



Gravesend Grammar School For Girls

Newsletter Number 4

March 2005

Dear Parents

This has been such a short half-term and yet we have all managed to do so much!

Our students have been excellent during the period of bad weather. They still dressed sensibly and refrained from snowball fights. It was a shame, in a way, that there was enough snow to create major disruption in parts of Kent but not enough for our students to build snowmen again. There were 2 days of major disruption as a number of staff were unable to drive to school. This meant some students had more than one lesson covered on those days. However, they worked sensibly. I thank you for your understanding of my decision to close the school early on Wednesday 2nd March. I responded to the situation some of you had reported, which could have meant some girls would not be able to get home. The buses confirmed this by collecting the girls early. This is the one occasion when mobile phones help!

Vaisaki Festival

A very special multi-cultural evening is being organised for Tuesday 12 April, both to celebrate Vaisaki and raise funds in aid of the Tsunami Fund. Acts will include: the Saheli Writers, Gatko, 4 x 4, Mc-ing, Storm Promotions, the School Choir and others.

Tickets are on sale from Kiran Ganja, 10DP, Room 6 and Mrs Connolly in the Finance Office before school, at break and lunchtime. £5 will include the show, food, wine and soft drinks. (Free for children under 5).

Tickets are limited, get yours early!

German Work Experience

During the February half term holidays the following Lower Sixth German students spent a week in Neumunster, Gravesend's twin town:

Fiona Davis
Nicole Kevill
Amy West

They worked in different establishments such as a local Secondary School, a Swim and Leisure Centre and a Veterinary Practice. The girls agreed that the work experience was an ideal opportunity to increase their language skills and gain further

background knowledge, which will help them with their A Level studies.



Year 9 Shakespeare Workshop

On Friday 4th March Year 9 took part in a Shakespeare Workshop run by the Rainbow Theatre Company. They were treated to memorable performances and activities based on *Macbeth* and *Much Ado About Nothing* - the set texts for this year's English SATs. It proved very useful to explore the plays in such a practical way before the examination. Well done to everybody who got involved by assisting the actors with their improvisations or by asking them challenging questions!

Public Speaking

Caroline Knott L6 represented the school in this year's Junior Speakers Competition at Woodville Halls. She delivered a very persuasive speech on the theme of "Are parents too protective of their children?" and gained a well-deserved second prize. Well done to Caroline!

Music



On Saturday 12th March 61 of our girls participated in the Annual Gravesend Festival of Music. The Training Orchestra had an early morning start with their entry in the Ensemble Class and were up against groups of older students from other schools. The Training Orchestra performed an arrangement of *The Flintstones*, which was commended by the adjudicator, and they were awarded joint second place. In the afternoon, both our Junior and Senior Choirs performed in their relevant classes. The Junior Choir sang *Catch a Falling Star* and *Colours of the Wind* and the adjudicator commended their performance and awarded them second place. The Senior Choir sang *Rythm of Life* and *California Dreaming* and were awarded first place in their class and were presented with a certificate and cup. A huge well done to all who took part and thank you to Miss Sayers and Mr Barker for organising.

On Tuesday 15th March we enjoyed another superb Spring Concert. It involved students from the Upper Sixth down to Year 7. Students produced high quality music as soloists and in their various groups. They are a credit to their teachers - Well done!

Sports & Personal Achievement

Cross Country

Hayley Hickmott, Year 10, was selected to run in the English Schools Cross Country for Kent on Saturday 12th March. She came 147th out of 333 runners. Well done!



Football

We have been in two major competitions. An FA run U12 held in Woking Leisure Centre on Saturday 5th February and the Adidas Cup U13 on Wednesday 9th February. All the girls did remarkably well in both and could have won.

On Saturday they played a mini league and came joint runners-up, won two lost two and drew. Only the group winners went into the final finalists. Unfortunately Charlton Athletic would not let our main player take part and her presence was sorely missed by her team-mates.

On Wednesday we had our full squad and played at Gillingham's training ground. About 20 schools took part. We came runners-up in the group stage by goal difference only, we won three and drew with the winners of the group stage with only one goal against us. The team then played the semi finals against the other group winners and won one and drew one thus taking them to the top of the group and through to the quarter finals. They had this match to

win to get to the final, but unfortunately lost to the team that eventually won the final.

In all they lost only one game and only 3 goals were scored against them - on any other day this would be enough to win. Well done girls and thank you to Mr Moore for giving the girls the opportunity.

Hockey

The U18 team played in the County Tournament on Wednesday 6th October. They beat King's College and lost to King's School, Canterbury and Sutton Valance School.

The U14 team played in the County Tournament on Monday 8th November. They beat King's School, Rochester and the Weald of Kent School and lost to King's College, Simon Langton Girls School and Rochester Grammar School.

Netball

The U13 team played in the County Tournament and lost all five of their games.

The Year 7 and Year 8 teams played in the North West Kent District League this term. Both teams are playing in the semi-finals on Tuesday 15th March at Dartford Technology College.

Rugby

Gary Theobald from Gravesend Rugby Club ran a taster session for Year 11 students on Monday and Tuesday 14th and 15th March.

Crufts

Laura Silvester in Year 11 showed her Norwegian Buhund, Miss Heather (Poppy) in the Post-Graduate Bitch Pastoral class. She was placed second against professional breeders and handlers. Congratulations!



School Officials 2005-06

Natasha Fowler was elected Head Girl with Alice Walker and Amy West as her Deputies. This year the elections took place early so that the Officials could be involved in a working party considering how we might improve the use of the student voice in the school, particularly in relation to consultation via the School Council.

A number of other officials will also serve the school in their roles with: the School Council, Charities, Publicity, Green Issues, Student Support, KS3 & 4 Co-ordinators, Cultural Issues, Sixth Form Liaison. Their names and photos will soon be displayed in school.

The involvement of senior students in the life of the school is a very important and valuable aspect of our school, which Ofsted praised highly. I thank all the students who have come forward to take on such roles, which I know they will enjoy.

Governing Body

I am pleased to announce that we have two new Governors who joined us this term. Mr Anthony Laurent has joined us as a Parent Governor and Ms Pam Dhesi as a Partnership Governor.

The Governing Body will need to be reconstituted for September 2005. Information about Election will be sent to you in April.

Sainsbury's Active Vouchers

If you shop in Sainsbury's please accept the vouchers and ask your daughters to bring them to school - they can be handed to the Main Office or the Finance Office. I shall report back on what the school has been able to acquire through the scheme.

Charity

Well done to the whole school for raising £2489 in support of victims of the Tsunami. This was donated to UNICEF.

Red Nose Day gave the opportunity for the students to be imaginative in their fund-raising activities. Some of the staff joined in! The final figure raised has yet to be confirmed, but it will be well over £500. Individuals do work hard in the background too. We recently received a letter from the Lions Hospice asking us to thank Fay Radcliffe 7TP for her help and support at a fund-raising event held at the Woodville Halls last term. Well done Fay!

Summer Uniform

Please be reminded that no trousers should be worn after the Easter break. KS3 students are allowed to wear short socks and KS4 can wear skin coloured tights. I would also ask you to check whether your daughter has outgrown her kilt. Some are looking short and yet the girls have not rolled them up. We hope to build up a stock of second-hand kilts so please pass them on to the P.A. via the School Office. Thank you.

May I ask you to remind your daughters who are in the Sixth Form that the Dress Code must be followed. That

includes: no trainers or jeans, no crop tops and no stiletto heels. We shall be talking to Years 11 and 12 next term about a tightening up of the Sixth Form Dress Code as so many are currently abusing the privilege of wearing their own clothes and looking far too casual for a work environment.

Regulations regarding earrings were relaxed for Years 10 and 11, however some girls are now abusing this. If it continues we shall have no option but to return to stricter rules. A number of girls in Year 10 are also wearing make-up, which can hardly be classified as "discreet". Please ensure your daughters do not wear heavy foundation, mascara or eye shadow - it is hardly suitable for a school environment. Thank you.

Message from the Attendance Officer

Please note that your daughters are still not always signing in when they arrive late for school. We need to know when your daughter is on site for Health & Safety reasons. If there is a fire, we would assume she is absent.

Every time they do not sign in will be counted as an absence and you will be sent a letter for a reason to be given. This includes lateness when a school bus is late - **they must sign in, stating the reason, before going to lessons.**

Thank you

The Design and Technology department would like to thank the following individuals and companies for the free supply of materials, which have been gratefully received and are proving to be very useful to students.

Mr Gary Reading at Crystal Enterprise Solar for the donation of Solar Panels

Mr Roy Kitson at Advanced Panels & Products Ltd for the donation of styrofoam and M.D.F. sheet

Mr Mike Upson and Jim Agnew at L&G Signs Limited for the donation of copper, aluminium and plastic sheet

Mr Martin Eaton at Smurfit South-East for the donation of large sheets of corrugated card

Staff Leaving

Mrs Dixon, Teacher of English and Head of Year 7 is leaving us at Easter to take up a position at Hugh Christie Technology College. Miss Hare has been appointed to replace her in the new term.

Arrangements for the last day of term

The last day of term on **Wednesday 23 March**, will be a normal day and will end at **3.40 pm**.

SUMMER TERM 2005

Monday 11 April - Friday 22 July

Bank Holiday Monday 2 May

Half Term

Monday 30 May - Friday 3 June

Staff Development Day

Wednesday 27 April

The new term starts on **Monday 11 April**. May I take this opportunity to wish you and your families a happy Easter.

Yours sincerely



Mrs N Chapman
Headteacher

