



# Westcliff Newsletter

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*The Westcliff Newsletter is online at: [www.whsg.info](http://www.whsg.info)*

**Monday 7 January 2008**

**Tuesday 8 January**

**Wednesday 9 - Friday 18 January**

**Friday 11 January**

**Monday 28 January**

**Friday 1 February**

**Wednesday 6 - Friday 8 February**

**Thursday 7 February**

**Friday 8 February**

**Monday 11 - Friday 15 February**

## **SPRING TERM 2008 BEGINS**

Year 12 Parents' Evening - 4.00 - 6.30 pm

Year 12 and 13 Module Exams

Year 10 Performance Updates issued to Parents

Year 10 Parents' Evening - 4.00 - 6.30 pm

Year 12 & 13 Performance Updates issued to Parents

Year 8 Science & Engineering Student Activity

**Year 12 (AS Students) ICT Convention to Paris**

Intermediate Maths Challenge

Year 8 Parents' Evening - 4.00 - 6.30 pm

**Year 11 Full Reports & Forecast Grades issued to Parents**

**Year 7 Interim Reports issued to Parents**

**Year 9 Options Fair**

**HALF TERM**



**WISHING A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR 2008  
TO ALL OUR READERS**

**First day back Monday 7 January 2008.**

**Dates for Non Pupil Days**

- Friday 4 January 2008
- Thursday 20 March 2008
- Wednesday 2 July 2008



## **Term Dates 2007 - 2008**

<b>Spring Term 2008</b>	Monday 7 January – Friday 28 March 2008
<b>Summer Term 2008</b>	Monday 14 April – Wednesday 23 July 2008
<b>Autumn Half Term</b>	Monday 22 October – Friday 26 October 2008
<b>Spring Half Term</b>	Monday 11 February – Friday 15 February 2008
<b>Summer Term</b>	Monday 26 May – Friday 30 May 2008

## **Uniform**

We understand that there are some concerns regarding the quality and availability of our current school uniform. We are at present undergoing investigations which may involve changes to the uniform for the next academic year. A period of consultation will begin in the new year of which we will inform parents in the next Newsletter.

*Dr P Hayman*



## Staff Leaving



After 8½ years service to our school Mr Paul Suddick is leaving our Geography department and retiring. Mr Suddick has been involved in leading many of our Geography trips and has achieved a good

deal of success for our A Level students. We wish him well for a long and happy retirement.

Mrs Kaur joined our staff in January 2005 to teach Food Technology and has made a valuable contribution to this area - especially with her oriental cooking classes. Mrs Kaur has now gained a position as Subject Co-ordinator: Food Technology at The Heathland School, Hounslow, and we wish her well in this role which she will be starting in January.



Mrs Easter has been a technician supporting the work of our Food and Textiles Departments for the past 13 years. Mrs Easter must have carried thousands of pots and pans around the school and assisted many of our pupils

in their various Food and Textile activities in this time.

We wish her well as she starts a new area of work in January.

*Dr P Hayman*



## WHSG PTA News

Welcome to a great new year of WHSG PTA activities. I am very excited to be the new chair; together with our elected members, the Headteacher and members of staff, we will organise social events throughout the year. Our aim is to provide opportunities for parents, pupils and teachers to get together, make friends and have a good time. All profits will go to the PTA funds to benefit the school.

In October, we held a Magic Night - close up and stage illusions with a magical buffet during the interval. Thank you to everyone who helped or came and supported us; a special thank you to Laurie Feather for the overall organisation, to Sally Darby & Annette Stewart for the wonderful food and Mr & Mrs Galsworthy of Riverside Nursery in Hockley for the beautiful flower arrangements. The profit of £545.00 goes to the PTA funds.

The sale of Christmas puddings raised £196.00 - thank you to everybody who put in an order. The puddings will be ready for collection at the school office from Monday 17 December 2007.

In January it will be time to renew or join the **WHSG 100 Club**. For £20.00 per year you will take part in 12 monthly draws and have the chance to win one of three money prizes each month. The more members, the bigger the prizes! So why not try your luck and join now - pay by ParentPay.

In 2008, we plan a Quiz Night, a Meal Out and a revival of the Summer Ball. Detailed information will be provided nearer the time via email and the Newsletter. If you would like to help or have any queries please drop me a note at [petra.bromfield@talk21.com](mailto:petra.bromfield@talk21.com) or via the school office. It would be great hearing from you and I look forward to seeing you and your family at many of our future events.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

**Petra Bromfield  
PTA**



# Year 12 Geography Trip

## Cranedale Centre, Yorkshire

### Friday 16 November to Wednesday 21 November 2007

Set off from Westcliff, one Geographer short, ready for six geography filled, fun packed, soggy days.

We had two days of travelling, four days of work ... literally! Four 17 hour days starting in the wild and ending in the classroom. We studied coasts on day one, rivers on day two, urbanisation on day three and on day four it was all about the soil.

Unable to communicate with the outside world, except through a cupboard, we were stranded. No phone signal. No television. No computer. We got used to it though, and I was surprised how much I didn't miss TV, it was really enjoyable sitting in the common room and in the bar just talking and this feeling was shared by the majority of the group. However, "the great outdoors" was a let down, mainly due to the weather; it chucked it down on day one, drenched us day two, on day three it poured down and on day four was like living in a cloud. Surprisingly it didn't dampen our mood and everyone was disturbingly willing to wear the purple jackets and matching green trousers.

We arrived in the Cranedale Centre, got off the coach, stumbled and jostled down a narrow corridor and congregated in an unfamiliar courtyard. It was dark already and the woman, Jo, directed us to our rooms. What I would describe as travelodge-y but countryside-like; i.e. bunk beds with lots of wood, flickering lights and a sink or two. They were pretty good considering we were expecting sheds. Anyway, Jo then proceeded to give us a tour of the centre, starting at the fire assembly point, and then the tennis courtyard, the large common room, the dining room and then the many classrooms, all of which were lovingly named

after the study sites. The food has to be mentioned. Most people found it amazing. We were given breakfast, three course dinners and a choice of lunch. They even made us hot chocolate if we wanted it, bless 'em.

First day and we were at the coast. First proper, working day of the trip, first experience of the Yorkshire weather, and the first of many minibus journeys. We went to Flamborough Head to draw a picture of a large dinosaur shaped rock. After lunch we moved down to the cliff to study the stones on the beach. We split the beach into sections. We measured stone size, gradient and then Jo showed us some of the unique features on the beach and we had fun taking pictures in a cave.

Day two, and probably the worst morning of the trip. Everyone was cold, wet and wondering if they still had fingers. We were studying changes in the river and we took dozens of measurements quite reluctantly. Then realising the longer we took the longer we had to stand in the deep, fast flowing, fast filling river, we sped up and finished only to be reminded of the other two sites. Luckily when we got there Mrs Feeley took the no-one-is-going-to-die-on-the-first-trip-I-organised approach and decided that due to rise in water level it would be unsafe for us to enter the river.

Day three: urbanisation day. We walked around each village staring avidly at every house, marking down dozens of details on our clipboards. This was a good day, little rain, straightforward work and a cheerful atmosphere as many of us had remembered we were missing double maths. Anyway, back in the classroom we compared the data we had collected then did graphs, charts and statistical analysis that left Mr Male with a headache.

On the last day we were in the woods, measuring various climatic features of a pole and feeling the texture of soil. We had lunch in a clearing, so delicious; rain and jam sandwiches, with salt,

rain and vinegar crisps, and a slice/sludge of Victorian sponge cake. Then we went back to the woods. Everyone was in high spirits and willing to work. We had been split into two groups and were given two types of forest to examine, and each group chose a 10x10m<sup>2</sup> square to get data from.

The weather, the people, the laughs and the looks everyone gave Fiona when she had gone too far made this trip what it was. A Geography Trip.....but fun

***Rachel Dingle 12.7***



### **Sixth Form visit to the Victoria & Albert**

On 29 November, I took the Lower and Upper Sixth Textiles A Level students to the V&A to see the exhibition *The Golden Age of Haute Couture*. It was even more impressive than we had anticipated. Not only was it packed full of couture outfits by iconic designers such as Dior, Chanel, Balenciaga, Givenchy, Balmain and Galliano, but there were also designer sketchbooks, illustrations, photographs, film footage, accessories and more. The students could study the fabrics, cut and details of the designs and they scribbled and sketched copiously, gathering ample information to expand and enhance their coursework projects. There's nothing like first-hand experience and by the end of the visit, everyone was inspired and burning to get back to the job of creating their own garments. I'm sure that in the summer, the examiners will be impressed to see evidence of the couturiers' magic. The girls' behaviour was impeccable and I was proud to be with them.



**Mrs Hodge**



## CHINA TRIP

Wednesday 17 October 2007 – Monday 29 October 2007



### Joint Curriculum Project Between Westcliff High School for Girls and Ying yuan Middle School in Jiading, Shanghai China

#### Before the trip

On Wednesday 17 October 2007, two of my colleagues, Mrs Michelle Austin and Mrs Ying Adams, and I, took 10 students (9 in Year 11 and 1 in Year 10) to Shanghai, China.



The 10 students were Georgina Feather, Emma Campbell, Gar Mun Hui, Hayley Clissold, Hannah Rudman, Bethany Pennycook, Isobel Smith, Emily Lodge, Rochelle Edwards, and Stephanie Overton.

This trip was made possible because we have a partner school "Ying yuan" in Jiading, Shanghai. The British Council partly sponsored us for a joint curriculum project. The planning for this project began in January 2007, where we were assessed by a panel of independent adjudicators.

We had kept a record of video conferencing with our partner school in Jiading showing our communication and shared objectives.

After a lot of planning, I was determined not to let my students down after all their commitment in learning Mandarin with Miss Zhong Wang and Mrs Ying Adams for an hour a week after school on Mondays since January.

Many Year 11 students wanted to come with us, but unfortunately, I could only take ten.



In April, the British Council gave us the green light for this project to go ahead. With the help and support from Dr Hayman, our School Governors and parents, we were able to book the flights with Virgin Atlantic Airlines.

## The trip

### Thursday 18 October 2007



We arrived at Pudong International Airport in Shanghai at about 8.00 am on Thursday morning after a 12 hour flight. We were greeted by staff of Ying yuan School who took us back to Jiading.

We were introduced to the Headteacher, Mrs Zhu and had lunch in the school canteen. After lunch, we checked into the motel.

### Friday 19 October 2007

In the morning we visited Hui Longtan Park and the Confucious Temple, built to celebrate and commemorate the work and philosophies of Confucious.



In the afternoon, we had lunch in the Headteacher's conference room so that our students could meet their e-mail partners face to face for the first time.



After lunch, our students had a lesson on how to read Mandarin with the Chinese Classic "Butterfly Lovers". Later, Westcliff students taught Ying yuan students part of "Romeo and Juliet"

That evening, the Headteacher Mrs Zhu took us out for dinner in a restaurant located half way between Jiading and Shanghai. Generously, she assigned her school mini bus driver to us during our stay.

## Saturday 20 October 2007



Today we had a day trip to Suzhou. The journey took about an hour from Jiading. We visited the Tiger Temple, Han Shan Temple, and the Humble Garden.



## Sunday 21 October 2007



We were invited to a teacher's family, Mr. and Mrs. Fong, for lunch. They let us pick the vegetables from their garden, taught us how to eat sugar cane and showed us how to make dumplings. They all made dumplings by wrapping minced meat and diced vegetables. Later, Stephanie Overton played badminton with Mr Fong's son.

In the evening, we all went to the city of Shanghai. We visited the Jin Mao Tower, took a ferry across the river and did some sight-seeing. The city was very beautiful at night with fascinating variations of architecture.



## Monday 22 October 2007

The day was spent in Ying yuan with our students participating in lesson



activities, while Mrs Austin and I did some lesson observations. Our students were paired with their partners in lessons. Although all lessons were taught in Mandarin by Ying yuan teachers, with an exception of our English lesson, the teacher to students ratio was about 1 to 40.

After lunch, Mrs Zhu, took us to Sisu Jiading Foreign Language Experimental Senior High School to meet other the Headteachers. They had two Headteachers with individual responsibilities for each part of the school development. We were invited to the Headteacher's conference room with some of their staff and selected students. It was interesting to observe that their teaching style is pragmatic and creative. They seem willing to experiment with different teaching and learning styles similar to ours.



After the visit, we returned to Ying yuan. We were invited to observe their changing neck scarf ceremony (all students in Chinese Schools wear neck scarves) with the school band playing in the field. It signified the change of responsibilities as junior students become senior students. They put on a great show for us! After the ceremony, our students had another lesson on the "Butterfly Lovers" and in return Ying yuan students had another lesson on "Romeo and Juliet".

## Tuesday 23 October 2007

In the morning, we went to Shanghai Jiading No 2 High School to meet Mr Zhou Liban, the Vice Principal. We were given a tour around the school and observed their displays in the Physics room. Their Science teachers worked collaboratively to design and make models as teaching aids and resources for the students. We saw plenty of handmade models of various scientific functions, including projectiles, the illustration of centrifugal force with a ball bearing running along a track, and wave motions.



Afterwards we visited their magnificent sports building and played basketball and table tennis. The Chinese students take sports seriously and spend at school than English students.

After the visit, Mrs Zhu treated us for lunch in a famous bamboo garden and we tasted bamboo leaves tea for the first time.

In the evening, we went to Shanghai for more sightseeing and shopping.

## Wednesday 24 October 2007

We spent the day at Ying yuan School. Mrs Austin demonstrated a lesson on Science. Our students were paired with their friends to help them with the language and discussions. I brought along a set of mini-white boards from Westcliff for the students of Ying yuan. A group of Headteachers from outside Jiading were invited to observe this lesson. The Headteachers and the students enjoyed this new learning experience.



After lunch, our students continued the "Butterfly Lover" as well as rehearsing a Chinese folk song called Jasmine Flowers, a dance and a song from the Sound of Music! We were given traditional Chinese clothing with hats to wear for photo shoots.





After school, our staff and students were given a brush painting lesson. Our students kept their work and were given inks and brushes as gifts by the Chinese teacher.

**Thursday 25 October 2007**



We went to Shanghai Zoo in the morning and were delighted to see pandas as well as other exotic animals. During the visit, rain cascaded down mercilessly on us. We dived for cover but were soaked.

Next, we were taken to Yew Chung International School to meet the Vice Principal Dr Barkei and the Co-Principal

Vicki He Wei Ji. This visit was made possible through Mrs Adams who taught Dr Barkei Mandarin when he was working at Westcliff High School for Boys last year. Dr Barkei gave us a tour around the school and treated us all for lunch in their splendid school canteen. I also bumped into a teacher who used to work at Westcliff Boys as a trainee teacher last year.



Later in the afternoon, we joined their Year 8 class for a Mandarin lesson. The Chinese teacher made the lesson fun and easy for us. We did some wonderful singing in Mandarin too.

Dr Barkei gave our students a baseball cap each as departing gifts.

Whilst we were in the city of Shanghai, we visited the old town for sightseeing and shopping.

**Friday 26 October 2007**



Ying yuan School put up a technology display which included model racing cars and rockets of various scale. We brought along our rockets and students from both schools had a lot of fun with them.

We launched the rockets in the school field. Students from both schools fired up the rockets they had made and launched them into the sky. An official from the British

Council of Shanghai came and was delighted to see all of this.





Afterwards, we had a formal meeting with speeches on both sides. Dr Hayman's speech to our partner school was shown on their electronic whiteboard. I exchanged gifts with Mrs Zhu, followed by our students exchanging gifts with their partners. (The gifts from Ying yuan to Westcliff are displayed in the glass cabinet by the main



entrance of the School Hall.)

In the afternoon, there were joint cultural exchange stage performances by Ying yuan and Westcliff students and staff. Our school sang the Chinese folk song "Jasmine Flowers", a contemporary dance, a song from the Sound of Music, and "the Butterfly Lovers". Ying yuan School students and staff put on performances on a folk dance "Red China", a Chinese chorus, and a short performance of "Romeo and Juliet".



In the evening, we put on a thank you dinner for the Headteacher and some staff of Ying yuan in our motel. The students from both schools sat at one table and the adults occupied the other. After the dinner, we said farewell to each other with lots of hugs and kisses.

**Saturday 27 October 2007**



We got up very early in the morning for a day trip to Hanzhou where we had lunch in a local restaurant. We had a boat trip in the amazingly scenic West Lake.

We then visited Lin Yan Temple. It was magnificent! The statues of gods and goddess, and the famous "Laughing Buddha" were carved in stones on the hill. They seemed to stare at you as you approached. The air



was heavy with the smell of incense burning the sound of monks chanting before the altar.

After the visit, we went to a local tea-making shop to sample their famous "Dragon Well" tea. We all brought some home to England.

**Sunday 28 October 2007**

Mrs Adams took us to the old town of Shanghai with traditional shops and restaurants. By the evening, we were ready to pack our suitcases.



**Monday 29 October 2007**

We had a good flight back to England and arrived at the school in the evening.

**By Mr Tsang**



## **After the trip**

### **Some comments from students of this trip are:**

"I feel that I have developed a greater knowledge and appreciation of the Chinese culture and just how enormously different it is to ours in England. I had the opportunity to experience various activities in the schools that I visited, most of which I will probably never get the opportunity to do again. I would personally like to thank the British Council for funding this once-in-a-lifetime trip, as it has provided me with countless memories, which I will never forget."

**From Hayley Clissold**



"I thoroughly enjoyed taking part in the joint curriculum project with Ying yuan Middle School in Jiading, China as it has allowed me to see how a different country functions, giving me the opportunity to gain a better understanding and knowledge of their life and culture. I hope to continue to study Mandarin and would like to return to Shanghai in the future to view a different aspect of their culture and lifestyle, further improving my knowledge of their country."

**By Emma Campbell**



"Visiting our partner school Ying yuan Middle School taught me a lot about school life in China and showed me how different it is to schools in England. I thought that eye exercises were a good idea, as it was relaxing, and music to show the end of the lesson would be a lot more welcome in England than a harsh bell. I was also shocked to learn that pupils did not get a choice of meal in the canteen; as we have so much choice in England, I realized how much we take for granted."

**By Emily Lodge**



"I was lucky enough to be one of the ten girls to go to Shanghai in October. I thoroughly enjoyed the visit. I have come away learning so much about Chinese and more specifically Shanghai culture and customs. I have tried many new things that I would never have got to try without this once-in-a-life-time opportunity."

**By Hannah Rudman**



I have learnt a lot from our amazing trip to China. My Chinese e-mail partner taught me a lot about Chinese culture and about her everyday life. Most of all, I have learnt that although our cultures are different, it is what makes each country individual and what make us want to return."

**By Betheney Pennycook**



This trip taught me a lot about China, its culture and the life students have there but surprisingly, I learnt a lot about myself too. I really got a feel for life in China and discovered about the history and various characters written on stones and walls. It has increased my interest about this wonderful country and my love and desire to learn the language. I cannot remember a moment during the trip when I was not happy."

**By Gar Mun Hui**



The students came back with inspired enthusiasm and continue their Chinese lessons with Mrs Adam. We will maintain our link with Ying yaun and hope that the Headteacher and the students will come to England to visit our school.

All the Chinese HeadTeachers including Dr Barkei and all teaching staff commented how good our students were. They were polite, smart, eager to learn and approachable. As a coordinator of this trip I was proud of them.

My thanks to:

- ❖ Dr Hayman and the School Governors for approving this trip.
- ❖ The British Council for their sponsorship
- ❖ Mr. Bott and Mrs. Martin for dealing with the exchange of currency, coach arrangement and travelling insurance.
- ❖ Mrs Adams and Mrs Austin for accompanying me on this trip.
- ❖ Mrs Zhu, the Headteacher of Ying yuan and her staff for their support.

**By Mr Tsang**



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