

Gravesend Grammar School For Girls

Newsletter Number 1

October 2005

Dear Parents

The new school year has got off to a fine start as we are fully operational as a Specialist Science College. We were pleased with our students' results which continue to put our school high up in the performance tables. You will find details of our results in the Head's Report which you will receive this week.

Students (and staff) have been able to enjoy new facilities from the outset. Our Science block was opened on 7 September 2005 by Paul Carter, KCC Cabinet Member with responsibility for Education. It has been named the Rosalind Franklin Centre after a female scientist famous for her work on DNA. We hope her achievements will be an inspiration to our students.

We are also delighted with the new Learning Resources Centre which incorporates the new Library with a suite of computers for research as well as a Careers Library and Sixth Form study area. We have also been able to create a dual purpose classroom with desks which can be traditional and also provide ICT facilities. Students have been consulted about the opening hours of the new Learning Resources Centre. In response to their request the opening hours will be 8.30am-4.30pm.

Building Schools for the Future

As I informed you in my May newsletter Gravesend Headteachers are currently working with KCC developing planned improvement for Secondary Education in our area capitalising on the huge investment Gravesend will receive through Building Schools for the Future.

Students are beginning to get involved through the Student Council. In July a small group attended a Borough wide student consultation workshop organised by DEMOS, the following students from GGSG represented the school and had a thoroughly enjoyable day discussing ideas, likes and dislikes about their school learning experience. They have come back full of enthusiasm and will be feeding back in

Key Stage assemblies, to Governors and furthering discussion at School Council.

Charlotte Stalker	7TP
Alice Micklewright	7VM
Catherine Fooks	9JG
Sam Healy	7TP
Sophie Clayton	7VM
Amy Walters	10SD
Maria Lovesey	10SD
Sally Lynch	10RDE
Alice Walker	L6ME
Natasha Fowler	L6MC

Thank you to Mr McCorkell for co-ordinating this and the girls for attending. From the feedback they gave the Senior Team last month I think they got a lot from the experience.

New Staff

I am pleased to report that we have started the New Year with a full complement of teaching staff:

- ❖ Mr Delnon, MFL/German
- ❖ Mrs Grossman, Maths
- ❖ Mrs Parsons, History
- ❖ Miss Perry, English
- ❖ Mrs Heywood, returning to MFL/French

We also welcomed the following Support Staff:

- ❖ Mr R Martin, Assistant Librarian/Classroom Assistant
- ❖ Mrs Mantle, Creative Arts and Technology Technician



Training School

This term we welcome four new Associate Teachers who will be training with us as part of the Kent & Medway Training scheme.

- Miss A Parker (English)
- Miss J Man (Maths)
- Mrs M Tibeau (MFL)
- Mr S Goss (Science)

Switch on to Science

Saturday 17th September saw several students and staff have an early start to their weekend as they waited outside the school gates for a coach to the Tate Modern in London. Not for a tour of the gallery (although there was an opportunity for that as well), but for an inaugural Science event called 'Switch On to the Science of the Thames', an event inspired and coordinated by Mr McCorkell, Science College Director, in partnership with the Thames Estuary Partnership.

With nine other schools across the South East and London regions, teams of year 10 students were treated to hands on workshops, designed and delivered by a wide range of commercial and public bodies from the Thames region.



The aims of the day were to expose our students to the wide range of science based careers on their doorstep, as well as give an opportunity for companies to express their commitment to corporate social responsibility.

The day was a great success with each team of students experiencing two workshops during the day. Our students enjoyed a workshop on the Archaeology of the Thames, led by Museum of London Archaeological Society in the morning and tested wind power generators under the direction of RWE nPower in the afternoon.

Early evaluation of the event suggests considerable enthusiasm amongst both the schools and companies to repeat the event next year, perhaps trying to make it larger if a suitable venue and source of funding can be found. This event also marks the beginning of a

series of innovative events planned through the Science College at GGSG aimed at engaging local young people in the opportunities and excitement of Science.



Future Events

- 14-17 Oct 05 Space Camp for Years 7 and 11
Euro Space Centre, Belgium
- 9 Nov 2005 Fireworks Starts and Electrons for
L6 Chemists at Tonbridge School
- 10 Nov 2005 The Magic of Oxygen for U6
Chemists at Dartford Grammar
School for Girls
- 8 Dec 2005 Theatrical Pyrotechnics
Years 9 and 10 at 2.45pm
Open to the Community 5.30-
6.30pm . Everyone Welcome!

Expedition to Central America

This Summer, two groups of students went to Central America to experience life in countries very different from their own. The two groups had alternative itineraries, but they all had the chance to trek in the jungle, cook their own food on open fires and see the animals of the jungle up close. Both groups went into Guatemala, Belize and Mexico and some of the wild creatures they saw were Boa Constrictor snakes over 2m long, scorpions in their washing up bowl, tarantulas in the shower, jaguar footprints in the morning and howler monkeys in the treetops. They even camped next to a lake full of crocodiles! The students had to solve everyday problems, such as buying, carrying and then cooking provisions for several days in the jungle without being able to phone through to Tesco's. One group started the expedition running away from hurricane 'Emily' which was expected to touch land exactly where they were hoping to camp within the next 12 hours! Organising accommodation and travel became second nature to them and hopefully, they have now stopped smelling of sweat, mud and river water and appreciate just how lucky we are in the West to have clean running water and proper showers. Thank you to Mrs Pina and Miss Vamplew for organising the expedition.

Uniform

Your daughters have started the term looking very smart, thank you. We are particularly impressed with our Sixth Form who have taken well to wearing smart suits. They are presenting themselves as the smart young professional women they will become in the future!

As you are aware we monitor closely the quality of service provided by Longfield Wools for Year 7 to 11 uniforms. We believe it has improved for the start of the new year but would welcome any comments you may have.

Gifted and Talented

Thank you to all students who participated in the Gifted and Talented Holiday Club at Thamesview School where they took part in the annual Black History Month Poster Competition. Congratulations to Ravneet Khabra whose poster won second place.

Well Done!

Student Planners

Please be reminded that your daughter's planner is to be used as a means of communication between home and school as well as between school and home. When your daughter causes concern (homework not done, uniform issue, behaviour issue) a note will appear in her planner which we would ask you to sign. Clearly, you may also use this means to inform us of issues of concern or points of information.

Student Support

Please remind your daughters that Student Support is a service always available to all students at the school. Please refer to the attached letter received from Social Services.

Teaching & Learning

The beginning of term has seen a number of developments in Teaching and Learning at the school. Year 7 girls are the first year group to follow our new "Learning to Learn" course. They have one lesson per fortnight and cover areas such as learning styles, note taking, revision techniques, mind mapping, self review and target setting. The intention of the course is to help our students at the beginning of their time at GGSG to become better learners by giving them a range of techniques to use and by clearly setting out and reinforcing our expectations of students as partners in the learning process. The course is being taught by Ms Hare, the Head of Year7, who planned and designed it in consultation with Mrs Bell and Mr Barron.

Older students starting a new Key Stage have also benefited from an introduction to the new demands they will face. Year 10 students were taken off timetable for the morning of September 30th for a programme of activities designed to prepare them for GCSE and to help them become more effective learners. Year 12 students had a similar experience for the beginning of AS study on September 12th. Both sessions stressed the importance of homework, taking good notes, reviewing notes, and approaching their work in a serious and committed way. Actively participating in lessons and using their initiative to do wider reading and study around the topic they were doing were also covered. Please support us in helping students to become more effective learners by reinforcing these points with the girls at home.

Music



The following girls passed Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music and Trinity Guildhall examinations at the end of last term. Well done!

Year 8

	<u>Instrument</u>	<u>Grade</u>
Holly Hagan-Walker	Piano	2
Sumanpreet Sekhon	Violin	1

Year 9

Edwina Grix	Piano	1
Amelia Hook	Oboe	2
Jenna Turner	Clarinet	2*
Tijana Micunovic	Double Bass	2*

Year 10

Victoria Burton	Clarinet	2
Rebecca Knights	Violin	4*
Rebecca Knights	Piano	6*
Rebecca Knights	Singing	6*
Melanie Nurdin	Singing	4**

Year 11

Jenny Wallace	Guitar	4
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Year 13

Emily Death	Bassoon	8*
Caroline Townsend	Singing	4

Ex-Year 13

Flora Death	Piano	5**
Rosalyn Mott	Singing	6*
Julia Munday	Theory	5

* = with merit

** = with distinction

In addition to the above, Flora Death also passed her Diploma of the Associated Board of the Royal

Schools of Music on the clarinet, a remarkable achievement.

On Tuesday 4th October, four Lower Sixth AS Level Music students went to Shears Green Infant School where they worked with Year 2 pupils creating pieces of music based on the seaside. Our students were responsible for leading the sessions, aided by the pupils' classroom teachers and worked very well. Thank you to Miss Sayers for organising this.

P.E.

School Games Captains

The Captains for this year are:

Hockey	Rachael Hatter
Netball	Emma Winn
Athletics	Rebecca Saunders
Tennis	Nicola Kevill



Athletics

Joanna Coe in U6 competed for Kent in the Multi-events Championships in Southampton on the 16th and 17th September. The Kent team beat five other counties in the regional finals at Hemel Hempstead in June. The Kent team came third out of six counties and Jo came 34th out of 45.



Hockey

The U18 team took part in the County Tournament on Wednesday 5th October and came fourth in their section.

Swimming

Gravesham Borough Swimming Championships took place on Wednesday 6th July at Cygnet Pool. The Year 7-9 Junior relay 'B' team beat the 'A' team to win the trophy. The Senior relay team retained their trophy. Well done to Hannah Daley who won the Year 7-9 25 metre race.

Interform Tournaments

Year 10 and 11 have had their Hockey and Netball Tournaments already this term. The results were:

Year 10 Hockey

1	10LD	18
2	10KJ	15
3	10EP	15
4	10AM	10
5	10RB	7
6	10SG	6

Year 11 Hockey

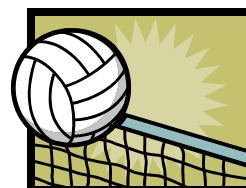
1	11HS	18
2	11HGM	13
3	11AS	11
4	11SD	8
5	11KB	8
6	11CHD	14

Year 10 Netball

1	10KJ	17
2	10SG	14
3	10AM	14
4	10RB	14
5	10EP	11
6	10LD	5

Year 11 Netball

1	11HS	20
2	11HGM	15
3	11AS	11
4	11KB	10
5	11SD	8
6	11CHD	6



Horsriding

Congratulations to Emily Mason who was recently named Show jumper of the Year at the Black Horse Show jumping Championships. Emily and her horse Danny beat 25 other competitors to claim the title at Combe Farm in the Alkham Valley. She won the Perpetual Trophy and a rug for Danny. The following weekend Emily also won a second show jumping championship final by taking the Equestrian Elite title at Blue Barn in Ashford.

Emily is the youngest candidate to ever have passed her British Horse Society Stage One examination.

Well Done!

Duke of Edinburgh

We have now over 150 girls in Key Stage 4 and 5 actively involved in the Duke of Edinburgh Awards. This includes Bronze, Silver and Gold.

Congratulations

Well done to Poonam Rathore (9TP) who has achieved a Grade A in her Punjabi GCSE. Poonam has now decided, on her teacher's suggestion, to sit her A' level. We wish her lots of luck and encouragement.

Readathon

The English department's annual event to raise money for the The Roald Dahl Foundation and CLIC Sargent, both charities for disabled and sick children, will begin on Monday 17 October. During this week, Year 7 are sponsored to read as many books as they can, to raise as much as they can, for two very good charities. Please encourage!

School Fund

Reminder

School Fund donations are now due for this academic year. Thank you to all parents who have already sent in their donation.

The request for a donation to School Fund this year is:

- £21.00 for one girl
- £31.00 for two sisters
- £41.00 for three sisters

Please make cheques payable to: Gravesend Grammar School for Girls and place them in an envelope marked with your daughter's name and form. Your daughter can then post it in the letterbox situated outside of the Finance Office. Should you choose to pay by cash please ask your daughter to go to the Finance office to sign a receipt list.

Calendar

Your copy for this year is attached. I would be grateful if you could arrange holidays and outings during school closure days.

Activity Days



These were run last July incorporating a range of different activities for all year groups. We have carried out an evaluation which has been very positive and are considering running such events again this Summer. Final decisions will be taken immediately after the half-term. We aim to ensure each activity is curriculum based with specific learning outcomes. We shall improve the planning process to give parents more notice, particularly of activities which will need your financial support. The activities will be balanced to ensure that no group is involved in more than one activity requiring some payment. We shall be informing you of the plans before the end of Term 2 (Christmas).

Parents' Association News

The Annual General Meeting of the Association was held in September, where we said goodbye to four of members who had served on the committee for all the time their daughters had attended the school. We thank Mrs Russell, Ms Fitch, Mrs Loomes and Mrs McDowall for the time, energy and enthusiasm they have given the school.

The officers elected at the meeting were:

- Chair: G Reading
- Vice Chair: J Bassant
- Treasurer: V Bria
- Vice Treasurer: L Clayton
- Secretary: M Fielder-White.

It was agreed that a sum of £5000 be given to the school as our contribution to the refurbishment of the new Learning Resources Centre situated in the Annexe.

We held a successful new Year 7 Disco in September and there will be a Year 8/9 Disco on 4 November and a Year 7/8/9 on 2 December. It is hoped to arrange for a live band to play in January – look out for details.

The weather was kind to us for the Fun Day at the beginning of October. An amount of £2000 was raised for funds; this was raised in equal portions by the PA and the students. Thank you for all those that helped on the day in setting up the stalls, and for those students and parents that came along to support the event. The winner of the £25.00 Bluewater Gift Voucher in the L6CS raffle was Lucy Gasper (11HGM). Congratulations!

The Christmas Raffle tickets will be coming home for sale at the start of Term 2 in November with the draw taking place on Friday 9 December.

Forthcoming Events

October

- 14-17 Year 7 trip
- 17 Harvest + OAP tea
- 17 Newsletter home
- 18 Year 7 Concert
- 21 1st School Fund payment due
- 24-28 Half-Term

November

- 2 Year 7 Parents' Evening 4.00-6.30
- 4 PA Disco: Years 8 & 9
- 7 Senior Prizegiving
- 8 Development Day – school closed for students
- 11 U6 RE Conference p1-3 at GGSG

- 11 Technical rehearsal
- 14 Dress rehearsal
- 16-19 Production
- 21 Governors' Meeting: 5.15 for 5.30
- 23 Year 11 Parents' Evening 4.30-6.30

December

- 1 6th form Parents' Evening 4.00-7.00
- 2 PA Disco: Years 7-9
- 5 Christmas Concert
- 6 Year 7 Childline
- 7 AL Options 7.00-9.00
- 9 PA Christmas Draw
- 12 Junior Carols
- 12 Newsletter home
- 14 Carol Service
- 15 Pantomime
- 16 **End of term**

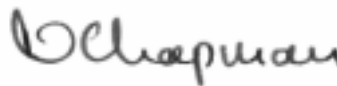
A Request to All Parents

In future, could you please refrain from bringing unnecessary forgotten items into the school for your Daughter(s). Our Reception Staff are becoming inundated with items that are being delivered throughout the day which is proving to be very time consuming.

We will no longer accept anything other than Medicine or GCSE Coursework.

Please note: Year 7 are the only year group exempt from this new rule.

Yours sincerely



Mrs N Chapman
Headteacher