at home to discuss any worries or support we can put in place;
- Celebrating good attendance - we celebrate students' 100% attendance at the end of each academic year and there are other incentives and rewards;
- Parents will be informed by letter when attendance dips below 95% in the first instance. Should there be further concern, parents will be invited into school to discuss the issues and, if necessary, the Education Welfare Officer will be informed. Parents and children may be invited to the Attendance Clinic where our Attendance and Welfare Officer, Mrs Shephard, the EA Education Welfare Office and other key support staff meet with parents and carers to discuss ways forward to improve attendance and punctuality. Parents or students may also request an appointment – it is a two way dialogue!

• If students are late for school then they are required to make up the time with their Year Team Leader at break time.

Holidays - The holiday form is no longer available as the Governors have not authorised holiday absence for any student during term time since September 2007. Only in exceptional circumstances such as a family bereavement or participation in a representative sport will authorised leave will be granted. In these circumstances, parents should write directly to the Headteacher.

Penalty Notices - In line with our Education Authority practise we must advise parents/carers that a Penalty Notice may be imposed where unauthorised holiday leave is taken and for those Year 9, 10 and 11 students who have had 10 or more unauthorised absences since January 4.

Please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Shephard, a Year Team Leader or Mrs Burnett if you would like to discuss attendance issues further!

SPORTS NEWS

Hockey Fixtures Year 7/8 Boys v Chatham Grammar for Boys

This match was held at Holcombe Hockey and was the boy's first game of the season.

During the first half, many of our players, who were playing positions they hadn't played before, found it quite difficult to put together a sequence of successful passes. This resulted in our team being 2 – 0 down by the end of the half. However, after some positive talking during the break, the boys began the second half in a more determined and united manner, and were soon back in the game with a goal, scored through excellent play out of defence. Despite putting the opposition under a great deal of pressure in the closing stages of the game this was how the score remained, but we now can't wait to play them again and achieve the result we deserve.
Chatham Grammar 2 - Thomas Aveling 1

Year 7 Boys v Chatham Grammar for Boys

Again this match was held at Holcombe Hockey club, and was played in 3 sections as opposed to the normal 2 halves. The first third saw (and this seems to be a Thomas Aveling trait), the team approach the game in a slow and unsure manner, and before we realised what had happened we were 2-0 down. At the break there was some positive talking and clarification on responsibilities, and this seemed to inspire to boys because they played more attacking and flowing Hockey during the middle third. This positive play had the desired result, which was a goal scored by Ian Couperthwaite. During the last third the play was end to end attacking action, but unfortunately a goal was not forthcoming for us and the game ended in a 2 – 1 victory to Chatham Grammar

A quick reminder about Hockey practice Girls Yr 7 – 10 practice on a Tuesday after school, Boys Yr 7 – 9 practice on a Wednesday after school and Boys Yr 10 – 13 on a Thursday after school.

Badminton

West Kent Badminton Competition

Following success in the Medway Tournament both our U16 Girls and U16 Boys teams were put through to the West Kent Finals held in January this year.

The Boys team, playing in a section that included Grammar and Public schools demonstrated some excellent play in both singles and doubles matches, but despite some very close games finished in 5th position. The team included Tom Coleman, Theo Onumah, Stephen Munn and DJ Page (year 8) The Girls team completed the group in 4th position but were unfortunate as they narrowly missed out on victories in both doubles and singles games, which would have resulted in them being higher up in the final rankings.

The team included Kiamini Martin, Vickie Jefferson, Megan Wherry and Rebecca Garbutt

We'll play everyone, hopefully next year, now we have more students attending Badminton Club (Tuesday 3.00 – 4.30), we will be able to enter Boys and Girls teams in the U14 age group as well.

The students playing in the league matches, (the games will be underway in the next few weeks) will have training on a Monday night 3.00 until 4.30.

Miss Wellman

CALLING ALL YOUNG CARERS

Woodies Youth Club

Is starting an afterschool club on

Monday 28th February - 3pm till 4.30pm

*

For Young Carers Entrance is 50p

*

The coffee bar will be open which sells drinks and snacks

*

If you are looking for somewhere to play pool, learn first aid or cooking or simply somewhere to get your homework done then Woodies is the place to be.


**We would be grateful for any
old rolls of wallpaper**

(patterned or plain)

**That you may have hanging around
in your lofts/garage.**

Many thanks


Ms Job & Ms Wilkins - Textile Dept.



An adaptation of
BURNING EVEREST
by Adrian Flynn

7:30pm
9th and 10th March 2011
Tickets £2.00 Children
£3.00 Adults

Tickets on sale at
break and lunchtimes
in the hall



"Jim can't get used to life with his foster parents and finds it impossible that his own mother doesn't want him"

"He copes by escaping into a fantasy world where he dreams of leading and expedition up Everest"

"Problems arise when fantasy and reality become dangerously mixed"...

Introduction to IT

Open to all abilities, Thomas Aveling School offers a free introduction to Information Technology. This program of 6 sessions, provides an overview of skills and topics, as well as acting as a foundation to future academic IT study if desired. (Students are welcome to attend with adult/parent learner.)

1. Buying a Computer.
2. Software Applications.
3. Using Digital Images.
4. Computer Security.
5. Using the Internet.
6. Digital Communication.

The sessions will run every Monday, 18:00 to 19:30. The Introduction starts 28th February until 4th April 2011. If you wish to attend, please contact Thomas Aveling Reception with your name and contact details to register your interest. Places are offered on a first come, first served basis.



A FOUNDATION TECHNOLOGY COLLEGE & TRAINING SCHOOL
Arethusa Road, Rochester, Kent ME1 2UW
Tel: 01634 844809 office@thomasaveling.co.uk

The course is designed for people whose first language is not English and for those who would like to improve their written and oral skills. It aims to help improve the conversation, reading, writing and listening skills needed for university-level study and employment.

The course covers a range of language skills including:

- Spelling & punctuation
- Reading English
- Writing English
- Speaking with structure, purpose and effect.

It is assessed by a portfolio of evidence and for those who wish to go on to further university study, and is equal to 10 credits of a 1st year university degree.

The programme is free to adults who have not been to university, either in this country or their country of origin.

English for Study is a 6 week course commencing Monday 28th Feb - Monday 4th April 2011. 6pm - 8pm in the Thomas Aveling Conference room.



A FOUNDATION TECHNOLOGY COLLEGE & TRAINING SCHOOL
Arethusa Road, Rochester, Kent ME1 2UW
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English for Study.

What's on at
your library

Funky Monkey Fun

Storytime and craft for children up to eight years old



Thursday, 24 February 2011
3.45 – 4.15pm

Thomas Aveling School and Community Library

Booking is essential for this free event.
For more information phone the library on 01634 338728

LIBRARIES FOR LIFE
www.medway.gov.uk/libraries

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Serving You