

Gravesend Grammar School for Girls

Dear Parents

I am indeed very pleased to be able to write this newsletter. As you were informed I was away from school for some weeks, clearly not the time I would have chosen! I am very grateful to my senior colleagues, Mr Cowan and Mrs Bell in particular, but also to Mrs Redmayne, Mr Holmes and Mr Jones for covering for me in my absence. The weeks leading up to an Ofsted inspection are particularly busy! You will understand how important it was for me to return on the 24th, which I was delighted to be able to do.

Ofsted

I hope your daughters have told you that we had a very successful inspection. At this stage we have only received a verbal feedback which I was able to share with the staff and the students. You will be delighted to read that the inspectors were very impressed with your daughters and with the education we provide for them at GGSG. The Registered Inspector will provide a draft feedback to me and the Senior Team on Wednesday 9th April. That day he will also meet with governors for a presentation of the inspectors' findings. The full and final report will not be available until next term. I should be able to provide you with the summary with my next newsletter.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank you, the parents for your support (over 50% of you returned the questionnaire, which is exceptional) and for the positive feedback you provided. I have already thanked the girls in assembly, they rose to the occasion and helped to show the best that we can be and of course the staff for whom an inspection is always stressful. However, they received such positive feedback from their lesson observations that they did enjoy it in the end! The whole process demonstrated how well we all work together as a team, students, staff, parents and governors.

Music



Flora Death, Kirsten King (Year 11) and Emily Death (Year 10) recently had success in the Gravesham Festival of Music. They were awarded an 'Outstanding' classification for their performance of a Telemann Trio Sonata and were invited to perform in the Festival Concert.

We have just had the Spring Concert and once again, this was a huge success. All who took part performed to a high standard and deserve to be congratulated.

A large proportion of our girls learn to play musical instruments, however a relatively small number participate in the wide range of extra-curricular clubs we run. Please encourage your daughter to join an ensemble if she has instrumental or vocal tuition – we do expect all musicians to take part in at least one extra-curricular music club: after all, it is they who represent the high quality of music making at GGSG.

There will soon be vacancies for tuition on most instruments. There are opportunities to learn many instruments in groups, which in turn reduces the cost of lessons whilst still making good progress. Further details can be obtained from Miss Sayers.

Sport

Inter-form Tournaments

Year 7

<u>Hockey</u>	<u>Netball</u>	<u>Participation Award</u>
7SBR 1 ST	7SBR	Hockey
7AV 2 ND	7LS	Netball
7BB 3 RD	7BB	7BH
7LS 4 TH	7BH	
7BH 5 TH	7AV	7LS
--- 6 TH	7CV	

These were played at lunchtimes and both tournaments were organised by the 6th form CSLA group as part of their Community Sports Leader Award. The PE Department were very impressed with the CSLA group and would like to thank them for their commitment and hard work. We were disappointed that 7CV did not enter a hockey team and hope they will participate fully next year.

Hockey

Year 10

1 ST	10LA
2 ND	10HS
3 RD	10SD
4 TH	10MC
5 TH	10MN
6 TH	10HGM

Stephanie Forbes has been selected for the Kent U18 Hockey Squad.

In the North West Kent Hockey Knockout Competition, we had three teams in the finals on Tuesday 1st April.

The U12 team lost 0-1 to Dartford Girls Grammar (both Year 7 teams reached the semi-finals, so congratulations to them).

The U 14 team lost 0-1 to Dartford Girls Grammar.

The U16 team won 8-0 against Dartford Girls Grammar. Special thanks go to Miss Jewiss for organising the competition and running the finals evening at Gravesend Rugby Club.

Netball



Francesca di Palma has been selected for London Hurricanes Super Cup Team from which the England team will be selected.

In the District Tournaments:

The U12 team came first on Saturday 8th March.

The U15 and U16 tournaments were postponed until Wednesday 9th April.

Football



Emma Drummond has been selected for the Kent U16 team. They have reached the semi-finals of the National Competition against Hampshire.

Life Saving



Julia Marshall has won the Kent U16 Doubles Competition with her partner for the second successive year.

Cambridge Union Debating

2nd Round 2002-2003

As reported last term, the school debating team won through to the 2nd round of the premier schools' debating competition, the Cambridge Union. They were again required to travel down to Tunbridge Wells, where they were competing against the best debating teams in the area. The motion to be debated was 'This House would not trade with dictatorships', a fairly topical motion considering event in Iraq and Zimbabwe at the moment. The team of Laura West and Ellie Clarke, were not allowed to know their debating side or position until 15 minutes before the event started, and were in the end relieved to be drawn as the first opposition team. The debate was lively throughout and by the end of this first stage, there was not much separating the competitors. The teams were then given 15 minutes to prepare a debate on the motion 'This House would elect the Lords', again a most topical motion. The ensuing arguments were varied, and led to a confident performance by the GGSG team. However, in the end only one team can go through to the finals day at the Cambridge Union and sadly the judge decided that Tunbridge

Wells Girls Grammar were the best team on the night. It was a most enjoyable evening and Laura and Ellie should be congratulated for their level of commitment and expertise to have got so far in the competition.

The debate train stops again in Tonbridge on the 19th February where the GGSG team of Laura West and Toni Atkinson compete in the area final of the ESU Schools' Mace Debating Competition. Thank you Mr Smith for encouraging and coaching the participants.

Science College Update

I am pleased to be able to announce that we have raised £11,000 to date towards the required £50,000 sponsorship and have applied for a substantial grant from the Wolfson Foundation.

The Parents' Association have donated £6,000 and are keen to expand the supermarket voucher scheme.

In view of my absence the application has had to be postponed until the October 2003 round.

Science Faculty News

We are pleased to announce the success of some girls who recently took part in the Biology and Chemistry British Olympiads 2003. The following girls were recognised as being particularly high achievers:

Anna Hutchinson - Highly Commended Certificate - Biology
Rebecca Sumner - Highly Commended Certificate - Biology
Rebecca Sumner – Silver Certificate - Chemistry

Several Year 11 girls have been awarded commendation certificates in the Physics Challenge 2003.

Sarah Church	Katie Spinks
Katie Smith	Melissa Sung
Jasmeen Bains	Pascale Matthews
Emily Earnshaw	Oneet Kaur Sandher

Well done to all girls who took part in each of these events.

Uniform

May I remind the parents of Year 11 students that the girls should be in summer uniform after Easter, therefore wearing their short sleeved blouses and no ties. For the whole school please remember that trainer socks and pop socks are not acceptable. You can continue to wear dark tights or ankle socks. No flesh-coloured tights may be worn. **Please note these changes to the summer uniform.**

Free School Meals

Kent County Council has asked me to remind you that any parent/child who is in receipt of Income Support/Job Seekers Allowance or is an Asylum Seeker qualifies for free school meals. However, with effect from 6th April 2003, regulatory changes also permit any parent who is in receipt of a Child Tax Credit (but not Working Tax Credit) and whose annual income does not exceed £13,230 to be eligible for free school meals as well. Further information is provided on the attached sheet published by KCC. Forms are available from the Main Office. Please be assured that all related matters are dealt with discreetly.

Police School Watch

We have been asked to remind you that theft from motor vehicles is common, particularly when cars are left for a very short time such as when collecting children. Valuables should not be on display and entertainment systems should be removed if possible.

Premises

I am sad to have to inform you that Mr Sharp, our Premises Manager, has recently resigned from his post at the school.

You will agree that there has been a marked improvement in the maintenance of the school buildings and grounds since his arrival last May. He has achieved a tremendous amount in a year and created a precedent, which will make him hard to replace. I know you will want to join me, the staff, students and governors in thanking Mr Sharp for his dedication and hard work in the short time he spent at GGS. We wish him well in his new life in Cornwall where his wife is being relocated by her employers.

The post has been advertised locally, if you know anyone with relevant skills and experience who may be interested please ask that person to contact me.

Examinations Reminder

The girls have worked very hard this year and we wish them all the very best in their revision period and in the examinations over the coming weeks.

At this time I feel it important that you are made aware of the boards' policy with regards to mobile phones. Any candidate who is found to be in possession of a mobile phone is considered by the Board to be "in breach of Board regulations". This means that the Examination Boards have the right to

cancel the candidate's examination and also reserve the right to review any other examination(s) they have taken with the Board in the current examination season. Girls are made fully aware of this but I feel it is important that you are also aware of the serious consequences of taking a mobile phone into an examination room. We are however, unable to take responsibility for mobile phones left outside examination rooms and therefore advise students to leave their mobiles at home. Girls will be fully briefed in relation to the arrangements for examinations. Should you have any worries please contact the school office.

Invigilators

Following our success last year, the School will be using people from outside the teaching staff to assist with external examinations invigilation. We need people between 12th May and 27th June and expect to pay not less than £5 per hour. If you are interested then please contact Mrs Janice Dell with dates when you are available, and to obtain further details.

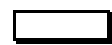
Forgotten Items

May I ask for your support in ensuring that only **essential** items are brought into school for your daughters i.e. keys, money etc. I cannot ask the Main Office staff to run around after the girls for such things as: an apple, a drink (we have drinking fountains on site), clothes for after school, an umbrella and hair straighteners! I have instructed the staff not to accept non urgent items.

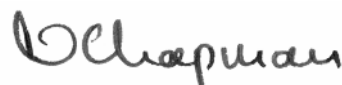
Arrangements for the last day of term

The last day of term is Friday 11th April. Girls will be able to leave school at 12.35 after registration. Should you wish your daughter to remain in school until 3.40 on that day, please inform her Head of Year so that we can make provision for her.

May I take this opportunity to wish you a very happy Easter

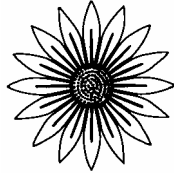


Yours sincerely



Mrs N Chapman
Headteacher





Gravesend Grammar School for Girls

Please return to your daughter's form tutor

I acknowledge receipt of the following:

The Newsletter, Issue 4
Free School Meals Information Sheet

Daughter's name _____

Form _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian _____

Date _____