



# Westcliff High School for Girls

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## NEWSLETTER 126

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### Charity Week 2009

For one week each December, the school dedicates itself to raising money for charity. During this period, pupils endure the sight of their teachers singing (I use the term extremely loosely) to retro classics, dancing middle-agedly and wearing clothes that would be rejected by even the grimmest of dustbins. This year, our chosen cause was Crossroads Caring for Carers, a charity which organises holidays and clubs for children who are carers of a parent or sibling. The week was launched in a whole school assembly, during which a representative from the charity gave us an insight into their excellent work and stressed the especial importance of fundraising during this economic downturn. Happily for the teachers, the theme for the week was Fame; they had at last been provided with a convenient excuse to don their favourite neon legwarmers and set their eyes on stardom.

The first event to take place was the fashion show, which was held on the evenings of 2nd and 3rd December. The occasion was organised by Daisy Baldwin and Maddie Heal (both of Year 13), who choreographed the sixth-

form models with the help of Ellis Booth and Harriet Jackson. As well as showcasing a range of clothes from local boutiques, the catwalk featured garments from charity shops, high street stores and some of the girls' own designs. The evening was divided into several categories ranging from bridal dresses to sportswear, and photographs from the event were published in a local newspaper.



In addition to the fashion show, several other evening events took place during the week. Westcliff's Got Talent (based on the popular reality television show) was held on the night of Wednesday 9th December, and saw a number of courageous pupils performing in front of a panel of discerning judges. The programme featured a wide range of

acts, including singing, tap dancing, body popping and piano playing, with Year 7 pupil Emma McCarthy emerging as the overall winner. All told, the event raised more than £300 for charity. Its organiser, Pearl Asaman of Year 13, would like to express her thanks to all of the teachers who generously gave their time to supervise the event.

The week ended on Friday night with the lower school disco, to which boys from the St. Thomas More High School were also invited. Again, this was a hugely popular event, with more than 200 people in attendance.

Several sporting activities took place during the week. It is a little known fact that inside every teacher is a primed athlete bursting to take part in each and every Bleep Test that comes their way (for those lucky enough not to know, the Bleep Test is a thinly-disguised method of torture involving endless shuttle runs from one end of a hall to another). After a prolonged period of persistent nagging, we were able to uncover the 'enthusiastic' long distance runners who disguise themselves so very well behind

a façade of suits and ties. Despite some technical hitches, Mr Softly emerged victorious to a round of rapturous applause (but not, alas, a prize- it's the taking part that counts!).

For the teachers whose preference is for team games, the netball match provided an ideal opportunity for both hearty exercise and the wearing of 'skorts' (strange hybrid garments for which Dr Hayman expressed a particular fondness after sporting one for the duration of the lunch hour). In all, the event raised more than £120.



Hot food was sold throughout the week by the Charity Week Café, which was organised and run by Ruth Beddow and Katie Fisher with help from a vast army of Sixth Form volunteers. The delights on offer included bacon rolls, cheese toasties and chocolate fudge cake, and I can personally assure you of their success because it was the first time I have ever developed Repetitive Strain Injury from a sandwich toaster. In all, we raised approximately £1000, a fantastic sum which will make a great difference to the charity. We would like to extend our gratitude to everyone who helped to cook and sell the food, and indeed to all who bought it. Special thanks go to Mrs Farquhar, who generously gave her time, patience and expertise to ensure the event ran smoothly.

As ever, the lunchtime house events and Revue were at the core of the week's success. Monday's 'Ready Steady Cook!' event, organised by Lydia Richardson of Burchier, featured competitive pancake flipping and blindfolded cake decorating, as well as a contest to find which participant could fit the most marshmallows in their mouth (something one must always know about one's teachers). The finale of the event came when the luckiest of the competitors enjoyed a 'cake in the face'.



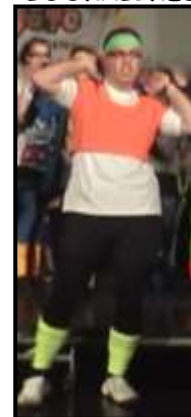
Tuesday's event, 'Mr and Mrs Westcliff', was organised by Ellen Palmer of Mandeville. Mr(s) Bailey and Mrs Wilkin were particularly enthusiastic contestants, and threw some thoroughly 'post-modern' shapes that would undoubtedly do the contemporary dance world very proud indeed. The crowd were suitably impressed, and the pair triumphed in both performances.



Ami Willis, house captain of Devereux, led 'Blind Date' on Wednesday lunchtime. Charity Week stalwart Mr Yeomans took on the role of Cilla Black, for which he sported an über fetching ginger wig. The star of the show, however, was Mr Hodges, whose performance of

Beyonce's 'Single Ladies' was barely distinguishable from the original.

#### LOOKALIKES



Beyonce



Mr Hodges

The house events were concluded by Bohun with 'Stars in Their Eyes', a competition organised by Lottie Gibbons and her team. Ms Farrar assumed the role of Michael Jackson and moonwalked her way into Charity Week history with an unforgettable interpretation of the famous 'Thriller' routine, while Mrs Swift and Miss Limentani gave an accomplished performance of Beyonce's 'Crazy in Love', complete with some worryingly authentic hip-hop steps.



## Young Enterprise Success

Two groups of WHSG girls went to the Meadows shopping centre in Chelmsford to take part in a Young Enterprise Trade Fair, earlier this month, along with many schools from the local area.

Young Enterprise allows young people to form their own companies and run them so that they can get a feel for how businesses work. The companies formed by the girls are real companies and even have to pay VAT!



The first company, *Green Leaf*, whose managing director is Mohrag Taylor, sold bags and solar lights. The second, *Gazelle*, whose managing director is Rumbi Makanga, sold scarves, T-shirts, Christmas decorations and confectionery.

Both groups did really well, selling out of some of their most popular products. *Green Leaf* won the 'Best Stand' in the awards ceremony. Both companies have some products left to sell and these can be found in school or *Gazelle* has its own website:

[www.gazelleenterprise.webs.com](http://www.gazelleenterprise.webs.com)

The final lunchtime event was the Revue, in which teachers were able to display their excellent acting abilities as well as their favourite neon-coloured outfits. Mr Dell's choice of attire was particularly remarkable, essentially comprising of baggy trousers that would put hip-hop sensation Soulja Boy to shame (and very probably several marquee firms out of business).



Mrs Bailey embraced a thick estuarine accent and a tracksuit with her usual vigour, and the verisimilitude was such that she could pass unnoticed on any street corner of the UK. Mr Hayton was slightly less successful in carrying off a chic turquoise dress, although the combination of the Dolly Partonesque wig with his moustache would certainly not have looked too out of place spread across the front cover of *Vogue*.



Although the final amount raised is yet to be announced, the week was without doubt a great success. Without making this an Oscar speech, we would like to thank everyone involved, especially the teachers who were so willing to give up their time (and dignity) for this worthy cause and the local businesses who generously offered their services for little or no charge.

Many congratulations to the Senior Team (Jessica Leonard, Charlotte Fox, Rachel Jackson, Katie Fisher, Vidhya Chauhan, Ruth Beddow, Pearl Asaman and Tomilayo Ejendawe) who all worked tirelessly to bring the week together, and also to Emma Stennett and her friends who ran the disco.

The individual form events (including soak-the-teacher [below] and a candy cane delivery service) were also hugely successful, so thank you to everyone involved in organising and supporting them.



The money we have raised will undoubtedly make a big difference to Crossroads, and it will allow many more children to enjoy days away from their responsibilities at home. We hope that you had as good a time as we did.

Rachel Varnam and Ruth Beddow  
(both 13.4)

Sara Zygmunt