



home-link

N E W S L E T T E R

MARCH 2011

Headteacher's Hello

Friday 18 February was Comic Relief Day and the students were involved in many varied activities to raise funds. In just one day they raised £3,000 – a magnificent achievement.

Earlier this term the Year 8 students researched 'Charities and Fund Raising' as part of their Personal Development lessons. A practical application of the theory was for each form to choose a charity to support. They organised many activities such as sponsored runs, sponsored silences, bake sales, car washes, 5-a-side football competition, spot the teacher's baby photo and many more. Year 8 raised just over £2,700 to be distributed to the following charities: Perthe's Association, Rainbow Charity, Great Ormond Street, Save a Baby, Make a Wish, Cystic Fibrosis, UNICEF and the Stroke Association.

This, together with the magnificent effort of the Sixth Form Charity Event just before Christmas which raised just over £7,000, means St Clement Danes' students have raised, through their own efforts and organisation, just under £13,000 for various charities in a little over three months. This is a tremendous achievement and one we are all justly proud of.

The centre pages of Homelink are dedicated this month to the Creative and Expressive Arts Faculty. Congratulations go to all involved in the school production of Macbeth in March. This was an ambitious, unabridged version, set in gangland London in the 1960s. The performances were superb and the technical support, staging, costumes and scenery were equally outstanding. Congratulations to all the students and their drama teachers – Mr Laverty, Miss Morby and Mrs Ingleby.

This will be Mrs Ingleby's last St Clement Danes production as she is leaving us to work at Berkhamsted School. She will be sorely missed by staff and students. She started as a newly qualified teacher in 2004 and rose to become an outstanding Head of Drama. We wish her every success in her new school.

On Wednesday night I saw the first night performance of the Gym and Dance display. Superlatives fail me – it was tremendous and very enjoyable. Congratulations to all the very talented students and also their teachers, Miss Seabourne, Miss Mitchell, Miss Nicholson, Mrs Monk and Mrs Lewis.

The Easter holidays for the students begin at 3.40 on Thursday 7th April and school will re-open on Tuesday 26th April when Year 10 will start their school exams. There will be no issue of Homelink in April.

I wish all the students and their families a happy and refreshing holiday.

Josephine Valentine

Headteacher

Transport

An update on Home/School Transport from September 2011 onwards will be sent out via Parentmail before the end of term.

Uniform

You will have received a ParentMail letter from John Lewis regarding changes to their selling of School Uniform. Please note that due to the changes, regulation uniform will be unavailable to purchase from John Lewis from 25 March to 3 April 2011. During this period you will still be able to purchase uniform from Beat School Uniforms via their website, www.beatschooluniforms.co.uk and also from Chorleywood Sports via their website on www.holdall.co.uk.

From next term students are able to wear the summer polo shirt.

Forthcoming Events

Wed 6th April	Easter Concert, 7pm, Barbirolli Hall
Thu 7th April	End of Term, 3.40pm
Tue 26th April	Summer term begins, 8.40am.
Fri 29th April	Bank holiday (Royal Wedding)
Sat 30th April	Geography Field Trip to Swanage (ends 2nd May)
Mon 2nd May	Bank Holiday
Fri 6th May	Year 7/8 Junior Maths Challenge
Fri 13th May	Year 11 & 12 Study Leave begins
Mon 16th May	Year 11 GCSE Exams begin Year 12 AS Exams begin
Fri 20th May	Year 13 Study Leave begins
Sat 21st May	Year 9 French Exchange (ends 29/5/11)
Mon 23rd May	Year 13 A2 Exams start
Mon 30th May	HALF TERM (ends 3rd June 2011)

Exam Office News

All students in years 10, 11 12 and 13 will receive a copy of a detailed summer 2011 timetable by the end of this term, by post. This will show room and seat number as well as date and time of the examination.

Any potential clashes of exams have been resolved and additional information will be supplied with the timetables to relevant students.

PLEASE CHECK THE TIMETABLE ON RECEIPT AND KEEP IT SAFE.

Mrs D Harvey

Exams Officer

New Web Alumni Site

Calling all Old Danes - please join our new Web Alumni site!

150 Celebrations 1862 - 2012. If you previously attended St Clement Danes School or you are a current student with siblings who previously attended the school we would like to invite you to join our new Web Alumni site! Former students can access the site via the school site at www.stclementdanes.org. Please click on Alumni, which leads to the registration page.

We would like all of our former students to register on the site, so that we can keep everyone updated with details of future events planned to celebrate the school's 150th Anniversary next year. The site is in the early stages of development, but can you please help by relaying this information to all former students that you know. We would like our Alumni to have an opportunity to join our very special celebrations!

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact Jackie Hardy or Denise Wilson in the Development Office 01923 284169 X334.

Gymnastics

The boys below went to the national finals on Sunday 13th March 2011. This was after winning the regional's and then the zonal rounds held earlier in the year. The U13's came 5th and the U15's came 3rd.

U13 - Daniel Meryjck, Jonty Bier-Allen, James Fielding, Charlie Bird

U15 - Charlie Hammond, James Holloway, Josh Meier, Jack Taffel

Excellent results considering this is out of the whole of Great Britain. The boys should be very proud of themselves in reaching this huge achievement. The boys have worked hard throughout this year and it was great to see them reach this success.

Miss H Seabourne

PE Faculty

CREATIVE ARTS UPDATE

New York, New York!

The Art and Drama students enjoyed five days exploring the sights of New York and soaking up the day to day life of this amazing metropolis.



The two groups enjoyed visiting various sights together such as the Empire State and its fantastic views over the city, the Statue of Liberty standing powerful and majestic; we were able to sail around it by boat. We also enjoyed a diverse range of evening entertainment such as the New York Knicks playing the Milwaukee Bucks at Madison Square Gardens and Mustang Harry's, Bubba Gumps restaurants

and the Broadway show 'American Idiot' in which the Green Day band leader Billie Joe armstrong starred on a rare occasion.

The Art students enjoyed drawing in the various art galleries: Guggenheim, Whitney, Metropolitan Museum of Art, MOMA and The Central Museum of Photography. Many wonderful drawings and paintings were produced and the amazing artists we studied have helped to influence the students' ideas for their own art projects.



A huge thank you to the teachers who helped to supervise the trip with me and I hope everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves, creating some long lasting memories. Thank you to Miss Morby, Miss Cort, Mrs Taylor and Mr Marks.

Mrs D Reid

Head of Art/Photography



The Witch Doctor Arrives at SCD



A major part of music education at St Clement Danes is teaching students about the musical traditions of other cultures. One of the most popular projects this year, aided by a brand new class set of Djembe

and some original teaching ideas from Miss Bennett, has been African Drumming.

On interviewing 7 Clare about the project they spoke enthusiastically about how Miss Bennett had split them into two rival tribes, The Black Eyed Cheetahs and The Eleven Akonz. James Inwards (Lead Drummer & Tribe Leader of The Black Eyed Cheetahs) spoke of how Miss Bennett (affectionately known as The Witch Doctor) had helped the tribes develop a back story. They were a tribe that went back many generations and owned a large amount of land in Africa.

A few quotes from students sum up their views on the project

"I love the way we don't just speak about African drums, but actually get to play them!"

Marcie Lewis

"I enjoy being able to play the rhythms on proper African Djembe."

Nina Turnbull

The project teaches the students about call & response, polyrhythms and syncopation in a practical manner whilst also giving the students a greater understanding of the culture behind the African Djembe.

Chris Marks

Head of Creative & Expressive Arts

CREATIVE ARTS UPDATE

Macbeth Production

This year's drama production was Macbeth by William Shakespeare. Upon starting as Head of Drama last year I was amazed to see so many talented students in one school and found it extremely difficult to choose a play that would really challenge our student's performance both mentally and physically. We wanted a play that would be epic in story, original and something not every school would attempt. A piece of Shakespeare seemed perfect in so many ways. It seems that now schools tend to avoid Shakespeare or if they do attempt it, it is often an adaptation or "based on the story of...". The language often deters students and so does the idea of waltzing around in frilly collars and tights. However, Shakespeare shouldn't be seen as inaccessible and has always been extremely relevant in our society; it is just about finding a way to unlock the text for a modern audience. It is for this very reason that I chose Macbeth, a play with conflicts, change of power and horrific crimes. This year's production of Macbeth was far from inaccessible and a modern interpretation was the only way to go. We set the play in the East End of London in the late 50's to early 60's and its aim was to explore the dark underworld at the time.

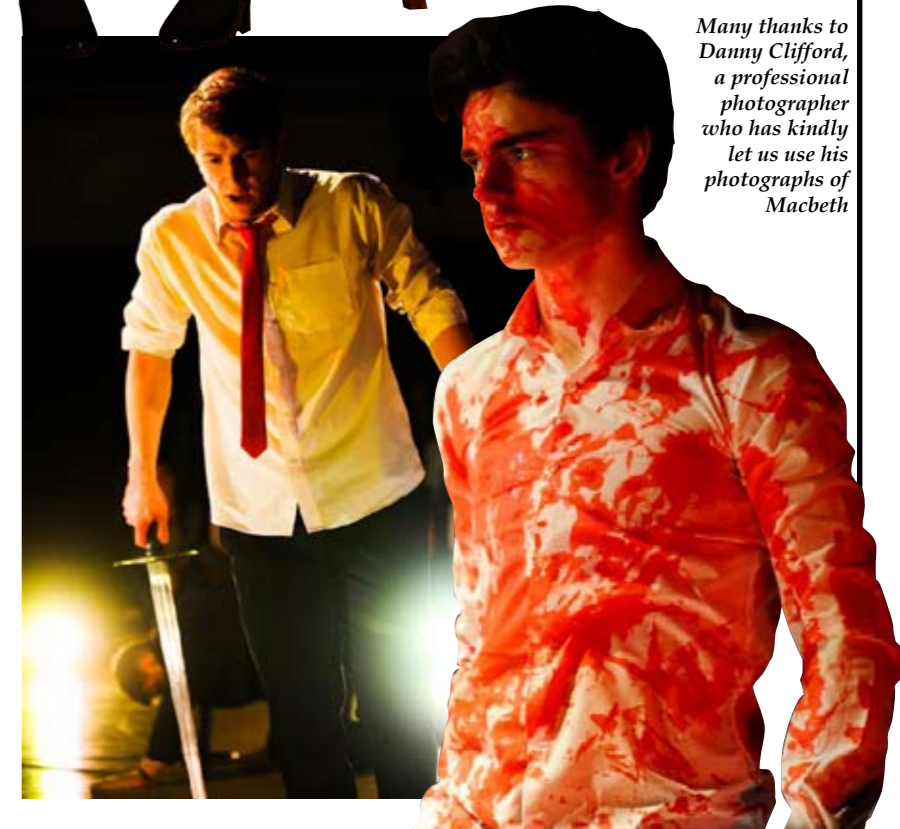
The students were absolutely outstanding in their performance and in learning their lines which is a huge task on a modern piece of drama. My favourite scenes had to be the opening battle montage, the banquet where Jake Entwistle rose up out of the table covered in blood as the ghost of Banquo and of course the final sword fight which took George Fenton, Ben Wilson and myself a long time to choreograph. Every night I had 999 ready on my phone but the boys did an outstanding job of making the fight look real, although I was a little worried at times. The work from George as Macbeth was phenomenal, the combination of his cockney accent with the Shakespearian language tripped off his tongue with ease as if he were having a conversation with you. Ellie Herdman who played lady Macbeth received a standing ovation on both nights which was well



deserved especially in the 'out damned spot' soliloquy where she captured the audience wholeheartedly.

I feel the bar is set for next year now as we look to take on an even bigger project to celebrate 150 years of St Clement Danes. However, the departments next focus is on the lower school production of High School Musical and of course the piece of theatre we will be taking to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival 2011 where will be going up as 'New Move Theatre Company' performing 'A Grimm Tale' at the bongo club between 8th - 12th August. Everyone who took part in Macbeth in any way ought to be extremely proud of themselves for producing such a professional play and I look forward to the many future productions at the school.

Many thanks to Danny Clifford, a professional photographer who has kindly let us use his photographs of Macbeth



Second Hand Uniform & Kit Sale

Just to remind you that the Parents Association will be holding a sale of second hand uniform and kit in the foyer of the Barbirolli Hall from 10am to noon on Saturday 2nd April 2011. All are welcome.

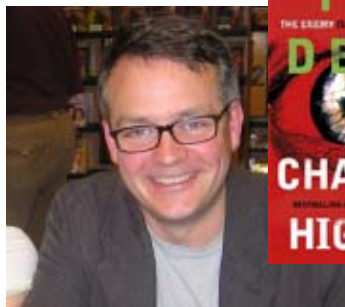
Charlie Higson Coming to SCD

The English Faculty is excited to announce that Charlie Higson will be visiting St Clement Danes on Monday 4th April to give a talk to our Year 7 and Year 8 students.

Charlie has been a successful actor, director and writer for television and radio and has written for children since 2005. He is perhaps best known amongst our students as the creator of *The Enemy* and *Young Bond* series. Charlie had always been a Bond fan, growing up in the sixties, when the Sean Connery movies were being made. He never expected that one day he would actually be asked to write a James Bond book himself. He has now sold over 1 million copies.

Charlie has recently written a new book and is interested in sharing his ideas about this new venture and his thoughts on a life as a writer. There will be an opportunity for students to buy Charlie's books and to have them signed after the talk.

Mrs A Pickard



Head of English Faculty



HPV Vaccination - Year 8 Girls

I would like to remind you that the 3rd and final HPV vaccination (cervical cancer immunisation) will be done on the morning of Wednesday 6th April. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Mrs M Whiteman

Medical Administrator

Year 7 Spelling Bee



The English Faculty held the first St. Clement Danes Spelling Bee for Year 7 this month. It was a hugely popular event with over forty keen Year 7 students taking part.

The students must have been practising hard because the vast majority of them seemed to sail through the opening rounds. Then the pressure was raised with many Year 7 students bowing out in the third round which included some trickier words such as 'belligerence' and 'luscious'. Nevertheless there were still another three rounds to go and it seemed that the final four spellers, Hiroko Asano, Thomas Conway, Iona McCarthy and Matilda O'Neill couldn't be beaten. Finally, however, we found our winner, Hiroki Asano from 7 Temple! He won by successfully spelling some truly taxing words such as 'apocalypse' and 'narcissism'. Congratulations to Hiroki and all the Year 7 students who dazzled us with their spelling skill!

The English Department will certainly be holding more events like the Spelling Bee in the future as it really was a lunch time well spent!

Mrs A Lewis

English Faculty

STEM - Second in National Final Again!

No other team across the UK, except St Clement Danes School, has managed to be in the national STEM final for two year running and both times we have been placed second out of hundreds of schools. The STEM Challenge, coordinated by STEMNET and supported by GE, invited teams of 11 to 14 year olds from secondary schools across the UK to play their part in preparing for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. The challenge entailed designing a wetsuit to be worn by the Paralympic triathlete Jimmy Goodard who is paralysed from the waist down and has great difficulty getting in and out of his wetsuit.

On Saturday 12th March the "Breaking Boundaries" Team, consisting of Yasmin Bier-Allen Year 9, Ross Taylor and Kim Ertl Year 8, and Ellie Bunce and Joseph Freedman Year 7 went to the Big Bang Fair in London. They had to present their ideas in a Dragons Den style competition. They did brilliantly!

Press release reads "*St Clement Danes School from Hertfordshire came in second place with their design to help Jimmy compete in future paratriathlons. The team inspired judges with their dynamic and inclusive approach to working together. STEM Challenge 5 provided an opportunity for a diverse range of students from three year groups to work together for the first time, and their design received £750 worth of STEM Club equipment for their school.*"

The STEM team of teachers, Mrs. Quinton, Mr. Perkins, Mrs. Bhimani and Mr. Clarke want to congratulate the team on their wonderful success.



Intermediate Maths Challenge

Students from years 9, 10 and 11 sat the Intermediate Maths Challenge in February. Nationally, the top 6% receive a gold certificate, the next 13% silver and the next 21% bronze. St Clement Danes students did very well once again.

Gold and best in school: Ellen Bamford (10L)

Gold: Alistair Ryall and Jessica Stone

Silver: Michael Swain, Matthew Hicks, Hadley Clarke, Jared Tyacke, Lotta Gustafson, James Price, William Arkill, Hannah Fisher, Ryan Travers, James Nicholas, Amy Hutchins, Charlotte Lewis, Emma Cooke, Ethan Westhead, Charlie Hammond, Sam Couzins, Daniel Hubbard, Hazel Farman, Thomas Smith, Gregor Chappell, Sebastian Allibone

Bronze: Matthew Brooks, Emily Collins, Anna Manfredi, Adam Leigh, Anya Vithlani, Katharine Baxter, Eva Peristiane, Katie Waller, Abbey Brimson, Benjamin Jury, Bethany Webbstrong, Amie Bailey, Emily Hounsome, Natalie Brown, Ryan Craig, Christine Swain.

Congratulations to everyone and especially to Alistair Ryall (9A) who qualified for the Grey Kangaroo - which is the unlikely name of a European mathematical competition (inspired by the Australian Mathematics Trust...); this places him among the top 5500 pupils for Maths (years 9-11) in the UK.

On the 10th of March St Clement Danes also took part in the Team Challenge, a knock-out Maths competition against local schools. The SCD team was India Barrett, Kimberley Ertl, Michael Swain and Alistair Ryall. Their performance was excellent and we finished in the 7th place out of 26 teams participating in this heat. Many thanks to the team for their time and commitment.

Maths Faculty

Language Masterclasses

The Language Department has recently run a number of Saturday-morning Masterclasses for Year 11 students. What did the individual languages get up to?

ITALIAN - The Masterclass gave students the opportunity to learn, not only about how to achieve high marks in the Speaking and Writing Controlled Assessments with the use of complex structures and language techniques, but also about Italy's culture, food, geography and customs.

The Masterclass started with a quiz on Italian culture, then students began to learn how to perfect their pronunciation in spoken Italian and how to express themselves using more complex language. After sampling some Italian cuisine, students then used different websites to build up their vocabulary.

The session ended with various activities, in which students practised the structures and vocabulary they had learnt, then they took home an Italian GCSE Masterclass booklet and certificate.

Ciao a tutti!

SPANISH - Perhaps it was the promise of the tortilla de patatas, the chorizo or even the magdalenas that managed to get students of GCSE Spanish into school for 9.30 am one Saturday in January? Whatever it was, there were about 30 dedicated individuals who came along to the Spanish Masterclass and spent four intensive hours working on improving their understanding of the language. The morning included some rather bizarre ways of tackling and learning new vocabulary. These included memory games with Post-its, quick fire Q&A and arcade games in which students had to fire at Spanish words which matched the English. Students then put their new-found knowledge to the test by attempting listening and reading exercises on the environment and healthy living. They all agreed that these exercises were more accessible than normal, and felt more confident about tackling this type of question in the forthcoming exams. The morning ended with the students working on idiomatic expressions and then trying to incorporate all they had learnt into newspaper articles about a beach spoilt by litter following a Fat Boy Slim concert or the problems of being a couch potato!

¡Muy bien hecho a todos los alumnos que participaron!

GERMAN - This was a morning of hard work, broken up with a welcome mid-morning break in which students were able to sample some much-needed German food. The main purpose of the class was to build students' confidence in tackling higher-level GCSE reading and listening tasks. The morning started with a vocab categorizing exercise to introduce students to the four topic areas to be covered: Umwelt (environment), Gesundheit (health), Beziehungen (relationships) and Gesellschaftsprobleme (social problems). Students then worked steadily through a variety of listening and reading exercises adapted from previous GCSE exam papers, and also refreshed their knowledge of German grammar. Congratulations to all twenty-five students who attended and worked so hard.

Wir gratulieren allen Schülern, die an der Meisterklasse teilgenommen haben!

FRENCH - The French Masterclass was split into two sessions, with a welcome break for a French petit déjeuner of brioches and croissants. During the first of these sessions, students learned how to improve their written and spoken French in order to achieve the highest marks in their GCSE controlled assessment. They came away with a set of expressions, which they have already started to adapt and incorporate into their work. The second session focussed on listening and reading skills. Students were given the chance to build vocabulary and to develop skills to help them understand authentic texts and video clips taken directly from the French media. They enjoyed learning about Tektonik, a new dance craze which has spread across France and the rest of Europe, and agreed that they would feel much more confident now when it comes to tackling their GCSE listening and reading exams.

Merci à tous pour tout ce travail et bonne chance pour les examens!

Student Survey from November

Students in all year groups completed a questionnaire in November 2010 and the analysis (conducted by Kirkland Rowell) was sent to the school at the end of last term. A summary of the results have already been fed back to members of staff, the School Council, and all year groups through assembly. The summary was also presented to Governors this week. We thought it would be useful to feed back some of the findings to you through this month's Homelink.

There were 1143 completed questionnaires which represented 83.4% of the school. As with the parent questionnaire (conducted in November 2009) areas covered included academic subjects, quality of teaching and general areas of the school. Students were also given the opportunity to make comments at the end.

The responses from students were very positive indeed. With regard to general areas, 'exceptional' areas included school facilities, social health education, availability of resources, control of bullying, community spirit, developing confidence, choice of subjects, truancy control and developing moral values. All areas were rated 'very good' or 'exceptional'.

Academic subjects were also rated highly. Music, ICT and Art were rated 'exceptional' and nearly every other subject scored 'very good'.

At the end of the questionnaire students made a range of comments which in summary showed that they are very happy at school, they enjoy their lessons, they appreciate the facilities and they feel they achieve very good results.

Student concerns included homework issues, some bullying/misbehaviour that is not noticed, toilets needing refurbishing and students who work hard not being recognised or rewarded.

Some areas have already been addressed, e.g. refurbishment of toilets. The Anti-Bullying Policy is currently being revised with greater student input and next term there will be new outdoor seating for students donated by the Parents' Association. Other specific areas for development will be identified and we will be discussing these with staff and students together with appropriate action to be taken.

Mrs J Pullen

Deputy Head

Christchurch Primary School Visit



The Year 12 Product Design students recently invited a class of 30 KS2 pupils from Christchurch Primary School to test their children's chairs which they have made as part of their AS coursework. They will use the feedback to determine the anthropometric data and ergonomics as well as the aesthetics of their designs. The students will analyse the feedback and use it to modify their designs.

Tesco Vouchers

Tesco are once again running their successful 'Vouchers For Schools and Clubs' scheme. In previous years the school has benefited from computers, digital cameras and last year a camcorder for the Sports Department.

The scheme runs until the 8th May and we are looking forward to receiving as many vouchers as possible in the LRC.

Magazines for the LRC

Following a suggestion from the Student Council, we are looking for donations of used good quality magazines for students in all years to enjoy at break times. Subject matter could include music, fashion, crafts, cars, food, science and nature, photography and computer gaming but all suitable magazines would be welcome if in good condition. We would particularly welcome BBC publications and supplements from weekend newspapers. We look forward to receiving your donations. Thank you.

Mrs F Hirst Mrs J Gustafsson

Librarians