

HIGHsted FLYERS...

March 2015

Dear Parents

It is hard to believe as I drive in to school in the blustery wind and rain that Easter is nearly upon us...

There have been so many activities within the Highsted community since January that exemplifies the great skill and talent our students possess; here are just a few examples to entice you to read on!

On March 18, Highsted embarked on what is now our 32nd exchange programme with our partner school in Erlangen, Germany. Students in Year 9, accompanied by Mr. Johnson in the MFL department, ably supported by members of the administration staff – Mrs Watson and Miss Calver, left Gatwick to champion another successful exchange trip. It was really encouraging to observe our girls on departure a little nervous about the prospect of living away from home, compared to their return where they were oozing with confidence and already missing their exchange partner! I do hope that life-long friendships will develop from this unique and important enrichment opportunity; congratulations to all our girls who challenged themselves to experience another culture and we look forward to the German colleagues and students visiting Highsted in the summer term.

Another highlight of March was the recent school concert in which the choir, under the direction of Catherine Orton, sang beautifully C-M Schonberg's '*Bring him home*'. Equally delightful to observe was the strength of the Highsted Orchestra and the Folk Band; girls (and boys in the sixth form) it is such a pleasure to see so many of you supporting each other in this important community event. Thank you to Miss Arden and Mrs Ridgeway for their continued dedication and commitment of music within the school.

Please be mindful that our summer production is *Hairspray* – for those of you in attendance at the Spring concert, you would have been blown away by Taya Harpum's rendition of '*Good Morning Baltimore*' and so we encourage you to book your tickets early to avoid disappointment!

Continuing the theme of personal development, I am delighted to share with you that Eleanor Gilbert (Year 8) has been leading a lunchtime club, teaching students and staff sign language; it is impressive to see such strong leadership potential in our students. Keep up the dedicated learning girls!

Congratulations to Eleanor Arthurs in Year 12 who secured 9th place at the World Championships for Irish Dancing last year; she is currently in Canada competing to improve on this fantastic performance; this is a tremendous achievement and highlights the dedication

and commitment many Highsted students demonstrate in balancing their academic success with personal interests. For all students involved in competing at county, national or international level, please share your success with us! Our Young Enterprise team have demonstrated superb skill and talent in ensuring the success of their business idea by selling their products at multiple venues; girls, you have to be the strongest team Highsted have worked with to date and it is great to acknowledge your professional approach to business – keep up the super work!

The school continues to participate in charitable work; our recent support of Comic Relief raised a total of £762.00; thank you to all students for their generous support of this important charity.

You will recall that the school has been involved with the Wisdom Hospice and many of the Highsted community were involved in the 'Colour Me Purple' 5K run on 22 March in Sittingbourne. It was a fantastic day for all and I am delighted that so many staff and students participated – of particular note were Peter Statham, our Chair of Governors and importantly, Miss Sheehan who secured fifth place (not that she is competitive in any way!) Thank you for your support of this great local charity.

I am delighted to inform you that the school has secured funding to renovate the school kitchen and serving area; this should improve greatly the provision for our students. We anticipate that works will commence in the summer term.

For your information, Mr Roberts Head of Art and Mrs Swindley, teacher of History and RE will retire from teaching at the end of April. We would like to take this opportunity to say a special thank you to our colleagues for their long-standing service and commitment to Highsted over the years; the school community wishes you well in your personal endeavours. Additionally, we welcome Mrs Harris, the newly appointed Finance and Resources officer to the school.

I hope you enjoy learning about the many additional activities your daughters, sons and their friends have been involved in since our last newsletter; our students really are a credit to their families and the school!

Finally, I wish you and your family a relaxing Easter and I thank you for your continued support of the school – your commitment is appreciated. Please do remember that the school will be back in session on Monday 20 April, 2015.

All good wishes



ANNE KELLY
Headteacher

Learning Resource Centre

On Thursday 5 March **World Book Day** was celebrated at Highsted. All Lower School students received a £1 World Book Day voucher which could be exchanged for one of ten exclusive books or put towards the cost of another book. Also, continuing the focus on reading for pleasure, there were many books on display in the Learning Resource Centre, including staff and student recommendations.



After the success of last year, all Year 7 students were once again able to choose a free book from a selection in the LRC. The LRC Managers had been collecting books throughout the year so that they could be given out to coincide with World Book Day. The students were able to select a book of their choice and a bookmark.

A second hand book sale took place in the LRC throughout March. All funds raised will be sent to Book Aid International. This is a charity set up to support literacy, education and development by improving access to books.

Young Enterprise

On 25 and 26 March, a group of Year 12 students visited the Kent Choices 4U event as part of their work in the Young Enterprise Company Programme. The students have been running their own company throughout the school year and this was just one of the many opportunities to sell their products. The students sold Easter confectionary to the hundreds of school and college students at the event over two days. Ffion Johnson, Managing Director of Highsted Enterprises said, 'This was a great experience to offer our products to a different market and to be able to talk to other students about the benefits of the Young Enterprise Company Programme'. Vanessa Johnson, Young Enterprise Manager – West Kent, praised the efforts of our students. 'The girls did a great job today representing the school and Young Enterprise. They promoted the company programme by speaking to many students and encouraged them to take the information back to their school. They were a great asset!'

Congratulations to Ffion, Jasmine, Laura, Ellie, Jenny, Emma and Rachel!

Dancing to success!

Year 8 student Eleanor Gilbert is pictured here celebrating her latest ballroom dancing victory. She won the Samba and Fox Trot in the Above Gold Juniors category on Sunday 8 March at Bromley. Well done Eleanor - keep up the good work!



Chemistry Trip to Salters Festival

On Wednesday 25 March myself and 7 others went to the University of Greenwich, in Medway. We participated in the Salters' Challenge and the University Challenge. In the Salters' Challenge we had 3 different experiments to do which allowed us to find out a murderer. In this challenge Highsted Team 2 came 3rd out of 11 teams. In the University Challenge we used different amounts of chemicals to make our solution change colour, we then had to figure out how much of each chemical we would need to make the colour change when a canon went off in a song. At the end of the day we had a talk about 'The Magic of Chemistry'. This day was very enjoyable and interesting and I did not only enjoy myself but I have improved my science skills a lot.

By Georgina Bostock Year 8

Today, we participated in the Salters' Festival at Greenwich University in Chatham. 8 Highsted girls went to the event for the day with Dr Oguntoye. The first challenge was the Salters' Challenge which was about a murder. We had several suspects with items on them and we had to go through three experiments and see if they matched with the items at the crime scene. This really gave me an inspiration for Forensic Science. Tierney Sharp, Molly Havell, Eesha Qureshi and I came 3rd in this challenge out of eleven teams. After lunch, we did the University Challenge, which was about getting the measurements spot on. We had to measure all the ingredients perfectly so that our mixture changed colour at the right time to our assigned music. Although we didn't win anything in this challenge, I think we tried our hardest. We then had a lecture about the 'Magic of Chemistry' which I found very interesting and I learned some new things too. I think we all had a great time at the Salters' Festival.

By Madeleine Braby Year 8

Flatford Mill

In February, the Year 12 Geography class went to Flatford Mill in Suffolk to take part in fieldwork and research for their AS exam in the summer. We got the opportunity to stay in Constable Country in the beautiful countryside, with educational facilities to help collate the fieldwork data collected on our outings during the day. After forgetting the health and medication forms a few minutes into our journey, it was not looking great. However, from then on, all improved. Cases were stacked high in the minibus filled with food, but we really did not need it, as the food provided was actually alright. Our rather fabulous group leader, Tristan, showed us the way of the countryside, and the need for rural rebranding in old seaside towns such as Walton-on-the-Naze, and we got to see both the successes and failures of urban rebranding in Ipswich. A touchy subject was the idea of having to measure pebbles on the beach, but to everyone's surprise, we did not have to. Luckily, the British weather held up, and we had days of sunshine, with no rain. Spirits were high throughout the time, and to top it all off, we had a lovely plate of fish and chips before coming home.

Outreach Programmes

This year Highsted is supporting local primary schools by offering a series of Outreach workshops in Mathematics, Music and Science. Each workshop is unique to the subject and supports student development.



Mathematics Outreach offers Year 5 students the opportunity to partake in a Mathematics workshop encouraging the interests of children in problem solving areas of Mathematics. The hour long workshop supports the learning of

Mathematics through developing the students' skills in number, shape and space, reasoning and teamwork. The workshop links to many numeracy skills learned in the KS2 Mathematics curriculum.

Music Outreach offers Year 5 students the opportunity to take part in the 'Junk Percussion' Workshop aimed at encouraging the interests of children in music. The workshop lasts for one hour and supports the learning of music through developing the students' skills in coordination, problem solving, reasoning and teamwork. The workshop also links to skills of rhythm, pulse and ensemble work seen in the KS2 Music curriculum.



Science Outreach offers Year 5 students the opportunity to meet and learn a few things about reptiles, amphibians and insects in a programme aimed at encouraging the interests of children in science. The visit supports the teaching of the KS2 Living Things and their Habitat and adaptations.



So far 10 primary schools have already taken part and more have signed up to take part in the sessions in the future

PE Updates

Netball



Well done to all the students who have represented Highsted in the Kent Schools Netball Tournaments this year. In all age categories, the competition was extremely tough and although we did not win many matches, all students involved played well and have learnt from the experience.



Swimming

In January, girls across the school competed in the Kent Schools Swimming Gala. It was the biggest team Highsted have ever had and the event saw lots of personal bests and successful outcomes.



A particular well done to Matilda Durrant who made the 100m Freestyle final, Olivia Hawkins who made the 100m Backstroke final and the Senior Girls Freestyle and Medley Relay team who made the final for the second year in a row.

Indoor Athletics

Well done for the Year 7 and 8 students who represented the school in the Area Indoor Athletics competition. Both teams were outstanding and won the competition with ease. This meant that Highsted progressed to represent Swale at the Kent Finals. The girls continued to perform well at this event, with Year 8's coming in 10th place and Year 7's coming 4th in Kent.



Futsal

Well done to the U14 Futsal team who qualified to represent Swale at the Kent Finals. The students played extremely well and were placed 6th in Kent.



Interhouse Benchball

Term 4 has seen the return of the schools Interhouse Benchball Competition. Every Thursday lunch time students across all age groups and staff have come together to represent their house. Student participation and support has been fantastic this year, and we hope this will continue for the interhouse sporting competitions that are coming up in the Summer terms. The final results were :

- 1st – Seacole
- 2nd – Franklin
- 3rd – Chanel
- 4th – Eliot
- 5th – Roddick
- 6th – Keller

Next term the PE department plan to run a Rounders tournament with the winning team getting the chance to take on the staff superstars!!

Highsted to Erlangen 2015

On Wednesday 18 March 2015, an excited group of 35 Year 9 and 10 girls, accompanied by Mr Johnson, Mrs Watson and Miss Calver made their way to Erlangen to partake in our school's annual German exchange programme; a long-standing partnership which has flourished and gained in popularity over its forty-two year history. After the usual initial hesitation, our girls quickly gained in confidence following a group trip to nearby Bamberg on day one. Here, the students, along with their German exchange partners, were taken on a guided tour of the city, visiting its Cathedral, town hall and the local ice-cream parlour, of course! The following day saw our trailblazing students visit the historic city of Nuremberg where we were fortunate enough to catch the eclipse and thereby feature in a national German newspaper. That evening, we all donned our glad-rags to dance the night away at a typical German prom. Even Mr Johnson had a go at a bit of ballroom dancing! Over the course of the weekend, the girls spent time with their German counterparts, enjoying such activities as bowling, swimming, mountaineering and horse-riding. The final three days of the exchange saw us take in a factory tour of the local, yet world-renowned, stationery manufacturer Staedtler, as well as join in with some lessons at our partner school. On the penultimate day, we celebrated and cemented our new-found friendships at a special afternoon tea held in our honour, which saw both English and German students bring along a variety



of delicious *hausgemachte* traditional cakes and bakes! We made the most of our final day by travelling back through time to the 1500s to a reconstructed German village where our girls tried their hand at living life the old-fashioned way. Inevitably, we had to bid a fond *auf wiedersehen* to our partners shortly afterwards and, with tears aplenty, we boarded the plane home comforted by the knowledge that we'll see them again in just a few months' time. I would like to congratulate our girls for representing our school so well, and thank Mrs Watson and Miss Calver for their support during the exchange.

Mr Johnson

Musical Concerts

This term has seen two events within the Highsted Music Department.



The Over 55s Club Concert was held on Tuesday 17 March and featured music from both music clubs and class performances. Our guests enjoyed an afternoon of tea and cakes whilst listening to pieces from The Highsted Choir, Windband, Rock Band Folk Band and The Origin. This concert was the debut for some of our Year 9 and 10 solo performers.



The second event was the Spring Concert, which was an evening of diverse music from Handel to Fall Out Boy. The Music Department welcomed Mrs Orton in her first concert as director of the Highsted Choir, performing a range of songs including Bad Day and Bring Him Home. As well as ear-catching performances from The Windband and Rock Band, the audience had a glimpse of our summer musical, Hairspray, from the Highsted Orchestra and soloist Taya Harpum.

Collecting Pupils from School...

Could we please remind you that you are not allowed to park in the school grounds at any time, regardless of circumstances, to collect pupils. We have limited car parking spaces and it becomes a danger to students when they are leaving the site.

The car park is for staff use only.

Please also show consideration to local residents when parking in Highsted Road. We have had complaints from residents about their driveways being blocked by parked cars and cars parked in a dangerous manner with regards to junctions and safe crossing places.

Highsted Road remains a congested place at the end of the school day, due to the high volume of traffic at this time. Could parents and students be reminded of the need to demonstrate extra caution with regards to road safety when leaving the site.

Calendar Update



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Term 5		April 2015	
Monday 20		Start of Term 5	
Tuesday 21		Year 8 Parents' Evening	
		May	
Monday 4		Bank Holiday	
Monday 11		GCSE/AS/A-Level Examinations start	
Friday 22		PSHCEE Focus Day End of Term 5	
Term 6		June	
Monday 1		Start of Term 6	
Tuesday 2		Year 7 Parents' Evening	
Thursday 11		Open Evening	
Thursday 18		New Intake Welcome Evening	
Saturday 20		Year 5 Activity Day	
Wednesday 24		GCSE/AS/A-Level Examinations end	
		July	
Thursday 2		Year 6 Welcome Day Higher Education Information Evening	
Monday 13		Citizenship Week	
Thursday 23		Lower School Awards	
Friday 24		End of Term 6	
		August	
Thursday 13		AS & A-Level Examination Results Day	
Thursday 20		GCSE Examination Results Day	
		September	
Thursday 3		Start of Term 1 Staff Development Day – School closed to pupils	
Friday 4		Staff Development Day – School closed to pupils	
Monday 7		Whole School Returns	
		October	
Friday 23		End of Term 1	

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