



Westcliff Newsletter

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The Westcliff Newsletter is online at: www.whsg.info

FUTURE DATES FOR DIARY

Monday 22 September	Year 7 students trip to Danbury
Wednesday 24 September	Year 11 Art Students trip to Colchester Zoo
Thursday 25 September	New Year 7 Open Evening - 5.45 - 9.00 pm
Tuesday 30 September	Whole School Photograph
Friday 3 October	World Challenge Giant Sleepover - Sports Hall
Saturday 4 October	WHOGA Luncheon
Tuesday 7 October	New Year 7 Parents' Evening
	New Year 12 Parents' Evening
Thursday 9 October	Foundation Day Assembly
Friday 10 October	Year 10 History trip to Ypres
Tuesday 4 November	Autumn Concert
Thursday 6 November	Senior Awards
Tuesday 11 November	Remembrance Day Assembly - Minutes silence at 11.00 am
Wednesday 12 November	6 th Form Open Evening- 7.00 - 9.00 pm
Monday 17 November	Year 11 Mock Examinations Begin
Wednesday 19 November	Non Pupil Day
Thursday 20 November	Year 13 Parent's Evening
Friday 21-Wednesday 26 November	Year 13 Geography trip to Cranedale Centre - Yorkshire
Saturday 22 November	11+ Examinations
Tuesday 25 November	Year 12 Parent's Evening
Wednesday 3 December	Alternative Test Date 11+ Examination
Monday 8 - Friday 12 December	Charity Week
Monday 15 December	Carol Service
Friday 19 December	Last Day of Term



HEADTEACHER'S UPDATE

SEPTEMBER 2008

EXCEPTIONAL A LEVEL RESULTS

At Advanced Level the results were excellent. At this level we probably had our third best ever set of results with the school placed 41st in the Times league table of state schools and colleges.

Nearly all students did well enough to get into their chosen Universities with all **eight Oxbridge** candidates receiving confirmation of their places.

- ❖ 53.9% of the Upper Sixth results were at grade A, with 80.4% of them at grades A & B
- ❖ The average points score per entry increased to 105.3 (based on A = 120, B = 100 etc)
- ❖ There was a 100% pass rate
- ❖ 31 students (just under a quarter of the whole year group) gained straight A grades in their examinations

A number of pupils were commended by the examination boards for their outstanding performance in the national examinations; they were:

- ❖ Yasmin Levene who scored one of the top five marks in *Geography*
- ❖ Rebecca Dingle who was amongst the top ten candidates for *Three Dimensional Design*
- ❖ Jennifer Marshall who was amongst the top ten candidates for *Government & Politics*
- ❖ Stephanie Overton who was amongst the top ten candidates for *Fine Art*
- ❖ Annabelle Mayers who was amongst the top ten candidates for *Fine Art*
- ❖ Pippa Curnick who was amongst the top ten candidates for *Fine Art*

SOME OF THE BEST EVER GCSE RESULTS

The GCSE results were a significant improvement on last year, and we were again placed in The Times and The Daily Mail top 100 of all schools.

- ❖ 63.1% of the grades were at A* or A
- ❖ 99% of our pupils obtained 5(+) GCSEs at Grade C or above
- ❖ 69.3% of our pupils achieved at least 5 A* and/or A grades
- ❖ 35 pupils gained all A and A* grades

The average points score per candidate was 559.37 (the new points scoring system is A*, 58; A 52, B, 46 etc.) which is our BEST EVER.

A number of pupils were commended by the examination boards for their performance in the national GCSE examinations; they were:

- ❖ Joanna Taylor who was amongst the top ten in *Art and Design (Fine Art)*
- ❖ Robyn Smith who was amongst the top ten in *Art and Design (Fine Art)*
- ❖ Sarah Rayment who was amongst the top ten in *Art and Design (Fine Art)*

- ❖ Nikita Tushar who was amongst the top ten in Art and Design (Fine Art)
- ❖ India Mycock who was amongst the top ten in Art and Design (Fine Art)
- ❖ Amy Llambias who was amongst the top ten in Art and Design (Fine Art)
- ❖ Natasha Grace who was amongst the top ten in Art and Design (Fine Art)
- ❖ Ellen Cole who was amongst the top ten in Art and Design (Fine Art)
- ❖ Laura Blaker who was amongst the top ten in Art and Design (Fine Art)
- ❖ Jessica Barry who was amongst the top ten in Art and Design (Fine Art)
- ❖ Lucy Bird who was amongst the top ten for Engineering (Double Award)
- ❖ Ruth Beddow who was amongst the top ten for Food Technology
- ❖ Jessica Galsworthy who was amongst the top ten for Food Technology
- ❖ Cassandra Bost who was amongst the top ten for Food Technology
- ❖ Rachel Varnam who was amongst the top ten for Physical Education
- ❖ Joanna Taylor who was amongst the top ten candidates for Religious Studies
- ❖ Jessica Galsworthy who was amongst the top ten candidates for Religious Studies
- ❖ Bethany Elliott who was amongst the top ten candidates for Religious Studies
- ❖ Megan Bishop who was amongst the top ten candidates for Religious Studies
- ❖ Lucy Bird who was amongst the top ten candidates for Religious Studies
- ❖ Ruth Beddow who was amongst the top ten candidates for Religious Studies

BEST EVER KEY STAGE 3 TEST RESULTS

At Key Stage 3 record breaking results obtained last year's early entry in English pushed us to our highest ever average Test score of 44.64 (or 6.94 in levels). The Mathematics and Science results were both just below their previous highest.

The average Teacher Assessment level at Key Stage 3 slightly increased to 42.41 (42.29), or 6.6 in Levels.

All of these results reflect the commitment and hard work by the pupils, teachers and support staff, and I thank everyone involved for what has been achieved.

English Key Stage 3 Appeal

The marking of the English Key Stage 3 tests have been the subject of comment in the press over the summer, and an analysis of the marking for our Year 8 entry pupils has shown significant errors in the Shakespeare paper. All of these have now been returned for re-marking.

University Success

We were delighted that not only all eight of our Sixth Form students holding offers from Oxford and Cambridge gained their places with their excellent A Level results - but nearly all the students who wanted to go to university or college have gained a place.

New English Building Starts Soon

MONDAY 29 SEPTEMBER 2008 is the date that the contractors start work on our long awaited new English block.

The company appointed for this work is LAKEHOUSE who are currently completing a project at Blenheim School.

This new building will cost more than £3M and is going to provide our school with a much improved teaching environment and fantastic new facilities which will benefit many of our existing pupils and staff as well as those to come.

Welcome to New Staff

We are very pleased to welcome a number of new full time and part time teaching staff to our school; in addition to replacing staff who left last term, they also represent a growth in the education provision at our school. They are:

❖ Miss Fishburn	- Geography	❖ Mrs Day	- Biology
❖ Miss Jardine	- Art	❖ Miss Quinn	- Dance
❖ Miss Long	- English	❖ Mrs Taylor	- English
❖ Mrs Pitt	- Biology	❖ Miss Butcher	- Music
❖ Mrs Turner	- Psychology & Drama	❖ Mr Harrison	- Drama
❖ Miss Parkin	- D&T	❖ Miss Knifton	- PE
❖ Miss Riebold	- Maths (and Science)	❖ Mrs Matsi	- D & T: Textiles
❖ Miss Thomas	- Spanish & French	❖ Mr Mismar	- Science
❖ Mr Vinten	- Art	❖ Mrs Rivers	- Mathematics
❖ Mr Cooper	- Assisting us in Art for this term		

We also have also appointed some new support staff:

Mrs Johns	- Pastoral Support Coordinator (Years 7-9)
Mr Price	- Canteen Chef Manager
Mrs Scroxtton	- joins us as our new Careers Adviser.

We welcome all these staff to our school and hope they will be very happy here.

Music Block Purchase

Over the past year we have been agreeing the terms for WHSG to purchase the Boys' school interest in the Music Centre (above the Canteen). I am pleased to say that the purchase is nearly complete.

WHSB kindly agreed to vacate the centre during the summer holiday so we could arrange the accommodation as we wanted - and this has allowed us to install a uniform shop and our Psychology department there - on a temporary basis until the new English Block is built.

Summer Improvements

Each year we try to make improvements to the school to provide better resources and an improved environment for us to learn and work in. Over the summer holiday we made the following improvements:

- ❖ The School Hall has been redecorated. We have also purchased new curtains, a new sound system and installed a projector and screen.



- ❖ Room M3 was redecorated
- ❖ We have installed new computers in ICT2 & ICT3
- ❖ M1 has been equipped with computers and keyboards
- ❖ Seven more electronic whiteboards have been installed in teaching rooms around the school
- ❖ The tennis courts have been extended



- ❖ A new Multi Use Games Area has been built next to the Sports Hall



- ❖ An additional car parking area has been built to the left hand side of the front entrance along with a hard standing for future new cycle sheds





- ❖ A new path has been made across the grass in front of the canteen, widening the crossing and creating disabled access; we have also installed an additional zebra crossing on the Private Road. These improvements mean that pupils no longer have to walk around the back of the canteen as they leave it, but can now walk directly back to the main school building on designated paths and crossings

- ❖ We have installed partitioning and shelving to create a Uniform Shop



- ❖ We have purchased a container which we are using to hold stock for the uniform store (next to Room 33)
- ❖ We made a new store cupboard in the basement
- ❖ We have created a new English teaching room in the basement - B1
- ❖ We relocated the Psychology office to the Music Block
- ❖ The PE Office has been refurbished

PTA Buy School a Minibus



At the end of last term the school was offered a second hand minibus which was in very good condition and priced very competitively. We were delighted that the PTA has purchased this mini-bus for the school - as part of the deal the school will now be responsible for its upkeep and general expenses.

This is going to be a really useful asset for transporting small groups of students around as well as being easier and cheaper.

We are really grateful to the PTA (Chaired by Petra Bromfield) for their fund raising efforts which has allowed the school to get this vehicle.

Uniform Shop Update

We have now set up a School Uniform Shop which is currently located upstairs in the Music Block.

Unfortunately it has taken longer to get all the supplies of uniform than we wanted as there have been severe difficulties for all uniform suppliers this year - but we are pleased to say we are nearly there and hope to be fully stocked by the end of September.

By half term we shall expect all girls in Years 7-11 to be in the correct uniform; this does not mean that parents will have to make unnecessary purchases, but must replace skirts when they are outgrown or too short (no more than 2 inches above the knee). All pupils will be expected to wear skirts of the correct length from half term. Any girl not correctly dressed from this point will be tackled by staff and if necessary sent home so arrangements can be made to ensure she is properly dressed for school.

One advantage to parents of the school now having its own Uniform Shop is that we are able to assist pupils in choosing the right size skirt to buy; parents will not need to make a special journey to the shop, but can simply pay via 'ParentPay'. Once the payment is cleared your daughter can collect the item of uniform from the shop for immediate use.

We are trying out times when the uniform shop should be open. At the moment these are:

Morning Break - Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday
Lunchtime - Wednesday

Whole School Photograph

We hope that we shall be able to take a WHOLE SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPH on Tuesday 30 September 2008.

This involves a lot of planning and organization, and the photographic company will be spending the whole morning assembling the staging for it.

To make the photograph as smart as possible we are asking that all pupils in Years 7-11 are dressed in the correct uniform, look smart and tidy and to help the appearance of the photo **wear black tights that day.**

Sixth Form students will be expected to be in smart casual dress - not flamboyant!

Clarification of Makeup Rules for Years 10 & 11

A number of parents have questioned why we allow girls in Years 10 & 11 to wear make up, and we know many local schools do not allow their pupils to wear it.

Our rule is that girls in Years 10 & 11 may wear **discrete** makeup.

This year we have seen more and more girls flouting this rule; this was a particular issue when pupils had their individual photographs taken and staff had to spend far too much time supervising girls in removing their excess makeup, but the rule continues to be broken and I can not have pupils arguing with staff over what constitutes 'discreet'.

To help all parents, staff and pupils we are defining what the school will accept as discreet makeup. This is:

- ❖ A thin layer of a neutral coloured foundation
- ❖ One thin layer of mascara

Nothing else is allowed (eg eyeliner, lipstick, lip gloss etc)

We shall be monitoring the way girls follow these rules. If by half term we have not seen a significant improvement, then we will change to a 'no make up' rule; we would prefer not to have to go to this measure and are asking for everyone's support and co-operation in this area.

USE OF PRIVATE ROAD

Can I please remind parents that the Private Road should not be used for dropping off pupils as they come to school. Facilities are provided adjacent to the fire station on Blenheim Chase for parents to stop safely and allow pupils to disembark and walk the last few metres to school.

Can I also please remind parents that they should not stop on the zigzag lines outside the school. Please do not pull into the entrance way to the Private Road to allow pupils to disembark and then turn round back into Middlesex Avenue, as this creates problems for the general flow of traffic as well as being particularly dangerous to the pupils who are trying to access the site.

Dr Paul Hayman



YOUTH DRAMA FESTIVAL

Pupils from Westcliff High School for Girls will be taking part in the Shakespeare Schools Festival at The Palace Theatre on Friday 10 October 2008. This is the UK's largest Youth Drama Festival. Over the course of the evening four schools will be performing four different half hour plays. Westcliff High school for Girls will be performing an abridged version of 'The Tempest'. The Shakespeare Schools Festival offers young people the opportunity to work in a professional theatre. During their six month journey of rehearsals pupils receive workshops from theatre professionals and have the opportunity to work with other young people from the local area. Please support our girls in this event if you can. Tickets are available from The Palace Theatre Box Office.

*From: Mr Bell
Head of Drama*



This Newsletter is intended for the sole use of students and parents of Westcliff High School for Girls. We very much hope that others will enjoy the opportunity to read it and learn about the activities at our school, but it may not be further distributed or reproduced in whole or in part in any way without the permission of the Headteacher.