



RICHMOND SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



www.richmondschool.net

July 2008

It is always good to reflect back on what has been achieved during the school year. As usual at Richmond School, much has happened and we continue to thrive. The following are just a few of the highlights:

- Over £22k has been raised this year for a range of charities and good causes, including our visit to Amala in India by Sixth Formers.
- Formation of Year 9 Young Co-operatives Group.
- Canada Rugby tour by Years 11, 12 and 13 this summer.
- U19 National Hockey Champions – Boys and Mixed.
- School identified as high performing and awarded second specialism in Science and Maths.
- U18 County Cup Champions - Football
- Redesignation as a Creative Arts School.
- Our assessment process is now established and the target setting process is rigorous.
- Our extra curricular programme continues to be extensive.
- We have invested over £120,000 in renewing the computers in Middle School and the Resource Centre.
- We have been developing the use of our VLE (Virtual Learning Environment) which allows staff to set work and post information for students to access at home or anywhere with Internet provision.
- We continue our links with other colleges and schools. The Year 11 students who have completed Land Based courses with Askham Bryan College have recently had their results.

Headline results include Jon Richardson who attained a Distinction

in all modules and achieves the equivalent of 4 A* grades in the First Diploma course. Jonathan has spent a considerable amount of time competing in European and World Trials riding competitions this year so his academic success is to be applauded.

Key developments planned for next year include:

- We will be introducing a new target setting system for our A level students. Every student will be given target grades based upon their GCSE performance, on their very first day in September. This will be followed up by a departmental review of progress in November and March where every student will receive support and guidance by all of their teachers to ensure the best chance of attaining their aspirational target grades.
- Our recently introduced reporting system is being further developed to include comments from staff as well as regular feedback on attainment, progress and other aspects of school work.
- Our Key Stage 3 curriculum has undergone a review and plans include 'challenge days' for Year 7, which will be led by Maths, Science and Arts. This will give students the opportunity to develop a range of skills which are transferable to other subjects.
- Other departments are planning events for Year 7 in October, when students will work on curriculum projects for a period of time, beginning with a 'project day'. The timetable will be adjusted to allow a more in depth learning experience to launch the project.
- We are looking at the Key Stage 4

curriculum with a view to giving students an even wider range of options both in terms of subjects and also levels of qualification studied. This will be a development for the future and may affect current Year 8 students in their Option choices in Year 9.

Farewells

The following colleagues are retiring at the end of this term, all of whom have given many years of excellent service to the School. They leave with our thanks and very best wishes for a long and fulfilling retirement:

- Pauline Atkins (Technician)
- Linda Conroy (Head of PSHE & Art)
- Anne Gale (Teaching Assistant)
- Sandy Pearson (Health & Social Care)
- Brenda Steel (Senior Lunchtime Supervisor)
- Dick Temple (Science)
- Martin Towell (Head of Business Studies)
- Vicki Walker (Humanities)

Other colleagues leaving to take up new posts in other schools are:

- Ruth Jones (Dance)
- Claire Kent (Science)
- Craig Ratcliffe (Music)
- Helen Tutill (English)

Again, our thanks and best wishes go to these colleagues.

Congratulations

Judy Moorhouse, a member of the teaching staff at the School, was awarded an OBE in the recent Queen's Birthday Honours list for her commitment to education and equality for all.

BSF Project

Following completion of the external exams, work has now resumed on our new Sixth Form Centre, which should be ready for February. Work has also resumed on the Sports Hall, which is due for completion by May 2009.

The architects are currently developing new designs for the rest of the site on a

phased basis. We are very pleased with the outline plans and want to create a school which the whole community can be proud of. We would like to present these plans to you on **Wednesday, 10 September** at 6.00 p.m. in Middle Hall so that you can be involved in the process.

Stimulating drinks!

Some students are now bringing drinks to school which act as a stimulant (Red Bull/Rockstar type) and we are finding that this can create excitable behaviour. As a Healthy school we already encourage students to drink water, which aids concentration. Chilled water dispensers are now available around school.

We would welcome your support in discouraging your son/daughter from bringing these branded drinks to school and encouraging them instead to drink more water, which is free!

Clip on Ties

Staff increasingly find themselves in a position of having to spend time talking to some students who regularly fail to wear the School uniform in the proper way, particularly ties. We have therefore decided to move to clip on ties.

A number of schools have now introduced clip on ties to good effect because they can only be worn with shirts and with the top button done up correctly.

An order has now been placed and the ties will be available on the first morning of school in September.

Because the School has instigated this change, the ties will be issued at no cost to the parents of students in Years 8, 9, 10 and 11 on this one occasion.

Finally, my thanks to all parents for your help and support in making the school such a pleasant place to work.

Staffing Vacancies for September

We are looking to recruit two new Mid-day Supervisors, and an Internal Exclusion Unit Co-ordinator to cover the maternity leave of the established post-holder.

Anyone interested in any of the above posts can obtain further details and an application form via our Website, or by 'phoning the School.

Ex Student Successes

Two former Richmond School students are performing at the highest level:

Joanne Jackson has qualified to swim at the Beijing Olympics in the following events: 400m Freestyle and 4 x 200m Freestyle Relay.

Callum Clark played England U20 Rugby in the recent Junior World Championships, where the team was runner-up.

Enjoy your summer holidays.

Phil Beever – Head

Creative Arts Specialism

Some highlights from a stimulating and exciting term...

- Year 7 & 8 '**Body & Soul**' Event on 2nd & 3rd July: a multicultural celebration of the arts, health and wellbeing, with an electrifying display and performance on the last afternoon. Salsa dance and Samba drumming from Brazil... Taiko drumming from Japan... Tabla music from India... Physical Theatre... Greek Drama... Commedia dell'Arte... Stage Combat... Karate... Pilates... journalism and photography... a visit to Hindu and Sikh places of worship in Bradford... Batik dragons... Japanese kites and carp streamers... African necklaces... North American totem poles... Aboriginal paintings... and delicious Mexican food!
- Sixth Form actors from our own **Mooncalf Theatre** performed in the **French Baroque Spectacle** for the opening gala of the **Swaledale Festival**. Katrina Wood and Steph de'Ath in Year 13 danced solos as the Raven and the Dove in the Festival finale, Britten's **Noye's Fludde**. All students earned praise from the professional artists with whom they worked.
- Mooncalf Theatre's **Tempest workshop** tour to Wensleydale School and to the Georgian Theatre in May helped Year 9 students prepare for their English SATs.
- The **Aspire** project with **Ballet Rambert** has seen Richmond School dancers collaborate with internationally-renowned company – an amazing and unique opportunity!
- '**Ocean World**', the 2008 Swaledale Choral Project, had a fantastic run from 10th – 12th July, with 170 performers from 8 primary schools joining our own singers.
- The **Summer Showcase** on 15th July featured an art exhibition for the first time, as well as offerings from extracurricular drama, music and dance (contemporary, street and the very popular new addition – tap!).
- **Art's** upcoming projects for our first full year as a Creative Arts school are set to take off: an artist in residence... a gallery enterprise... life drawing classes... a Sixth Form Art trip to Paris... the purchase of a printing press... and the equipping of a dark room.
- Another art award for **Sally Bingham** in Year 13: first prize in a national photography competition, as she prepares to study at the top photography teaching institution in the UK, the London College of Communications.
- Keiran Wade, Emma Towning and Michael Dagg in Year 13 have been recommended for a **For Youth Award** for their work with a theatre group run by the County Council's Youth Service.
- **Bethan Andrews** has won a place at a prestigious West End summer school at Her Majesty's Theatre in London, where she will perform in August.

- Jenny Ash, Alison Hicks, Michael Ash and Scott Richardson (Years 10 & 11) in the Tees Valley Youth Choir are performing in Birmingham in the national finals of the **Music for Youth Competition** as this goes to press – we wish them every success!
- Sophie Holden and Daniella Wood (Year 11) will perform in the international **Peer Gynt Festival** in Vinstra, Norway this August. We wish them well in their European debut – as trolls!

Liz Moss - Director of Creative Arts

Richmond School Cycling Club

Congratulations to Tom Parkin (Year 8) who was the youngest competitor to complete the recent Richmond 50 mile Sportive event in a time of 4 hours 43 minutes, despite the hills and the wind. He finished half way up the field, ahead of 28 adult riders.

Patrick Hansell and Max Coates have also been successfully competing in the Croft Circuit junior cycle races each Tuesday evening.

Kevin Sandell/Stuart Watson/David Yates

Year 9 Young Co-operatives

After a period of planning, learning how to be part of a committee and about the ethos of Fairtrade, the Year 9 Group started trading in January 2008.

The Fairtrade Group has been a huge success having sold almost £2,000 worth of Fairtrade goods in 6 months via orders and stalls. The students have participated in the organisation of the Year 9 Fairtrade Day and will be involved in its actual running.

We also have plans to work towards making Richmond School a Fairtrade school next year.

Products can be ordered using the order forms from students.

Please support this socially responsible project. All profits will be donated to our local/global charities – help transform lives via Fairtrade.

Arlene Garnett - Head of Year 9

Dalai Lama Visit

On the first Sunday of the Summer Half Term a party of 50 students and staff travelled to Nottingham to listen to His Holiness the Dalai Lama address an audience of possibly 10,000. This extraordinary event was part of the Buddhist leader's visit to the UK. Speaking with customary wisdom and compassion, the Dalai Lama confronted the issue of how individuals can play their part in protecting the world and working towards its sustainability.

Chaired by Jonathan Dimpleby, the Dalai Lama took pre-selected questions from young people on issues as diverse as 'How to stop people hurting animals' to whether the "earth itself was alive". It was a fascinating day and a privilege to have been in the presence of the leader of the world's 350 million Buddhists - all of whom view this man as an incarnation of Buddha - the spirit of compassion.

Nicky Hansell

Richmond School Amateur Radio Society – National Call Sign 'GX0RYS'

This year has been a busy one. We have hosted the Richmondshire Scout 'on the air' Jamboree, held a regional radio rally, and two members have just passed their National Foundation Amateur Radio Exam set by OFCOM and the Radio Communications Foundation.

Jonathan Coustick and Aidan Cost both passed with flying colours. This is a national exam aimed at adults. Well done to both students.

The Radio Club is now becoming well known internationally in radio circles.

Many thanks to everybody who has contributed to the success of this venture,

which continues to go from strength to strength

Paul Hunt - Radio Society Co-ordinator

Year 7 Middleham Castle Visit

The History Department organised a visit to Middleham Castle for all Year 7 students in the first week of June. Students enjoyed a tour round the main castle and a charge up William's hill, the location of the original Motte and Bailey Castle. This complemented their work in class on Castles and the Norman Conquest.

Despite some unseasonal weather and some close encounters with racehorses, all students and staff enjoyed the visit. One class was privileged to hear the legendary storyteller and veteran History teacher Ian Hughes return to teach the students about the history of this fantastic castle.

My thanks to staff and parents for supporting this visit.

Pete Jackson - Head of History

German Department Song Success

Three of our Year 13 students, Luke Seaborne, Alex O'Neil and Will Robinson recently won the German song section of the National Free Spirit Song and Poetry competition. They wrote and composed a German rock song on the topic of 'Women' and beat entries from over 100 schools to gain first place.

Luke and Alex attended the prize giving ceremony which took place at the Goethe Institut in London, where they performed their song live.

Fiona Dutton - Assistant Head of German

24 Primary Maths Challenge

As the first mathematical event arising from the Science and Maths specialism, Richmond School Maths Department hosted a "24 game" challenge on Tuesday 10 June at Lower School for Year 5 and 6 primary children. The event was part of our programme for gifted and talented

mathematicians. Thirty six primary school children took part.

"24 game" is a mental arithmetic card game. The aims of the competition are to promote mathematical problem solving and to strengthen links with our feeder primary schools.

The event was a great success and enjoyed by staff and pupils alike. Feedback from the primary schools was very positive and we intend to make this an annual event. The winning team was from Richmond C of E Primary with Croft in second place and Richmond St Mary's third.

*Sandra Johnson - Primary Maths
Co-ordinator/Lealie Richardson - Head of Maths*

French Department Exchange to Saint Aubin du Cormier

Twenty enthusiastic and highly motivated Year 9 and 10 have students visited our partner school of Saint Aubin du Cormier.

Saint Aubin is a small town, ten miles away from the cultural city of Rennes in Brittany. We received the warmest of welcomes from our French twin town with parties and visits organised for us. Our students thoroughly enjoyed a wide range of activities including attending French lessons, ordering pancakes in a restaurant, visiting a bakery and an oyster farm as well as trying out sport-sand yachting! In addition to developing their language skills the students made new friends and are looking forward to hosting their French partners on the return visit next December. Our students were excellent ambassadors for both the school and the town, joining in the cultural, sporting and linguistic activities and growing in confidence in understanding and speaking French.

Y7 Brittany Visits

Over the past two months we have taken three separate groups of Year 7 students to Brittany in France. This year we stayed in a new purpose built centre in the small town of Bégard. Students took part in an

action packed week, including a beautiful coastal walk which culminated with a picnic and an afternoon on the beach playing games. Activities also included orienteering, a trip to a water park and an aquarium, a visit to a local French market, bowling, and a tour of St. Malo. The final part of the trip was a day in Disneyland, Paris. Even those students who don't currently study French were given the chance to learn the language. Students conducted questionnaire surveys with local people as well as a treasure hunt. They also kept a diary of their experiences.

All three trips were hugely successful and extremely enjoyable. The 130 students were a credit to themselves and to the School.

Christine Norman - Head of French

Year 10 Work Experience

The two weeks commencing 23 June saw our Year 10 students out on work experience. This represented the culmination of months of preparation for the students. Since last January, they have participated in a programme of lessons designed to introduce them to the world of work. Sessions covered important areas such as "Creating the Right Impression with Employers", "Health and Safety", and "Why do Work Experience?"

Whilst we do not run a vocational work experience programme – we are not asking students to make career choices at this stage – we have endeavoured to match students to areas of work that interest them.

The range of placements was once again massive, and the vast majority of students had a great time. In total, over 250 students were placed. 97% successfully completed the full two weeks at their placement.

During staff visits to the placements, feedback from our local employers and students alike has been very positive. Although most students have found it hard

work, almost all say that it has been very rewarding.

All students participating will receive a certificate, and have completed a diary (supplied by North Yorkshire Business Education Partnership – NYBEP), both of which can be added to their Progress Files. Additionally, employers have been asked to complete a report form, and these will also be passed to students.

Students moving into Year 10 in September will have an opportunity for work experience next June.

Year 12 Careers day

Year 12 students participated in a careers day on 3 July. Over 30 presentations and workshops were available for them to choose from. Many of these related to University application, which is what the vast majority of our students will be embarking on in the very near future.

As a guide, all those applying should now have started completing their application form and should have attended some University open days. The deadline for normal UCAS applications is 14 November 2008.

Any parents with questions regarding the process can contact Mr Guy, Head of Careers, via email:
bguy@richmondschool.net

Barry Guy - Head of Careers