



Richmond School & Sixth Form College

NEWSLETTER



www.richmondschool.net

October 2009

Welcome

We've been delighted to welcome new Year 6 and Year 12 students to the school and college respectively. The school year has got off to its usual very busy start, with one or two highlights already!

OFSTED Inspection

I was surprised on 29 September to receive a 'phone call from Ofsted informing me that we were to be one of the first schools in North Yorkshire to be inspected under the newly introduced and more stringent criteria.

Having to go through an inspection so early in the academic year is particularly challenging because staff haven't had more than one or two lessons with their teaching groups, and new year groups are still getting to know the school and its systems.

Two HMI's and five inspectors arrived in School on 30 September and spent two days looking at our procedures, observing lessons and talking to students.

We are very pleased to have received an overall rating of 'good' particularly as the lead HMI also reported on a number of very good and outstanding features.

Our AS and A2 results this year have been some of our best ever and demonstrate year on year improvement.

Unfortunately, because this year's exam results had not yet been validated by the DCSF, (this is not usually done until November) it meant that the inspection team was not able to take them into account.

The inspection team did note the wide range of academic subjects offered in the sixth form, complemented by a selection of vocational courses. This ensures the sixth form is well placed to meet the needs and aspirations of individual students.

Comment was also made that since the last inspection the school had focused on ensuring teaching provides sufficient challenge for the higher attaining students and that the proportion of students gaining the highest grades has increased significantly.

I am attaching a copy of the final report to the newsletter.

Examination Results

This year's public examination results were very good indeed, with so many students achieving outstanding results.

Here are some of the headline figures:

A2

- 98.0% overall pass rate
- 53.5% A/B grades
- 25.3% A grades

BTEC Sport

- 100% overall pass rate
- 75% Distinction
- 25% Merit

GCSE

- 98.23% A*-G
- 70.10% A*-C
- 65.6% A*-C including English & Maths

My congratulations go to the students and staff.

'Oxbridge'

The following students have just headed off to Oxford and Cambridge:

- Rosanna Wright - Natural Sciences – Cambridge
- Emily Cottrell - Theology – Cambridge
- Max Goulding - Maths and Computer Science - Oxford
- Lucy Taylor - Classical Archaeology and Ancient History - Oxford
- Megan Moore - Classics - Cambridge
- Kathleen Brennan - Theology - Cambridge

Building Schools for the Future

Those of you who have been on site recently will have noticed that demolition has now been completed around the old sports hall area and that work has begun on the new teaching block.

Our magnificent new Sports Hall is now being used and enjoyed by students at the school and by members of the community.

We will use the new Sports Hall this year as our public examination centre, (January and May) so that we can ensure they are conducted in a quiet environment well away from the building noise.

Smoking at School or Near the Site

Staff are very concerned about the number of students who continue to smoke on or near the school site.

We have put "stop smoking" programmes into our Life Skills courses and promoted healthy lifestyles through tutors and assemblies. Detentions after school have also failed to deter some students.

So, we have decided to take a firmer stance regarding smoking. Students found smoking on or near the site will be temporarily excluded from school. We will combine this measure with more information and advice about quitting smoking.

PE Uniform

A number of students have mentioned that they feel the School's current PE kit is neither attractive nor particularly comfortable to wear (the rugby shirts are heavy and too long, as are the girls' warm tops).

The PE Department has been working with students to develop a kit that is attractive, cost effective and hard wearing.

Tutor groups have been given the opportunity to comment and a final proposal has now been 'costed'.

The aim would be to start introducing the new kit in September 2010, when it would be sold to the new Year 7 students.

We are in the process of putting examples of the proposed new PE kit onto the School Web Site (www.richmondschool.net) and would appreciate any comments you may have regarding the uniform itself, costs etc.

The PE kit is as follows:

Black Polo Shirt	£10.00-£10.45
Red/Black Rugby Top (B)	£12.50-£13.50
Black Socks	£2.95-£3.25
Black Fleece Top (G)	£13.45-£14.45
Waterproof Jacket *	£18.45-£19.45
Black Shorts	

* Optional
(B) Boys
(G) Girls

Phil Beaver - Head

Governing Body

We started off the new school year with a very early OFSTED inspection. To be inspected under a new framework so early was a lot to ask of the school particularly with the building programme still taking place. We have not yet had the formal feedback, but thanks must go to the whole school for creating a good impression for the inspectors. They thanked everyone for their welcoming attitude. Mention was made of the staff - from those who teach to those who provided the catering. The students were also highlighted as being

open, welcoming and well behaved. The school now gets less than two days' notice and thanks go out to everybody for their response.

As a governing body, we realise that there has been a shift in the inspection process, which is now much more rigorous than ever before. Safeguarding children has moved to the top of the agenda.

The Governing Body recognises that a huge amount of work has been done by the staff and students to ensure continuing improvement at all levels and wishes to congratulate them all on the recent very good examination results.

Inevitably there are still areas for improvement but we are keen to support the staff in their aim to enable each student to reach his/her full potential.

The building continues. We are delighted that despite the disruption, the school is continuing to thrive and improve on its results. Every effort is made to keep the disruption to a minimum. We are now seeing the benefits, as part of the building is completed. The Sixth Form Centre provides excellent facilities to the older students, with ICT and catering facilities to meet modern day requirements. The Sports Hall is amazing! For those who were used to the old sports' hall, this is in a different league. I hope students will enjoy the facilities and that those parents who take part in the Richmond Leisure Trust activities will see the new building and use it themselves.

We recently advertised a number of parent governor vacancies. Three new governors were appointed: Lorraine Clissold, Leslie Rowe (formerly an LEA governor with the school) and Mark Foster. Additionally we have been pleased to welcome Trevor Cook as a Local Authority governor, Liz Coyne as a Community governor, Ralph Remillard as a Teacher governor and Helen Bennison as a Support Staff governor.

This is also an opportunity to thank retiring governors – Jim Brettell, Steve Mannock and Jon Moulding for all the time they have given to the school.

A further parent governor election is currently underway and I will let you know the outcome in the next newsletter.

The Governing Body is working with both Phil Beever and Ian Robertson in ensuring that the transition to the new headship runs smoothly and that we continue to support the school in its aim to become 'outstanding'.

Annette Clark (Chair of Governors)

Lesson Monitoring, 'Keep Kids Safe' and 'IBehave'

The Local Authority has kindly supported the School's request to bring forward some of the BSF funding to improve our attendance and behaviour monitoring systems.

We have recently purchased 'Lesson Monitoring' software which will allow teachers to mark registers electronically at the start of each lesson. From this information we can quickly identify any unaccountable student absences.

Alongside this we have now purchased software called 'Keep Kids Safe' that will take the attendance data and link it to parental contact information, (e-mails and mobile 'phone numbers) enabling us to let you know if your child hasn't registered at school for a particular session.

Because we don't want this software to be seen just as a behavioural/health and safety tool, it's also our aim to develop ways of using it as a means of letting you know when your child has done something particularly good – letters of commendation often sit in student bags and you don't actually get to hear about the good things.

The third piece of software we have purchased is called 'Ibehave'. This package allows staff to record incidents of note, good and bad, which can then easily be shared with colleagues, will support our pastoral processes within school and improve our communication with you.

Web Site

A number of parents have told us that they often don't receive the general letters that are sent home via their children.

We have therefore now established an area on our Web Site, which can be found on the right hand side of the home page and is titled 'Letters to Parents'. This area holds copies of all general parental letters (parents' evenings, visits, activities etc.) and is listed in year group order.

Audrey Pledge – Admin Director

Sixth Form Fund Raising

Richmond Sixth Form College leavers of 2009 raised £740 for the St George Foundation, helping children in Freetown, Sierra Leone to go to school.

Gav Copland – Head of Year 12

Creative Arts Specialism

In September and October we have...

- supported several teaching departments and pastoral groups by funding resources, training and educational trips – part of our drive to maximise the '**whole school benefit**' of the Creative Arts specialism.
- bought **Circus Club** a range of exotic-sounding equipment, from peacock feathers and glow balls to silicone devil handsticks. The Circus Club is a unique feature of the school and its members do us proud by performing at community events.
- done some very positive **primary liaison** with our partner schools, including Drama and Dance staff supporting Middleton Tyas Primary School with their Romans project.
- been delighted by this year's record number of sixth formers getting on to **Drama and Dance degree courses** as well as the large number of students getting on to Art foundation courses.
- performed 'King Lear' at the ARC in Stockton for the **Schools Shakespeare Festival** on 14th October (and in school

on 20th October). Directed by Ian Henderson, Assistant Head of Drama, the cast and crew were a model of inter-year-group harmony: 20 actors from Years 8-11, three musicians from Year 10, two marketing and media gurus in Years 10 and 13 and two production assistants in Years 10 and 12 all working together to dazzling effect. Congratulations to all involved.

- started up a **Tech Club** for Years 9-11 covering all aspects of technical stagecraft.
- benefited from two **Art workshops** from nationally-renowned artists: Mark Hearld on two-colour linocut printing for Year 12 and Dave Barden on mixed media for Year 11, following up the work he did with that group in Year 10. (Mark Hearld enjoyed working with our students so much that he generously donated the large framed print now hanging in Reception.)
- inspired the **Year 9 Gifted & Talented Art Group** in their after-school sessions with works by Henry Moore.
- run the **Sixth Form Art trip to Edinburgh and Glasgow**, visiting Kelvingrove Art Gallery & Museum, the Scottish National Gallery, the Scottish Gallery of Modern Art, Glasgow School of Art and the Burrell Collection.
- congratulated Katie Mannock in Year 13 on designing the **winning logo** for the Richmondshire District Council's new eco shopping bags.
- seen Katy Jackson (Year 7) and Laura Canavan (Year 12) reach the grand final of **Community Idol 2009**, presented by North Yorkshire Police and Harrogate International Festival. Both sang impressive solos at The Royal Hall in Harrogate on 26th September.
- started a new **Year 8-11 Gifted & Talented Dance Group**, Metamorphosis, aiming to develop a repertoire and tour primary schools and local arts venues – in addition to the

host of popular extracurricular dance clubs already up and running.

- planned a titanic **Battle of the Bands** – Tuesday 24th November in Middle Hall, doors open at 7.15pm, tickets £2 available on the door. Student bands from Years 9-13 will ramp up the volume before a panel of mystery celebrity* judges offering incisive and entertaining constructive* feedback. (*These terms are used loosely.)
- been rehearsing like mad for '**Oliver!**', our major production for 2009, running 10th – 12th December. Tickets for this all-time favourite musical will be on sale later this term and are bound to sell like hotcakes (not to mention hot sausage and mustard). Be warned – this is a show so glorious, you *will* want some more...

Liz Moss - Director of Creative Arts

Area Representation

Congratulations to all of the following students for being selected to represent the Richmond and Hambleton Area Squads:

U14 Boys Football: Adam Cocks, Nathan O'Connor, Dylan Wardale.

U15 Boys Football: Sam Devlin, Lewis Stabler, Arun Keens.

U14 Girls Football: Bethany Edgar, Beth Lightfoot, Jess Wroe, Lucy Porter.

U16 Girls Football: Anna Hunter, Emma Morris

U13 Rugby: Stefan Johns, Kieran Thornton, Ben Chapman, Harry Sunter, Will Fawcett, Josh May, Jack Harrild, Matty Bateson

U14 Rugby: Joss Mercer, Joseph Smith, Ben Hodgson, Luke Richmond, Patrick Jukes, Michael Cullen, Dan Osborn, Sean Gunning, Adam Simpson, Curtis Swift

U15 Rugby: Stephen Lord, Callum Farrand, Arun Keens, Jamie Metcalfe

U16 Rugby: Joe Larder, Eric Hynes, Jack Cullen, Daz Catterick, Will Spink, Tom Mannock, Will Myers, Robert McHugh

Yr 7 Cross Country: Rebecca Hornby, Hannah Probert, Bethany Edgar, Millie Cartwright, Dominic Long, Will Jepson

Yr 9 Cross Country: Chloe Richardson, Josie Barker, Chloe Mae Kitching, Daniel Overin

Yr 10 Cross Country: Holly Richardson

Yr 11 Cross Country: Rosie Clarke

Yr 13 Cross Country: Adam Scott, Steven Bainbridge

Lyndsey Carruthers - SSCO

Lost Property

There is a large amount of unclaimed lost property in school that has now become unmanageable, and the school does not have space to store these items indefinitely.

With this in mind a 'lost property' session has been arranged to take place on **Wednesday 4 November 2009**, when students will be asked to check for any missing personal items either during lunch or the afternoon tutor period. This will be extensively publicised within school and following the session any remaining items will be taken to a local charity shop for disposal.

To assist with the management of lost property it has been agreed that items will now be held in school for one month and any property not claimed within this period will be sent to a local charity shop.

Please could you ensure that all clothing is labelled, as this means that items can be returned to the student concerned without delay.

Emma Jobling - Creative Arts Administrator

School Dates

27 November – Staff Training Day

18 December – Last Day of Term

4 January – School Re-opens

Advance Notice

PTA Family Ceilidh

Saturday, 21 November

7.30-10.30 pm in Middle Hall.

Supper, Bar, Raffle

Tickets: Adults £5.00; Children £3.00

Available from School Reception

Careers Department News

Year 10

Work is well underway organising the work experience programme for Year 10 students. The dates this year are **28th June to 9th July 2010** and we have already had an extremely positive response from employers who are willing to offer placements this year. This is as a result of the excellent impression many of our current Year 11 students made last year on their placements, so well done Year 11's, and thank you!

You should have returned your parental permission slip to school by now – **no permission slip, no work experience placement!** If you require another form then please see Mrs Busby in Middle reception as soon as possible.

And finally, please do not contact employers directly at this stage! If you have a particular placement in mind you will be able to state this when you complete a "matching" form in January. However, those of you that have a placement in mind outside of North Yorkshire should contact Mrs Busby or Mrs Eastwood as soon as possible to see if it is feasible.

Year 11

The "What Next?" evening was very well attended on the 7th October and parents and students were informed of the various post-16 options available to them. The Life Skills programme has been preparing students to make important decisions about their future and IGEN Careers' advisors, Bev Dawson and Lisa Pratt, have begun the process of interviewing all Year 11 students to offer them further guidance.

Just a reminder that any Year 11 student can request an additional Careers guidance interview by completing a yellow request form, found in the Careers library. The Careers library has many fantastic resources, available for all Year 11 students to use and Mrs Eastwood will be available every Thursday lunchtime to answer any questions and help you find information. Please come and visit!

Year 13

UCAS applications are well underway, with many students having completed their university applications in the last few weeks, so well done! The school deadline for receiving UCAS applications is **Friday 13th November**. Tutors should have seen first drafts of personal statements by now – if not, time is running out!

The Careers library is very well stocked with resources to help you make decisions, from writing a CV, planning a gap year, to choosing courses, colleges and universities. Sixth form students may visit the Careers library at any time during the day. Remember, there is plenty of support and guidance available – Mrs Eastwood can be found in the Careers library most lunchtimes or you could speak to your tutor. A Careers guidance interview, with Bev Dawson or Lisa Pratt, can be requested by completing a yellow request form, found in the Careers library.

LOOKING AHEAD...

Wednesday 18th November – Sixth Form Open evening for Year 11 students considering further education at Richmond Sixth Form College.

Carolyn Eastwood – Head of Careers