

News

July 2009
issue no. 101



Dear Parent/Carer,

We have had another very busy term at school. Students from many years have completed their exams and we are all eagerly waiting for results days in August, hopeful that they have performed to their potential. We have had a fantastic Dance Showcase where performers from Year 8 right through to Year 12 entertained a packed audience. The official opening of the Richard Hart Centre for Performing Arts took place and we are grateful to Mr Hart and Mrs Gunn for finding time in their busy schedules to attend this event. Students from Years 9, 10 and 12 took part in a BBC Blast event for young people interested in broadcast media and some featured on local radio. Year 11s celebrated the end of their compulsory education with a fantastic "Prom" and Year 10 had a great time designing their own brand of trainer and presenting their business plans to guest judges in the Enterprise Event.

I really appreciated the time given up by some parents in early June to come into school to give their views on what the school does well and what we need to improve upon. Their views, along with those of staff and students, will all be used to develop the School Improvement Plan which sets out the main areas of development over the next three years. There will be a further two opportunities to air your views next year, please see the calendar and website for the dates. An initial result of this consultation is that the school will establish a House system from September. Every student will belong to a House and there will be various activities and competitions throughout the year that will contribute to the winning of a House Cup. I hope that all students will enter into the spirit of this initiative and help their House be successful by looking to improve their own individual performance.

I think it is important that we constantly aim to improve the resources and environment available to our students. The Summer holidays provide us with a little time in which to do this and in September, students should see the outcome of this hard work by site staff and outside contractors. Some of the things we are doing are:- improving and enlarging an English classroom by knocking out walls and re-shaping; the installation of security gates at both main entrances to ensure the site is more secure and safe for our students and staff; the updating of external lighting to make sure that evening events are well lit; the installation of LCD screens around the school to showcase students' work, as well as providing opportunities for students to keep up to date with world events through News 24; and finally, improvements are planned for the English corridor behind the stage with new flooring, ceilings and painting planned.

In addition to this work, our Sixth Form students will benefit from a new area in which to work and relax. This space has been carefully designed and will provide not only state of the art technology to enable independent learning, but also a place to relax at breaks and lunchtimes.

Finally, I would like to wish all our students and staff a restful and enjoyable Summer break.

Mr Paul Jackson
Headteacher

IMPORTANT TERM DATES

Monday 13th - Thursday 16th July (inclusive)

Activities Week

Friday 17th July

End of Term 6

Monday 7th September - Years 7+12

Start of new term.

Tuesday 8th September - All other years

Start of new term.

END OF TERM ARRANGEMENTS

Please note, the school day finishes at 12:40 on Friday 17th July.

HEADTEACHER SURGERY DATES

from 3.00 pm – by appointment only

WEDNESDAY 23RD SEPTEMBER 2009

Attendance Matters!

Research shows that there is a clear link between high attainment and good attendance in school. Therefore it is vital that students attend school every day. The school has 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, (who can be contacted through the school switch board), will text or telephone a parent or carer;
- 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 93% 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, the LEA 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! Please contact us if you would like to discuss this further;
- If students are late to school they are required to make up the time with their YTL 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 be granted. In these circumstances, parents should write directly to the Headteacher.

Penalty Notices - In line with Local Education Authority practise we must advise parents/carers that a Penalty Notice will be imposed in certain cases where unauthorised holiday leave is taken or a child has regular unauthorised attendance.

A Uniform Approach!

Our students look very smart in their uniform and wear it with pride. It is important, however, to ensure that there is consistency in how we approach all aspects of school uniform and as we look forward to a new term this is a good time to revisit a uniform approach.

All students must wear their blazers at all times in school

unless a teacher has given permission to remove it in a lesson. Trainers and plimsolls are for sport only. Coats should not be worn in school and hooded tops, either zipped or sweat shirt style, are not to be brought into the building. Jewellery, other than a watch or a single pair of plain studs, is not to be worn. Tights and socks must be plain and a suitable dark colour. If inappropriate tights or socks are worn to school girls will be required to change. Students wearing incorrect uniform will not be allowed into lessons - students, with parental permission, may be sent home to change or parents will be asked to bring correct uniform into school. It is also important that school bags are always large enough to hold all equipment and A4 size files. Full details of the school uniform requirements are on the school website.

Mrs G Nyangon - Assistant Headteacher

LOCKERS



Would students who have paid for only one year's locker hire please empty out their locker and return the key to Student Services by Friday 10 July. On return of the key, the deposit will be refunded. If students wish to retain their locker, they should pay £5 before 10 July. If the locker hire is not extended and the locker is not emptied the contents will be disposed of.

Mrs S Stratford - Student Services

Annual Dance Show 2009

On the 25th June 2009 a selection of talented dance students held an outstanding public performance showing work that they had choreographed themselves and work that had assisted them for their exams. As anticipated the show was a great success which was largely due to the hard work and professionalism of the students concerned. My thanks go to all of them and I wish them the very best of luck for their future.

Miss J Mash - Subject Leader in Dance



TA Apprentice 2009 – Enterprise Event

The Year 10 Apprentice event took place on the 22nd and 23rd June 2009 and the work the students did was of a very high standard. All the forms demonstrated good teamwork, creativity, initiative and enterprise skills. Congratulations to 11G Miss Chew's old form who won the event. We also want to congratulate 11V who won best trainer design, 11E best TV advert, 11L best display board and 11T best presentation. Mr.Jackson thought it was a GREAT event and the judges commented that all the students deserve a medal. Thanks again to teachers and Creative & Media students who help make this event a success.

Mr.Hauptfleisch – Business Studies





War Veterans

Rev Kerr and Peter provided a great opportunity for year 12 / 13 English Literature students to enhance their learning of War Literature. Both gentlemen discussed their experiences before and during the war in detail and they answered several questions which clarified many misperceptions about the war. Students and teachers enjoyed the talk by the war veterans and plan to visit the Imperial War Museum in the new school term. The Department of English would like to thank Debbie Peace, Jenny Jeans and Lynda Burrows for their assistance.

By S. Mahomed



Year 7/8 History Visit



London Dungeon & Madame Tussauds

When I went to the London Dungeon I had a wonderful time. We went into a surgery where Mrs Jones sat on a chair at the front and the actor pretended to take out some of her brain, cut her so her blood came out and sliced off her hand. We then went on a boat ride which was fun. At the end of the boat ride a man stood on the dock and jumped out and made us all scream. We then entered a room where Sweeney Todd was. Once we were all settled in, the room went pitch black and we heard the voice of Sweeney Todd. When the lights came back on again and we found another doorway we went into a room to do with Jack the Ripper and we continued into a bar where Jack the Ripper pretended to murder someone.

Barbara Blackwell

When I went to London Dungeon and Madame Tussauds I thought it was great. I think London Dungeon was the best as it was scary and at the same time funny. The best bits included the scary boat ride when people were making funny noises and jumping out at us. I liked the Sweeney Todd barber shop when it was pitch black and it felt like they were cutting your hair. I also enjoyed the pub where we found out about Jack the Ripper, the light moved around and then Jack the Ripper jumped out and scared the life out of us.

The bits I liked most at Madame Tussauds were the taxi ride because it told me all about things that happened in the olden days. I also liked the models of famous people and finally the 'Big Brother' room.

Adrienne Bell

London Dungeon was great. It was very scary and dark, with people dressed up. The scariest bit was when we were in the pub and Jack the Ripper jumped over the stairs and started to shake the teacher but the lights were flashing so it was hard to see. Mrs Jones was asked to sit in a chair and the actor pretended to cut her and blood came out into a bucket.

Madame Tussauds was great too. My friends and I got our photograph taken with 'Troy' from High School Musical. There were lots of models of famous film stars, musicians and sports personalities and they looked very real.

Sophie Shipton

London Dungeon was scary and dark and I was terrified. The best bit was Jack the Ripper. Much of it was very gory and it was funny when people screamed. I enjoyed the rides, the boat ride was the scariest but the last ride my lips went to the side and I came off my seat.

Max McCann and Ryan Hexham



Troy wasn't that impressed by Mrs Whybrow's cheerleading skills!



BATTLE OF THE BANDS

And the winners were...

After a superb evening of entertainment and tough competition at Battle of the Bands, the judges found it very difficult yet again to make their decision. All of the bands performed extremely well and were supported by the audience dancing in the aisles. The judges continued to receive mixed reactions from the crowd and presenters as many of them practised their best Simon Cowell impressions – and the bands weren't afraid to stand up to them! After a long session hidden away behind closed doors (and I'm told heated discussions...) the judges came to their decision and announced that the winners of Battle of the Bands 2009 were Vulcan Static and TBC. Sophie Sussex from TBC said 'it was a very good night, thank you for everyone's support.' Luke Naylar of Vulcan Static commented on their victory -

'when we heard that we had won we were ecstatic! We would also like to thank everyone for their support and help throughout the evening.' Thank you to everyone who has been involved, particularly the 6th Form team who have been working hard since January.

Miss Voice - Head of Music

O₂ Thomas Aveling students sing at the o2 Arena! O₂

On Wednesday 1st July 13 students from Year 7, 8 and 9 all went as a choir to the o2 Arena to sing 32 Beate songs. There was a lot of work to go towards it, starting with auditions in February, but it was all worth it. Miss Voice and Miss Chew gave up their time and helped us to learn the words and dance moves as well as joining in on the day. There was about 4700 kids all singing together with Robert the conductor who was very excitable which was great! We set off to the o2 arena at 10.00am and then got back at 11.30pm during that time we went and looked around the o2, had lunch at Nando's, then we had a rehearsal before the concert and all the celebrities were there who were Bill Bailey, Heather from Eastenders, Mike Barnes from Hollyoaks and Nemesis from the final of last year's Britain's Got Talent. It was hard work and in the end the concert was breathtaking! Thanks Miss Voice & Miss Chew! Lizzie Wastell 9N



NEW YEARS 10 & 11 HISTORY BERLIN 2010



History has left an indelible mark on Berlin. It is not only the city's memorials which evoke images of bygone days. Berlin's streets and squares also tell the tale of its unique, turbulent history.

Nearly 20 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the city never ceases to change and develop.

JOIN US FROM 30TH MARCH - 2ND APRIL FOR A TRIP OF A LIFE TIME

See your History Teacher for a letter NOW

CHRISTMAS TRUCE TOURS

incorporating a Christmas Truce Re-enactment

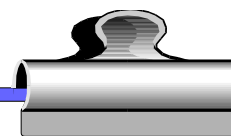
New Year 8

Christmas 1914, there saw a series of extraordinary events. Along the front, a series of informal truces saw British and German troops greeting each other in no-man's land, singing carols, exchanging gifts and even playing a football match! For a brief moment the war was suspended. This was never to occur again as the conflict dragged on and the feeling of hurt and hatred escalated.

Join us from 3rd - 4th December

See your History Teacher for a letter NOW!

- Including:
- Coach travel
 - Short sea channel crossing
 - Sightseeing
 - Trench meal
 - Hands-on display of weapons equipment
 - Re-enactment team of four guides
 - Free places for leaders
- Also meals, accommodation and much more...



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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