

Gravesend Grammar School For Girls

Dear Parents

Another busy term with a great deal to celebrate!

The King and I



Our production team continues to excel itself! Thank you to Mrs Rosenthal, Mrs Heywood, Miss Sayers, Mr Barker, Miss Mills, Miss Bray and Miss Vamplew for another brilliant production. It has revived memories for many parents and grandparents and educated younger audiences of times past. The costumes were stunning and the music lively and fitting. As for the performances well we had the full range of youngsters from Year 7 to Upper Sixth. Congratulations to them for recreating on stage scenes which entertained as well as brought tears to our eyes. Special congratulations must go to the two lead performers Hannah Bishop and Joe Crisfield. I must add my thanks to all other helpers, friends and relatives of the production team!



Debating



The autumn term is always a busy one for debating and the last few weeks have been just that for the school Debating Team. On Thursday 27th November they were drawn against King's School, Rochester in the 1st Round of the ESU Mace Debating Competition. The event took place at Dartford Girls and we were asked to oppose the motion 'This House would give all cities elected mayors.' The standard of Debate was high, with the experienced Toni Atkinson (U6KS) and Becky Drewry (L6NM) putting forward a balanced and convincing opposition. They were convincing enough to not only win the vote on their motion, but also to go through to the next round of the competition in the New Year. It must be said that along the way the team has taken the noticeable Debating scalp of Newstead Woods School for Girls, something that has not been achieved before by a GGSG team in seven years of trying.

Monday 1st December saw the same pairing participating in the Cambridge Union Parliamentary Debate competition, along with teams from Dartford Girls and Benenden. The standard of Debate was very high, with the team showing a great deal of insight and structure in the way that they put forward their cases for the two motions; 'This House would make the unemployed work for the dole', and 'This House would legalise prostitution'. The latter of the two motions was something that they were only given 15minutes to prepare. In the end, the team was not selected to go through to next term's further heat. However, the experience gained will benefit the team for the quest for success in the ESU competition.

It is very pleasing to report that a junior society has been flourishing this term under the guidance of the team members and also Sophia Buckley (U6ME). The enthusiasm shown is very promising and augurs well for future years of debating. Thank you to Mr Smith for coaching the students!

Charity

I am pleased to report that so far this term our students have raised the following amounts for charity:

Children in Need	£1565.00
Readathon	£2001.00
Jeans for Genes Day	£848.45
Children of Iraq	£138.30
Year 10 Cancer Research	£10.00

Individual Achievements

- Kate (8KG) and Elizabeth (7BB) Hamilton recently received a special award from the Lions Hospice for their commitment to raising funds. They did a sponsored dance working with 2 girls from Northfleet School for Girls. Well done!





- Iyesha Cheema-Bradshaw and Amy Craig attended auditions for the professional production of “Cinderella” at the Woodville Halls and were selected from a crowd of 120 dancers to appear in the show due to open 17th December. Congratulations and good luck.
- I am sure you will want to join me in congratulating Miss A Vamplew, Teacher of Art in achieving her Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award this summer. She proudly received the award at St James Palace on 20th November. She is clearly an excellent role model for our students!



Detention

An increasing number of students are being required to attend detention. Most for failing to hand in homework on time. Some staff will keep girls at break or lunchtime, but the official whole school detention is Monday afternoon. Due notice will always be given. I ask you to ensure arrangements are made on these occasions for your daughter to get home safely. It will only be in exceptional circumstances that the detention will be re-arranged. Please support the staff by helping to monitor your daughter's homework. She can then avoid detention altogether!

Whole School Celebration



On Monday 1st December I proudly received the “Investor in Careers” Award on behalf of the School. It is in recognition for the excellent Careers programme we have for our students at GGSG. I wish to thank Mrs Curtis without whose hard work and dedication this would not have been possible. I am particularly proud as we are the first school in Kent to receive the award.

Curriculum



Those of you with daughters in Year 7, 8 or 9 should have received a copy of the updated KS3 Curriculum booklet recently. Please contact your daughter's Form Tutor if you did not receive one.

Scuba Diving Trip to Malta



On 26th October 2003 a group of 26 students, one ex-student, two members of staff and one ex member of staff boarded a plane for what was to become a unique and unforgettable week's diving in Malta. As a group they had already studied hard for the course, completing endless theory tests.

Invigilators

Thank you to those of you who have supported in the past. We shall require your help again in January, then May and June. Please contact Mr Holmes, Assistant Headteacher, or Mrs Dell, Finance Officer, if you are able to help.

On one day they were taught how to kit up and put on wetsuits. Three hours later they were ready to enter the water! After completing a series of confined water dives at the start of the week where they practised important skills, they were eventually able to brave the open waters of Malta and what an incredible experience it was! Their efforts paid off and they were greeted by the sight of beautiful sea-life, breathtaking views into a deep abyss and the serenity of the underwater world.

Parent Governors

Your daughter will have been given an information letter about vacancies and how to nominate parents interested in taking on the role of Parent Governor. Please inform your daughter's form tutor if you do not receive this.

Thank you to Mr McQueen for organising such a successful trip and congratulations to everybody who gained their PADI certification for open water diving anywhere in the world!

Teaching & Learning

In the last newsletter we outlined plans to train all students in the use of a technique called Mindmapping. I am delighted to report that all year groups have now successfully completed their training in the use of this technique which aims to improve note taking, planning and revision. This is a technique that can have a significant impact on students' understanding and retention of knowledge. With the January tests fast approaching, we would encourage all students to use this strategy alongside their usual methods of revision. Additionally, students in Years 8 to 13 have undergone an assessment to have their preferred learning styles identified. This information should now be inside students' planners together with some suggestions for strategies that match each of the learning styles.

Family Holidays & School Attendance

We continue to be concerned at the number of families who take holidays in school time. Whilst we have to accept that some parents have no alternative because of professional commitments, I must stress once again how disruptive absence can be to your daughter's education. May I ask you therefore that such absences are kept to the bare minimum, due notice be given and work collected by your daughter from her teachers prior to the holiday.

Parents' Association



We are very grateful for the hard work of the committee and other parent helpers who support the school. We said goodbye to Lis Smith this term. She chaired the committee and served the school well for many years. She has been replaced by Caroline Mills.

Please also bear in mind that telephoning the school to report your daughter's absence is insufficient, we also need a letter. I'm afraid this is a legal requirement.

Lower school students have enjoyed their discos this term!





I trust you have been able to purchase your raffle tickets for the Christmas Draw, which took place on Friday 12th December. A list of winners accompanies this newsletter. All winning raffle tickets should be returned to Mrs Bates, my PA, who will issue prizes. However, alcohol will only be issued to adults.

School Fund

Thank you to all parents who have paid their School Fund this term. The direct debit facility has been taken up by 133 of you. For your information I can confirm that last year's School Fund was used to support the following: Debating, Biology Olympiad, Maths Challenge, Year 7 Mobile Bookshop, badges for students, Year 11 leaving day, Xmas tree, public telephones, subscriptions and affiliations, newspapers, sports and, of course, the minibus. It is also used to support the cost of curriculum trips for students in hardship cases.

Newsletter by email



Please remember that you could receive your newsletter by email. 200 of you opted for this earlier this term. If you wish to be included on the mailing list please provide us with your address on the reply slip. (very clearly so as to avoid the emails bouncing back!) Thank you.

Africa Link



As you may already be aware, we are linked to a school in South Africa as part of the "Link Community Development" scheme. The school is the Jongilizwe Senior Secondary School in the Mhloutlo District. The school was burnt down in 2001 but reopened in 2002. We aim to support the school's development through links with our Senior Team. We also want to involve the students in raising funds for the school as well as establishing curriculum links. Through the Global Teacher Programme teachers are also encouraged to go and spend their summer in Africa.

Travel to and from school

In addition to the usual request for parents to be considerate to our neighbours I need to ask you to support us in reminding your daughters to line up in tidy rows whilst they wait for buses. We have had complaints from pedestrians who are forced off the pavement out into the road.

Goodbyes

At the end of term we are saying goodbye to 2 of our students, Brianna and Amanda Biscoe in Years 7 and 8, who are returning to the USA. We wish them well in their future life there.

Team Reports



- U18 team came fourth in their section of the County Hockey Tournament on Wednesday 8th October
- U16 team drew two and lost two, coming second in their section of the County Hockey Tournament on Thursday 16th October.
- In the North West Kent League, the Year 9 team reached the semi-final of the finals night and the Year 10 team won to become district champions. The League was played every Tuesday this term.
- In the U15 and U16 district tournaments on Saturday 9th November, the U16 team came second and the U15 team won.
- In the U19 County Tournament on the 12th November, the team reached the second round and narrowly lost to Benenden.

Music



At the end of October in excess of 80 Year 7 girls performed in the Year 7 Concert. Performances included solo and duet items as well as the Training Orchestra, Junior Choir and Recorder Ensemble. The standard was very high and everyone who took part deserves congratulating.

More recently, the Senior Choir participated in the annual Festival of Lights at the Rose Gallery, Bluewater. They entertained shoppers for an hour with a variety of Christmas carols, receiving some very favourable comments. Well done to all who took part and thank you to Mr Barker for organising the performance.

There are several vacancies arising for instrumental lessons, namely clarinet, saxophone, violin, cello and trumpet. Lessons can be taken in pairs, which works out considerably cheaper than individual lessons. Please contact Miss Sayers for details.

Arrangements for the last and first days of term

This year the last day is **Friday 19th December**. Please note that girls will leave school at 12.35 on that day (buses will leave at 12.45). There will be an extended break service in the canteen but no lunch.

Your daughter should have received a green form informing you that **the Nu Venture Bus will leave at the normal time**. If you have not received this and are unable to make alternative arrangements, please inform the school office.

We will return on **Monday 5th January** which will be a normal day.

Finally, may I wish you and your families a Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.

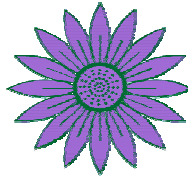
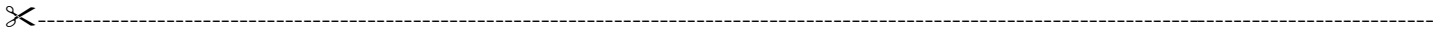
Yours sincerely

Mrs N Chapman
Headteacher





Wishing you all a Merry Christmas & Happy New Year



GRAVESEND GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Please return to your daughter's form tutor by Wednesday 17th December 2002

I acknowledge receipt of the following:

- 1 The Newsletter, Issue 2
- 2 Winners of P.A. Christmas Draw

Please send my Newsletters by email. My email address is: _____

Daughter's name _____ Form _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian _____ Date _____





**PARENTS ASSOCIATION
CHRISTMAS RAFFLE 2003 WINNERS**

1st PRIZE	Colour TV with DVD	Ticket 02213	Mr T Pemberton	*****
2nd PRIZE	Stereo CD Player	Ticket 01506	Mrs A Wall	*****
3rd PRIZE	£ 50 cash	Ticket 00128	J Hollingum	*****
PRIZE	Christmas Hamper	Ticket 01287	H Kemsley	*****
PRIZE	Bowling for 6	Ticket 06296	Winn	
PRIZE	£ 10 M & S voucher	Ticket 01103	G Spiteri	
PRIZE	£20 FOR GIRLYS voucher	Ticket 00597	S Finnegan	
PRIZE	£20 ASDA voucher	Ticket 01355	J Blunden	
PRIZE	Two Tickets to watch Gravesend & Northfleet FC	Ticket 00620	M Fuller	
PRIZE 4	Tickets for Ice Skating	Ticket 01465	J Kaur Kai	
PRIZE 2	Tickets to the Cinema	Ticket 06540	Whiterod	
PRIZE	£10 TESCO voucher	Ticket 07447	A James	
PRIZE	A Teddy Bear	Ticket 03297	Mrs. E Smart	
PRIZE	Day Trip on Le Shuttle for Car and up to 8 passengers			
		Ticket 04439	G Gasper	
PRIZE	A Clock	Ticket 01444	B Barriskill	
PRIZE	A Bottle of Whiskey	Ticket 08655	Mr A Pugh	*****
PRIZE	Family Swim at Cascades	Ticket 01617	B Daley	
PRIZE	A "Year's" Supply Of Toilet Rolls (160 No)	Ticket 02874	Chidlow	
PRIZE	£50 Longfield Wools Voucher	Ticket 02349	Mr Yeates	
PRIZE	£20 New Look Voucher	Ticket 00647	Miss S Jarrett	
PRIZE	A Cuddly Dog	Ticket 00765	Mrs. P Thornhill	
PRIZE	£20 W H SMITH Voucher	Ticket 08382	L May	
PRIZE	A Mountain Bike	Ticket 02419	Mr. G Gardiner	*****
PRIZE	A Box of Chocolates	Ticket 08313	Edwards	
PRIZE	A Bottle of Wine	Ticket 08924	Y Sterry	*****

Prizes can be collected from Mrs Bates' office during lunch breaks, preferably before school closes next Friday, 19th December. Please ensure that you have the correct ticket with you.

Prizes indicated thus *****, must be collected by a responsible adult and will not be sent home via a pupil.

The pupil who sold the most raffle tickets was Victoria Rowlands of 7SS who won £10.

The winner of the Golf Bid was J Bullock with a bid of £226.

