



THE BLUE SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Mr S Jackson

Headteacher

English SATs Results - CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to our Yr 10 students, 108 of whom saw an improvement to their marks following a successful appeal organised by Mrs Budge and English Team colleagues.

We are sorry to be saying goodbye to the following staff:

Mr Steve Heal, who has taught DT here since September 1999.
Miss Sarah Neale, who has worked as a Cover Assistant since September and Ms Viv Burgess who has worked in the library on maternity cover since January. We wish them all well in their future careers.

Many thanks to all staff and students for a fantastic Autumn term.

The Blue School

Roll of Honour

Thomas Horton 9CH has been selected to play hockey for Somerset.

At a ceremony held at the Blue School on 15th December, **Richard Sansom 12TE** was awarded a prestigious Arkwright Scholarship for outstanding work in Design and Technology. Richard's scholarship is sponsored by The Dulverton Trust and was presented by Mr Colin Turner. Scholars are selected following a rigorous selection process comprising an application, Arkwright Aptitude Paper and Interview. During the interview students presented their GCSE project work to a panel of interviewers; interviews are hosted across the country by universities. The interviewees participate in a team activity and tour the engineering/design departments. 238 Scholarships were awarded following applications from 740 candidates. The Arkwright Trust was founded in 1990 and supports young people during their A-level years by awarding £250 a year to assist with the purchase of materials and books. Richard will also carry the status of 'Arkwright Scholar' into university. In addition, the school's Design & Technology Department receives £225 per year for the next two years.

FEAST

Mrs J Spencer

FEAST is an acronym for Food Excellence and Skills Training. You will have seen the Jamie Oliver campaigns that contributed to the Government introducing a series of food and nutritional standards aimed at improving the quality of school meals. In order to support those working to deliver school meals, a number of FEAST centres are being opened throughout England. The centres will support those involved in providing meals and allow access to appropriate training and qualifications. The Blue School is the first school in England to be awarded FEAST status; other centres are based in FE colleges or with Local Authority catering providers.

At the Blue we believe that our students have an entitlement to a school meals service that provides a nutritious and balanced diet.

Eating is a life defining activity and we feel it is crucial that students are encouraged to develop a positive approach to lifestyle habits. The new FEAST centre will allow us to work in partnership with others who share these views.

A new catering training kitchen has been built on the school site and the school is delighted that Raymond Blanc OBE has agreed to come and officially open the training centre on 14th January 2009. Raymond Blanc is one of our most famous chefs and he has championed and nurtured many other famous chefs personally in his kitchens. He was awarded the OBE in 2007 in recognition of his services in promoting culinary excellence and for raising awareness of the importance of healthy food as a central element of family life.

The FEAST initiative will involve the Blue School working in partnership with Somerset Skills and Learning, the training arm of the Local Authority, who have much experience of work based learning and training in Somerset. The centre will offer a range of NVQ qualifications in catering and hospitality, including apprenticeships and Train to Gain programmes. Those wishing to study for a qualification will be given advice on appropriate funding routes to support the cost of training.

The FEAST centre is available as a local training venue for both those who work inside and outside of the education sector. We are looking forward to working with local business and services to provide local training opportunities for anyone with an interest in catering and hospitality. We will be able to negotiate and provide bespoke packages, including short courses to meet legislative standards in food hygiene.

Anyone interested in accessing the training or discussing a career in the school catering workforce, please contact Lisa Western – Catering Manager, or Jane Spencer – Business Manager, at the school.

Scarves and Hats

Mr J Reay

I would like to take this opportunity to thank parents for the support we have been given following my letter about the wearing of coats on site. We have also reviewed our policy with regards to hats and scarves and it is now as follows:

Hats and scarves may be worn during the half term leading up to the Christmas break and the Spring Term following it. They may be worn for warmth and not as a fashion accessory and therefore should be worn outside the buildings only.

We trust students will respond appropriately to this concession and will avoid extremes of style and fashion.

Yr 8 Trip to Lille

Mrs V McIntyre

Forty four very excited children and 5 staff left for France at midnight on Thursday 29 November to travel to Lille via Calais for the annual Christmas market. We reached Lille at 9.30 am French time on a very cold, bright morning full of Christmas atmosphere. The market was quiet and relatively empty at this time, so stall holders had opportunity to talk to our pupils, who obligingly bought lots of presents, hats, souvenirs and food! We

completed a series of worksheets on shopping, famous buildings and a walk around old Lille as well as enjoying a 3 course meal in the warmth of a city centre restaurant, where the waiting staff were amazed at our pupils' excellent behaviour and use of French. Congratulations to all the pupils who participated in the trip - their behaviour was exemplary and they have produced some excellent work as a result of their trip. My sincere thanks to Mrs James MFL, Mrs Savery Yr 8 tutor, Mr Yates MFL and Mr Bilkey Head of Yr8 who were excellent travelling companions and bravely bore the trials of a day trip of such length!

Gifted & Talented Trip to London

Dr S Jamieson

On Saturday 8th November, a few hardy souls met at a rain and windswept Templecombe Station for a visit to the Imperial War Museum in London. We were going to visit the Holocaust Exhibition as part of our brief to produce a number of assemblies to commemorate holocaust Memorial Day in January. The visit was phenomenal. The exhibits were very moving, and they were presented in a very accessible way. The students made their way round at their own pace, and they had to deal with a number of very disturbing accounts. The most amazing thing about the exhibition are the stories of the survivors, and at the end students were able to see what had happened to a number of those they had come into contact with during the course of the exhibition. After looking at the exhibition the students were then given the opportunity to look at the other exhibits on display. The students were a lovely group, and they came up with some great ideas as a consequence of the trip. I'm looking forward to seeing the finished result in assembly in January.

Founder's Day Service

Mr P Newbery

The annual Founders Day Service was held on 12th November at St Cuthbert's Church. The whole of Year 7 walked through Wells to the church where they were met by Father Peter and Mr Jackson. The service is held to commemorate the founding of the school in 1641 by Ezekiel Barkham and to celebrate the fact that the school has been on continuous operation in Wells since then. The Year 7 students participated in the singing of two hymns and the school choir gave an excellent performance of Halliluya by Leonard Cohen. Mr Jackson gave the address describing and illustrating the formation of the Blue School and the various moves around the City until we reached our present location. The reading from Saint Luke's Gospel was given and explained by 3 students (Arthur Dart, Lucy Watson and Henry Mansfield).

As an integral part of the service, the school's Chaplain Mrs Joy Hawes, was commissioned into this role. The commissioning was performed by Father Peter, for whom this was the last Founder's Day Service, and was witnessed and assisted by the various parts of the school community. It is particularly important that the commissioning of the chaplain was conducted in front of Year 7 who are also just starting in their journey through the school.

Wells Blue Sports Centre

Matt Daffurn

Fitness Offer - **Join in January - Get a Month Free!**
Adult membership from **only £23.00 per month!**

WELLS BLUE SPORTS CENTRE OPEN DAY
SATURDAY 24TH JANUARY 2009
10.00am - 2.00pm

All welcome! **Free Exercise Classes, Free Health Checks, Free Club taster sessions, Free Kids Club Taster.** Come along and try a host of activities: Aerobics, Athletics Club, Climbing, Hockey Club, Karate Club, Kickboxing Club, Pilates, Pre School Gymnastics, Rosemary Conley Diet & Fitness, Soft Play, Tae Kwon Do Club, Tai Chi, Trampoline and more!

Activities are free and aimed at giving people the opportunity to sample classes at the Centre so they can return in confidence.

Further information can be sought from the reception team on 01749 836222 or visiting the Centre via Kennion Road entrance.

Yr 12 Biology

Bianca Mawee Patel & Rachel Henson

In preparation for our exams in January, Mr Foster, Miss Hall and Mr Walden took Yr12 Biology students to Bath University, where we looked in depth at different types of microscopes cell organelles. We were divided into 3 groups throughout the day. We visited different parts of the University where we learnt about different biological techniques.



We found it fascinating how electron microscopes work and how clear the produced images were. It was great to have the opportunity to shadow the undergraduates while they conducted practicals. We found the trip beneficial and would like to thank the staff for organising the day for us.

Not JUST a Film Club

Mr M Tennenhaus

You'd think that cramming 25 young people in a darkened room, away from everyone else would lead a more sheltered existence. Cinema should not be like that. **Film Bleu** certainly isn't. Drama, action, comedy, tragedy, intrigue and surprise are all part of our weekly diet. Not every film has all of these, but we try to select films for their positive values and what they can tell us about the big wide world.

Club members have come to appreciate the value of being able to focus on a big screen, without the kinds of interruptions you might get watching a DVD at home. No pause button, no adverts, no channel hopping, no walking in and out.

I love the cinema. It can take you anywhere from inner space to outer space and lots of places in-between. With over 30 feature films a year that's a lot of places! They say, the best kind of learning happens when you don't realise its happening. I learn a lot from the films we watch and from what I can tell, I'm not alone. Film Bleu is open to all students in years 7, 8 and 9. Many thanks to Messrs. Jackson, Hopkin and Hotston for their continuing support.

The School Council has gone from strength to strength this term showing their amazing commitment to their teams and the school. We currently have over twenty active teams with a roll of around 250 students. The teams encompass a broad spectrum of issues from students' passions, like gardening or mini beasts to the fabric of the buildings: the toilet team and the Beautiful School team. On the way they take in the needs of communities here and abroad with the Africa Link Team and the Fundraising Team, not forgetting the needs of the students in the school with the Fitness Cuisine Team and Dyslexia Support Team.

Here are a few highlights from the term:

- The newly formed Buddying Team spoke at an anti bullying conference in Wiltshire in front of a large group of students, teachers and local councillors.
- Six students accepted the special invitation to be guest speakers at the Somerset Newly Qualified Teachers Conference at Dillington. According to the organisers they were the highlight of the programme and served as an inspiration to all the NQTs present.
- So far this term fourteen teams have had their annual reviews at The Wells Museum. These reviews are a vital part of the process of supporting and encouraging the teams.
- The Badger and Spoon Team went to collect their new hens
- The Gardening Team drew up an amazing cropping plan with the help Nick Leithley, the head gardener at Godminster Farm. They have also benefited hugely from the input of the indefatigable Phil Rogers groundsman for the school.
- The toilet team decorated and helped re-fit the boys toilets in Kennion Corridor with a manga theme.
- The Year 7 theme day generated an enormous range of ideas and inspirations both for our current teams and some new ones that they formed on the day, welcome The Bin Team!
- Congratulations to our two new year reps for Year 7: Henry Mansfield 7M and Sophia Radford 7VC
- The Beautiful School Team have lived up to their name and decorated the halls ready for Christmas.
- After a lengthy consultation we have adopted a new strap line which we think reflects perfectly the ideals of the School Council:
"Because change doesn't happen on its own"

The full list of our current teams is a reflection of the strength of our school community:

The Fundraising Team; The Waste and Recycling Team; The Toilet Team; The Future Trees Team; The Transport Team; The Fitness Cuisine Team; The Fair Trade Team; The Beautiful School Team; The Communication Team; The Year Reps Team; The Aquarium Team; The Garden and Growing Team; The Energy Team; The Dyslexia Support Team; The Africa Link Team; The Office Support Team; The Finance Team; The Management Support Team; The Co ordination Support Team; The Governance Support Team; The Badger and Spoons Team; The Buddying Team; The Science Support Team; The Quiet Space Team and The Shelters Team.

If there are any parents or members of the community who would like to get involved in supporting any of our teams, please do get in touch.

Merry Christmas.

At the recent AGM we were pleased to welcome five new members to the Committee. Key personnel for the forthcoming year are again: Di Harris, Chair; Jacqui Summerhayes, Treasurer; and Jo Armstrong, Secretary.

The Quiz Night in October was a great success and raised £813.75. Thanks to all those involved in that – teams, sponsors, helpers. The Glastonbury Festival is another big fundraiser for us and it looks as though enough parents have volunteered to help form a second team of stewards. If you have any queries about this, contact Robin Horton via the Admin. Office.

Thanks to all parents who have recently joined the 100 Club – 46 new shares were issued. It's never too late to join the 100 Club if you've still not got around to it. It costs as little as £12 per year, with a draw held every quarter. This session's first prize winner received £118, so it's well worth joining. Contact Jacqui Summerhayes (PTA 100 Club) via the Admin. Office.

The winners for the July–September 2008 draw were:

1st prize: £118.00 – share no 53 – Mrs K Flood of Wells
2nd prize: £35.40 – share no 125 – Mrs S Lee of Wookey Hole
3rd prize: £23.60 – share no 56 – Mrs A Coombs of Wells

All our funds are currently being saved towards a new minibus for the school.

The PTA meets once each term and any parents are welcome to come along. If you'd like to be involved but are unable to attend a meeting or would like any more information on the PTA activities, please contact Di Harris (01749 676947 or DiHarris@talktalk.net). Otherwise, do come along to the next committee meeting on Tuesday 13 January 2009, 6.30 pm in the Atom Café, Kennion Hall. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Performing Arts

What a wonderful job the students and staff of the Performing Arts Department did in bringing to the stage Ibsen's notoriously difficult opus Peer Gynt. They ran four performances in the Milton Hall from 8th – 11th December. A cast of more than 30 drawn from Yrs 8 to 13 (12-18yrs old) began the audition and research process in June – younger cast members still being in Yr 7 at the time. The work of the technical team fused live action realtime video, powerpoint projection, Greig's original music and imaginative lighting to transport the audience from Norwegian fjords to Egyptian lunatic asylum, a shipwreck and possibly heaven. The cast were exceptional from trolls with no lines to wedding guests mocking a brash young Peer, they were totally committed and professional throughout. The extraordinary Dovre Master (King of the Trolls) was full of menace, humour and physical intensity in the hands of Angus Morrice (Yr8). The two Peers – Fergus Collins as Young and John Dixon as Older Peer, managed the text and the responsibility of being almost constantly on stage with maturity and class. Sarah Neale's choreography for Anitra and the slave girls was perfectly pitched and the sets created by using plain pallets and wonderfully painted moving screens demonstrated just how much thought and effort had gone into this production by the Drama and Art departments. Richard Crooks – new Head of Art, and his team of students deserve huge credit for their contribution.

Simon Moody, Team Leader Performing Arts commented "It has always been described as a difficult play to stage and has rarely if ever been performed with Greig's music as an integral part of it. I thought the cast and crew produced a definitive interpretation of

the play in which the music was completely at home and they should be very proud of themselves."

Bath Costume Museum

Becky Webster

With Miss Webster at the wheel of the school minibus, Year 12 Fashion and Textile students visited the Bath Costume Museum as part of the new AS D & T Product Design Level coursework. Thankfully all went smoothly and much was learnt by all. Bath Costume Museum is a must for any fashionistas!

The visit started with a tour of the museum – all manner of clothing over a 300 year period, along with some impressive and creative haute couture, was on display. After which students were taken to one of the museum's study areas. The main piece of clothing analysed by the students was an original 1947 Christian Dior 'daisy' suit worn by the infamous ballet dancer Margot Fonteyn. As expected it was very tiny! Incredibly it was made entirely by hand stitching and encompassed some 105 pattern pieces. Constructively, it was extremely clever, particularly the padding hidden within the concealed pockets to emphasise the hips (a Dior classic) - not something we envisage Mrs Beckham would be happy wearing today!

They were able to look closely at a dress created for a debutante in the late 1940s. This dress was encrusted with beads and jewels, all sewn by hand – many thousands of hours must have been spent creating this beautiful dress. Students soon realised why today a haute couture outfit could cost the recipient well over £30,000!

Having the opportunity to look at, touch and see how clothing used to be made before industrialised machinery and mass manufacture took over was fascinating. The students (and teachers) learnt much and the visit has helped inspire products for their coursework which will be able to be seen at the departments fashion show next year. Do come along. As always the students were exemplary. Thanks girls.

Examination Certificates 2008

Certificates for the 2008 examination season are ready for collection from the school reception. These certificates are important documents and may be required when applying for a job or for further/higher education. ***Please note that the Examination Awarding Bodies have agreed a standard procedure for dealing with unclaimed certificates. Certificates will be kept by The Blue School for one year after issue i.e. until September 2009, after which time they will be destroyed by a secure method. Once destroyed it is the student's responsibility to request duplicates from the Awarding Body, for which there may be a charge.*** If students are unable to collect certificates, they may authorise another person, in writing, to collect them on their behalf. Students may request certificates to be posted to them; however, the school cannot accept responsibility for any loss.

Dates for Your Diary

17 Dec	Term ends for Pupils
18 Dec	Inset Day 3
19 Dec	Inset Day 4
05 Jan	School resumes
15 Jan	Y 9 Options Evening
22 Jan	6 th Form Choices Evening
05 Feb	Yr 9 Parents' Evening
13 Feb	Half term begins
23 Feb	School resumes

19 March	Yr 11 Parents' Evening
26 March	Yr 13 Parents' Evening
02 April	Yr 12 Parents' Evening
03 April	End of term
20 April	School resumes
04 May	Bank Holiday
14 May	Yr8 Parents' Evening
22 May	Half term begins
01 June	School resumes
18 June	Yr 7 Parents' Evening
26 June	Inset Day 5
02 July	Yr10 Parents' Evening
08 July	Yr 6 Induction Day
09 July	Yr 6 Parents' Evening
13 July	Y10 Work Experience week
22 July	End of term

Pupil Data Sheets were posted to all students at the beginning of term in September and many duplicate sheets have since been re-printed to replace those that have gone astray! It is vital that our student database is accurate and up to date, but many sheets have still not been returned. Please ensure you advise us of any changes to students' data by returning your Data Sheet without delay.

ParentPay: ParentPay allows parents to pay for trips and activities over the Internet using either a debit or credit card; the system is available 24/7. One of the advantages of using ParentPay is that parents do not need to return the Permission Slip attached to letters; permission is given electronically at the time of making your payment. Parents may top-up their child's Smartcard – any top-up made via ParentPay will be credited automatically to the Smartcard by the following morning. A large number of parents are taking advantage of ParentPay and find it easy to use. We would like to encourage others to try it to see how quick and convenient it is. If any parent has lost their instructions, or secure log-on user name and password, please contact the Finance Office Team on 01749 836262.

The Blue School – Uniform Service

Term-time opening hours are:

Wednesday	11.30am – 5.00pm
Thursday	11.30am – 6.00pm
Friday	11.30am – 5.00pm
Saturday	10.00am – 12.30pm

Closed for lunch 2.00pm – 3.00pm

Shop will be closed Saturday 13th December to Friday 2nd January

Re-open: Saturday 3rd January

Telephone 01749 836236 for further information or 01749 836262 outside normal trading hours.

Reporting Absence: When your child is absent, please ring the school by 10 am on the first and subsequent days of absence. On returning to school, your child should bring a note to the tutor confirming the reasons for absence. Our Attendance Secretary has a direct telephone line with Voicemail – **01749 836210**. Please use this number when reporting your child's absence or, alternatively, you can e-mail us at attendtheblue@educ.somerset.gov.uk.