



TUNBRIDGE WELLS GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR BOYS

Mr J G Harrison, B. Ed. (Hons) **Headteacher**

Dear Parents, Carers and Students

22nd May 2008

HEADTEACHER'S END OF TERM 5 NEWSLETTER

The exams are well and truly upon us and students across the School are, I trust, focused on these important assessments. Congratulations to Year 9 who survived their first public examinations at TWGSB and our continued best wishes to those in Years 11, 12 and 13 who are in the middle of their exams.

OFSTED

"This is a good and improving school; it is well led and provides students with good standards of education, guidance and care. The welcoming atmosphere of the school is a reflection of the positive relationships that exist. These supportive relationships are an important factor in students' enjoyment of school. Students have a positive attitude to learning, air their views and develop their leadership skills through house meetings, the school council, the prefect system and by mentoring and supporting younger students. The school values its partnership with parents, most of whom have high regard for the school. One commented, 'The school knows the boys well and strives to help every one of them reach their potential.'

Students make good progress from their starting points to achieve high standards. They enjoy and benefit from the wide range of opportunities available to them. The good curriculum meets the needs of students and is increasingly flexible in accommodating their choices. The school's subject specialism in humanities adds breadth to its provision, helps students develop awareness of global and environmental issues and is being used effectively to introduce more imaginative approaches to teaching and learning. Extra-curricular activities also help students to explore their potential and grow into confident and articulate individuals. Testament to their good personal development, students mature into thoughtful citizens who care about the wider community and welcome opportunities to make a positive contribution to it."

So begins our Ofsted report following the inspection team's visit on April 30th and May 1st. The inspection team was led by a member of Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) who observed around 30 lessons and held a number of interviews with staff, governors and students.

A full copy of the report has been sent to all parents via ParentMail or in hard copy for those unable to receive e-mail communication. It is now available to download from our website as well.

We are very pleased with the report in that it is a positive reflection and recognition of the things that we do well, but it is also a useful check on our priorities for development. In the last few months I have shared our developing improvement plan with the Governing Body (including parent governors) and the PTA. I was pleased to see that the Ofsted team considered the priorities we had there to be appropriate and when identifying what we should do to become an even better school they agreed with our own self evaluation. In brief our targets are:

1. To improve the teaching that is described as "good overall and sometimes outstanding" to even higher levels,
2. Ensure we use the tracking and assessment data we have even more effectively, and
3. Address issues around variation within the School by sharing more effectively the existing excellent practice in our highest performing areas.



humanities

FABER EST QUISQUE SUAE FORTUNAE

We are really excited about the challenges that face us in the years ahead and aiming to be recognised as an outstanding school in 3 years' time. The journey starts now and on May 22nd staff are undertaking some training about turning good lessons into outstanding ones. The student learning group will also contribute to that development work. I will let you know more about our response to these targets in the months ahead as our improvement plan takes shape.

If you have not received a copy of the report and are unable to access and download the document via our website, please let our front office staff know and they will be happy to pass a hard copy to your son or daughter to bring home.

Enjoy the newsletter!

Yours sincerely



J G Harrison
Headteacher

SCHOOL LIBRARY NEWS

Thursday 5th June will see the first meeting of the lunchtime Library Challenge Club, a new venture taking a cross-curricular approach to extending the use and enjoyment of the Library and its resources. A variety of activities will be on offer, including reading and book discussion, board games, puzzles, quizzes and, by popular request, origami. A maximum of 30 students can book in advance for the weekly club and we hope to have some fun!

On Tuesday 24th June Creative Active Reading, a local independent book supply business, will be running a Book Fair all day in the Main Library. A range of quality fiction, including the latest titles, together with poetry and non-fiction, will be available for students to browse and buy. The commission raised will purchase more books for the School Library, so please encourage your sons to bring some money to spend on the day.

S Marchant
School Librarian

NEWS FROM THE MATHEMATICS DEPARTMENT

We are delighted that following his successes in the UK Intermediate Mathematics Challenge and the follow-on Maclaurin Olympiad, Edward Miller (Year 11) has now been invited to attend the National Mathematics Summer School at Queen's College, Birmingham. The invitation has been offered to around forty of the UK's talented young mathematicians.

Congratulations also go to William Bracey, Matthew Bullard, Nicholas Cane, Chris Davies, Nathan Durrant, Anton Ebbage, Ian Reynolds, Oscar Scott and Phil Tremenheere (all Year 11) who represented the UK in the European Kangaroo, a Maths Challenge held simultaneously in twenty-six countries. Nathan, Oscar and William achieved positions in the top 25%.

Liam Morris and Manav Mehta (both Year 9) have now had their place confirmed for the National Final of the Jaguar Cars "Maths in Motion" Challenge, to be held at the end of June at the Heritage Motor Centre, Warwickshire. They will compete against ten other finalists in their age band. An unfortunate consequence of their success is that Mr Young must compete against the other 32 teachers attending in the warm-up Teachers' Grand Prix!

The Department is running Revision Classes for GCSE, and the A-Level Modules Core 4, Mechanics 1 and Further Pure 1 during this holiday period. Students should have signed up by now, but a few spaces may remain - contact Mrs Harris. There are usually members of the Department available to give help

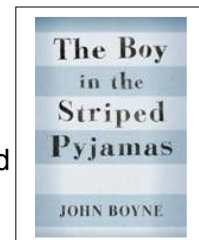
throughout the school day, so a student on study leave should not hesitate about coming in to see us. Staff can also be contacted using the usual school e-mail addresses.

Year 10 should be busily working towards their second **GCSE Module** to be taken on **24th June**.

*G Young
Head of Mathematics*

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT NOTICE FOR PARENTS OF YEAR 9 BOYS

Now that the National Curriculum tests are over, boys have begun GCSE work in Year 9 that can contribute to their final GCSE assessment at the end of Year 11. All boys are expected to complete two written assignments as well as one 'drama focused' oral assessment based on work in drama lessons. We will be reading 'The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas' by John Boyne. We hope boys will be motivated by the topics raised through studying literature related themes, as well as making significant links with the History curriculum. At the present time we are considering the setting for GCSE groups in Years 10 and 11. Whilst the main part of this assessment for setting will be based on test scores throughout Year 9, as well as the progress and motivation shown across Key Stage 3, any final decision may be based by looking at current work on the GCSE topics. This should give boys the opportunity to really show us what they can achieve beyond the limitations of the Key Stage 3 testing regime. Parents/carers need to be aware that English SATs results are not usually available until September and will not form part of our assessment for setting purposes.



*D Gould
Head of English*

HOUSE CHARITY EVENTS

This term saw the launch of the house charities. The current House Captains requested the opportunity to raise money for charity via the house system and to add the element of competition it was decided that the house that raises the most money for their chosen charity each year will be awarded the House Charity Cup.

The selected charities for this year are as follows –

- Kestrels – Save the Children
- Ospreys – Kent Air Ambulance
- Hawks – Cancer Research UK
- Merlins – Shelter Box
- Eagles – RNLi
- Falcons - Hospice in the Weald

Each house will organise a range of events to raise money for their charity. This term saw the first of these events which ran during the lunch hour and were organised by the House Captains. The events ranged from cake and sweet sales to penalty football and basketball shoot outs. We would like to thank all those who participated in helping to make these events a success, especially the House Captains!

THE EXODUS PROJECT – WHAT DOES EXODUS MEAN TO THE LIVES OF PEOPLE?

This term all Year 8 students participated in a 'Learning to Learn' day as an introduction to the Exodus project. This Project ran for the first time in Term 6 of the academic year 2006/2007 and is a cross-curricular, Humanities based project. Our Exodus project begins with the 'Learning to Learn' day which was delivered to 8A, B and C on Monday 19th May and 8D, E and F on Wednesday 21st May. In the morning students were put into learning groups that were not based on their tutor groups and attended a range of skills based workshops which ranged from building a shanty town to making their own movie using real film footage from aboriginals in Australia. These workshops were designed to help the students think about the different ways in which they learn and all had the theme of Exodus at their core. In the afternoon students were invited to a screening of our very own Exodus film, which introduced them to the project they would be studying in Term 6 in their English, Geography, History and RE lessons. After this, all students returned to their tutor groups and spent the afternoon with their designated learning leaders examining their preferred learning styles, finding more out about the Exodus project, reflecting upon the learning that had taken place during the day and finally enjoying a rare opportunity for a guided meditation. It was a very enjoyable, beneficial learning experience for all concerned. In Term 6 each tutor group will be working towards

presentations in groups that will aim to answer the key question 'What does Exodus mean to the lives of people?' The very best presentations will then be selected from each tutor group and these will be shown at our Exodus Celebration day scheduled to take place on the afternoon of July 14th. It will be our pleasure to send parents of the winning groups a formal invitation to attend this event and help us to celebrate the learning and achievement of our Year 8 students during this project.

*L Baker
AST*

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS COMPETITION

This was devised following a survey undertaken by the Institute of Directors. The survey was carried out to see which skills their member companies wanted to see in potential employees graduating from university. (If you would like to see the IoD Survey there is a link on the front page of the School Website.)

If your son is in Year 7, 8, 9, 10 or 12, please do encourage him to take part, particularly if he has a flair for art, design or graphics. There are £50 prizes for the best poster in each year group and a prize of £100 for the best poster in the School. The boys have been given full details of the competition and entry forms are available from the School Office. The closing date is 30th June 2008.

Final judging will be carried out by Mr Miles Templeman, Director General of the Institute of Directors.

*N G Furnell
Work Related Learning Co-ordinator*

NEWS FROM THE ART DEPARTMENT

The Art Department has been buzzing with activity recently as 70 students took external exams – with the A2 students nearly fading away in the tropical conditions! We are now sending the marks to the exam boards in the knowledge that our students have progressed well this year.

We look forward to relaunching the Summer Art Exhibition in July. This is an opportunity for students to see their artwork displayed in a more formal setting where we can celebrate their achievement. Look out for the posters and your invite! We will also be announcing the Grand Summer Photography exhibition which was a great success last year. Time for everyone to get creative and get snapping.

We have initiated a website for the students' artwork on www.artinfo.com and we look forward to seeing your children's work on the site. On the site search for Art@Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys.

After the break we will be initiating a series of workshops and activities for Key Stage 3 students. These will range from pavement art to clay faces and visiting artists. We could call it an Artsweek but it will go on and on!



*J Buttery
Head of Art and Design*

NEWS FROM THE PE DEPARTMENT

Cricket

The Year 9 Cricket Team beat Norton Knatchbull by 9 wickets in the first round of the Kent Cup recently. Henry Walmsley took 5 wickets and Charlie Thompson was 51 not out. This team (managed by Mr Douse) plays Tonbridge School in the next round of the competition.

English Schools Athletic Association (ESAA) Meeting at Ashford

The Intermediates were creditable runners-up and the Junior team came fifth. There were many notable performances from members of this School:

Gold Medals

- Ed Hall, Matt Saunders, Matt Hiller and Charlie Taylor - Junior Relay
- Cameron Knapp - High Jump (1 metre 36)
- Josh Bentham - Inter 1500m (4 minutes 26)

Silver Medals

Junior:

- Matt Hiller - 100m
- Ed Hall - 200m
- Matt Saunders - 200m
- Ajan Jeyaratnam - Hurdles

Intermediate:

- Nathan Sillet - Triple Jump
- Inter Relay - Jack Leeson, Jake Watts, David Southall and Sam Stennulat
- Sam Thompson - Shot Putt

*K Downing
Head of Physical Education*

INDIVIDUAL SUCCESSES

Sam Bonner (Year 12) was awarded a bronze medal in the ASA National Water Polo Championships in Manchester on 27th April. Unfortunately, Sam's team (Invicta) drew the eventual winners (Manchester) in the semi-finals and in a very tense, close match were beaten by only one goal (6-5). During the match Invicta hit the crossbar seven times! They went on to beat Birmingham to secure third place. Sam has done particularly well to be part of this successful team as he only started to play water polo two years ago.

Billy Stookes (Year 11) is a member of the Kent Youth Jazz Orchestra and has been invited to play at a music festival in Germany in September 2008. In addition, Billy recently passed an audition to study Music on Saturdays at Trinity College of Music, London.

Seven of our Year 9 boys (Timo Burbidge, George Farr, Martin Hawes, Jack Lennard, Jamie Malcolm, Liam Mahon and Adam Staveley) belong to Sevenoaks Town U14 Football Club. This team, despite a difficult season, made it through to the Crowborough District Cup Final, playing top of the table Little Common Youth from Hastings. This is the first time in the history of Sevenoaks Town FC that any team has reached the Final and they had to beat very strong opposition to get there. In a very exciting match, with strong performances from all the boys and against the run of play, Sevenoaks Town lost 1-0.

SEVENOAKS U13s SUCCESS AT THE 17TH TOPOLINO TOURNAMENT

On 10th and 11th May Sevenoaks U13s played in the 17th Annual Topolino (Rugby) Tournament. This is the annual tournament held in Treviso in Italy. Everyone knew that it wasn't going to be easy to win the tournament. On the first day we all played exceptionally well helping us to win our first league in the morning. We were then entered into what definitely was a harder league in the afternoon. We were up against teams like Roma who are exceedingly good rugby clubs. Again we won all our games also without conceding a try the whole day and scoring 17. The next day we were all ready for a big match in the semi-finals of the tournament. We were up playing Padova Petrarca whose adults compete in the Super 10. They were an exceptionally good club and they unfortunately beat us and went on to win the tournament. We then played Milan with whom we had recently become friends, but we had to put that aside while we

played the 3rd and 4th play-offs. We beat Milan to come 3rd out of 64 teams in the tournament. At the end of the match we joined in with Milan's team chant.

People from TWGSB involved: Tom Craddock, George O'Reilly, Nick Lessops, George Leahy, Charlie Beale, Harry Salter, Will Jacobs and Dan Sinclair.
Tom Craddock, 8C

READATHON

The whole of year 7 participated in the Readathon, which raises money for the Roald Dahl Foundation and CLIC Sargent, cancer care for children. This year we ran it as a house competition and the total raised was £2316.61. This is the most ever raised for Readathon in this School and I think it is a fantastic effort. 7A won the competition for raising the most and 7D was the first form to return all their sponsorship money. Thank you to all the boys, parents/family/friends for embracing this activity so positively and also thanks to the Librarians for their sponsorship and support. Many people ticked the Gift Aid box too, so that even more money can be claimed by the charities.

*G Welford
English Department*

HEALTHY EATING AT TWGSB

As part of the Healthy Schools Programme we have formed a working group called SNAG (Schools Nutrition Action Group) to help facilitate and promote Healthy Eating at School. We have had two meetings after our launch in January, and we are hoping to send a pack to every new Year 7 student starting in September, informing them of what we are trying to do and inviting them to get involved in competitions, etc. The group has started well and we have some very enthusiastic parents (Jeff Bolam, Sue Fish and Jane Latham) as well as some great students from Years 8 and 9 (Henry Cramer-Todd, Jeremy Kent, Damien Sammonds and Chester Searle). Apart from being willing to be at School until 9.00 pm on meeting evenings, they are undertaking considerable tasks to help make this group a success.

Key members of the group are our Catering Manager, Carole Jamieson, and the Chef, Ross Levitt, because without their support and endeavours the group would be ineffective. They hope to provide great food and information, such as sample menus, prices, what food is available outside of lunchtime, etc.

Finally, a development that I am really pleased about. After many years of campaigning, TWGSB is going to offer Food and Nutrition studies to the new Year 7 and 9 students in the academic year 2008/2009 as part of Design Technology. Also, in Years 13 and 12 we will offer 'course enrichment' in the form of basic cookery courses. There will be a new Food Room in which all this will take place and we have appointed a Food specialist teacher, Barbara Wedrychowski.

We hope you will encourage your sons to support this worthwhile initiative at School.
*N Tull
Head of Design and Technology*

STILL COLLECTING!

We are most grateful for all your donations of various tokens, like the Sainsbury's Active Kids vouchers, Tesco Computers for School vouchers, etc, all of which continue to provide valuable equipment for the School.

For a number of years we have also been collecting used postage stamps to raise money for the Kent Air Ambulance appeal. Unfortunately, the Kent Air Ambulance charity no longer recycles items like newspapers and stamps "for health and safety and fire hazard reasons". However, our current collection of stamps will be sent to an alternative registered charity, BIBIC (British Institute for Brain Injured Children) who will welcome them, so please keep the stamps coming! BIBIC has an informative website: www.bibic.org.uk.

Thank you once again for all your support.
*K Bamblett
PA to the Headteacher*

HISTORY “MUSEUM”

A small exhibition of historical artefacts, many relating to the world wars, has been created in the History area foyer. This has provoked interest from students throughout the School and we hope that parents will have the opportunity to view the exhibits at parents' evenings.

We are indebted to one of our Governors, and retired Deputy Head, Mr Mervyn Davies, for providing us with some fascinating objects and also to the current Head of Geography, Mr Ash, who has allowed us to borrow some of his own models that relate to aspects of World War Two, such as Dunkirk and D Day.

We are also keen to display models created by the students; we already have a wonderful trebuchet, made by Freddie Allaway of Year 7 and hope that other Year 7 students will respond to the modelling challenges of the Plains Indians project during term six. All tipis will be displayed!

*S Glover
Head of History*