

Gravesend Grammar School for Girls

Newsletter Number 5

May 2004

Dear Parents

This half term has flown by as students have been focusing on their examinations. Year 9 had their first taste of public examinations and deserve to be congratulated on their mature approach. A number of them had taken advantage of the additional Mathematics and Science revision sessions offered to them during the Easter break. Thank you to Mr Garner, Miss Sivaji, Mrs Thompson, Mrs Dalton and Mr Singh for coming in during their holidays. Year 11, 12 and 13 have entered one of the busiest periods of their education. We all wish them the success they deserve. Whilst they are at home revising they must not forget that their teachers can still be of help if they need to check out any information.

Water



No doubt you will be aware how much has been said in the media about the importance of a regular water intake for all of us. Schools have received much information about the role we should play in encouraging our students to drink water throughout the day. Apart from the health problems associated with lack of water, we have a vested interest in ensuring that our students' minds are sufficiently hydrated to maximise their learning capabilities. Evidence shows that students who drink water regularly throughout the day are able to concentrate better and longer. We are advised that small amounts throughout the day are better than large amounts less frequently. We have reminded your daughters that it is perfectly acceptable for them to take a small drink of water out of a bottle during a lesson. There are exceptions to this, girls are not allowed to have a drink in the Library, the ICT Rooms or the Science Labs, they must be sensible and have a drink **before** they enter these areas. We ask that they do not abuse this by bringing other types of drink. Water alone is allowed in lessons.

In addition to the water fountains we have in toilets and changing room areas we are having a fresh water dispenser installed in the Dining Room where girls can fill up the bottles they bring to school. Mineral water is also on sale in the drinks machines (we are planning to phase out sweet, fizzy drinks, but the girls will be consulted through the School Council).

Extra Curricular Activities

Regional Final of the Mathematics Challenge

Four girls took part in the challenge at King's College in London before the Easter break. The competition comprised of four rounds of challenging mathematical activities, our team actually came second in one of these rounds. Overall out of 18 other schools we came 9th. The girls who took part were Emily Banks, Ashani Biswas, Laura Humphreys and Stephanie Tann. Well done! Thank you to Miss Pulver for organising this.

German Exchange

During the Easter holidays 34 students accompanied by four members of staff enjoyed an exchange trip to Neumunster, Germany. Klaus-Groth Schule, our partner school for the past 16 years. Everyone adapted well to the 'German way of life', taking in similarities as well as differences in the school system, food, leisure activities and local traditions.

During their stay they visited the Hanseatic City of



Hamburg and took a boat trip round the international harbour and enjoyed a guided tour through the famous 'Rathaus'. The Easter weekend started with a walking tour through the old town and then joined their host families for Easter celebrations, which included an Easter egg hunt 'German Style' and a visit to a traditional Easter bonfire.

The experience also included a trip to Lubeck, a UNESCO World Heritage Town since 1987 and the farewell party which was organised brought their exchange visit to an enjoyable end. The girls agreed that they had experienced a wonderful time and benefited socially, culturally and linguistically from the trip. The accompanying staff were pleased by the girls' good conduct throughout their stay. We are now looking

forward to welcoming the German group back in June. Thank you to Mrs Chapman, Mrs Collin-Matthews, Mrs Gunthner-Saville and Mr Dudley for organising the trip.

Eurodisney Trip

On Saturday 1st May, 110 Year 8 girls and Sixth Formers enjoyed a day visit to Eurodisney, Paris. The doom and gloom weather forecasters proved to be wrong and we enjoyed a perfect day in the land of Mickey Mouse and Co, even when the Space Mountain ride got stuck! The whole trip went very smoothly thanks to the excellent behaviour and co-operation of all the girls and the support of the staff who gave up part of their bank holiday weekend to ensure that the trip was possible. This is the 3rd time we have made the trip and the girls have always proved to be a good advertisement for the school, with positive comments from the coach drivers on this occasion. Thank you to Mr Gilchrist, Mr and Mrs Murfet, Ms Bray, Mrs Gunthner-Saville, Mr Barker, Mrs Garner and her daughter, Mrs Matheson, Mrs Langworthy and Miss Medwin for their help and support.

Duke of Edinburgh Report

On the weekend of 24/25 April, forty three girls from Years 10 and 11 undertook a full day's Duke of Edinburgh training, including camping skills, packing rucksacks, cooking skills and safety and navigation tasks. In the evening they cooked their own dinner and then planned a hike of 12-15km for the Sunday. They camped at Hope Hill campsite and then very early (5am for some) they were up and about cooking their breakfast. At 10am they set off on their planned journey with a highly trained expedition assessor. They had to carry all their equipment in their rucksacks and navigate their route as a group. Most groups took it in turn to lead the route and they all had a lot of motivating to do, especially in the latter stages of the journey. They had many decisions to make and most groups went off their planned route at some point. However, after a little guidance from their leader they were soon back on track. Every pupil managed the walk and they all learned a great deal from this training weekend and are now ready to go on their practice expedition where they will this time, be walking without an adult leader and will have to make all the decisions themselves. Altogether there were 12 trainers/assessors on this training weekend and it was very pleasing to hear at least 5 of them say how wonderful it was to work with our girls and how attentive they had been. Thank you to Mrs Garner, Mr Barker and Louise Downing who helped over the weekend and in particular to Jill Lorkin and Elaine (field officers) who organised all the training and for getting such a wonderful group of trainers who are again all volunteers. Thank you to Miss Jewiss and Mr Barker for organising this event.

ESPRC Science Race Results



On 19th March a group of enthusiastic scientists led by our Science officials Victoria Hoptroff and Samantha Thurman took part in a nationally organised race. They had to answer a wide range of scientific questions on line. This was quite a challenge as not only had they to know the answers but they also had to respond against the clock.

We came 25th out of 120 in the South East and 150th out of the 600 schools that took part nationally. This was a great improvement on our results last year and I'm sure we will beat this next year.

Thank you to Vicky and Sam for generating such enthusiasm from our students. What we expect of a Science College, of course!

Music



This term began with a delightful evening of music making at the A' Level Music Performance evening. The Upper Sixth A' level musicians attracted an audience in the region of 80 people to hear their outstanding performances. Five of the students performed individual recital programmes for around 20 minutes each and the standard was superb. A huge 'well done' to Sarah Buchan, Fran Holmes, Rebecca Howard, Antonia Kent and Charlotte Williams. In addition to these, Emma Le Breton took part in the 'world premiere' of her A' level compositions *By My Side* and *Flowers of May*, which also featured musicians from the Upper and Lower Sixth and Year 11. Congratulations to Emma and her performers.

At the time of writing the last newsletter we did not have all of the instrumental music examination results. The following list is the complete set of results for Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, Trinity and Guildhall School of Music examinations. Well done to all!

NAME	YEAR	INSTRUMENT	GRADE
Larah Carter	7	Clarinet	2**
Lauren Casey	8	Clarinet	2**
Kathryn Dendias	8	Singing	5
Joanne Fairbairn	8	Flute	3*
Rebecca Knights	8	Piano	5*
Rebecca Knights	8	Singing	5**
Rebecca Knights	8	Violin	2*
Jennifer Wallace	9	Guitar	3
Cassie Ballantyne	10	Piano	3
Sally Brading	10	Piano	4*
Sarah Gamble	10	Piano	3*
Hannah Parker	10	Flute	6*
Hannah Parker	10	Piano	5
Nicole Strudley	10	Clarinet	5*
Emily Death	11	Piano	4*
Orla Wickenden	11	Flute	5**
Kirsten King	L6	Oboe	8**

Rosalyn Mott	L6	Piano	4
Julia Munday	L6	Piano	5*
Sarah Buchan	U6	Piano	8
Rachael Storr	U6	Piano	5*

* = with merit

** = with distinction

There will be several vacancies for tuition on most instruments and singing in September. If your daughter would like to begin lessons, it is advisable to apply before the end of the summer term in order for tuition to commence at the start of term. Shared lessons of two or more pupils dramatically reduces the cost and progress is usually only slightly slower than learning individually. Application forms can be obtained from Miss Sayers.

Windows: a happy ending!

You will be pleased to read that the KCC Planning Committee have agreed to grant the school retrospective planning permission for the new windows which have been installed since 2001. We are obviously very pleased and will learn from the experience! I would like to thank those of you who contacted the school or the newspaper to offer your support.

Uniform and Dress Code

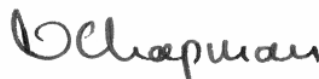
It has been brought to my attention that the new fashion of stiletto type heeled shoes is causing a great deal of damage to our wooden floors. We have asked our Sixth Formers to be mindful of this and not to wear such shoes. There are a small number of younger students who wear such shoes and so may I remind you that these designs are unsuitable for school wear. I thank you for your support.

Governing Body Update

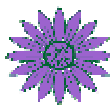
I am pleased to announce that Mrs Sara Langdale and Mr Steve East will serve as Parent Governors on the Governing Body. Their term of office will run until 31st August 2006 when the Governing Body reconstitutes.

Finally, we are saying goodbye to Mr Smith. Sadly, he is leaving us to take up a promotion at Headington School in Oxfordshire. He has served the school very well indeed in the 7 years he has been with us, both as a Teacher of English and as a Head of Year in the Sixth Form. We thank him and wish him well in his new school.

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 5
HOPE Poster

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

Please note: We regularly update email addresses when we receive additions or amendments, however, occasionally some newsletters still do not get through.

Please visit our website and download one or ask your daughter to collect one from the school office if this is the case.

Daughter's name _____ Form _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian _____ Date _____