

Christmas Carol Service



Our Carol Service led by Joy Hawes, the school's Chaplain took place in St Cuthbert's Church on Tuesday 15th December. The beautiful singing and excellent playing by the Wind Band truly made everyone feel that Christmas was here. Thank you to everyone who took part.

Operation Christmas Child



A few weeks ago students in years 7 and 8, together with other members of the school community continued a tradition within the school to support the shoebox appeal for Operation Christmas Child. Many wonderful toys, stationery items, toiletries, small items of clothing and even sweets were collected and packed into suitably papered shoeboxes. These gifts, bursting with generosity will be received by children in an Eastern European or African country. It is good

to be part of a nationwide activity that makes such a difference to those who have so little; this act of giving is, after all, symbolic of the essence of Christmas.

Mrs Joy Hawes (Chaplain).



Carol Competition

Congratulations to Lauren Mayor (year 12) who won 2nd place and a prize of £75 for writing a new Christmas Carol for her GCSE coursework and submitting it for a competition run by Corsham Choral Society. Lauren and the other four finalists had their pieces performed by the choir at a special event on Sunday 5th December. Well done Lauren!

Lego Robotics Competition

On a rainy Thursday in November, Eight intrepid robot designers from year 7 (collectively known as "The Cyber Squad") took their creation to the high-tech Hewlett Packard Labs in Bristol to compete against 22 teams from schools in the southwest. The atmosphere was buzzing with over 200 students at the event. First they had to make a presentation in to a panel of judges and 40 other students focusing on the event's theme of transport and road safety, then demonstrate how they have worked as a team and explain the design of their robot. Their robot then had to complete a variety of missions autonomously, knocking down items, releasing levers and jumping over walls!

The whole team performed superbly and finished in 8th place, an amazing feat when you consider they were against teams of pupils who were 3 years older with much more experience.

Congratulations to Thomas Owen, Josepheena Wells-Membury, Tom Hebbes, George Harvey, Eddie Read, Will Hale, Timon Erkelens and Harry Gallacher.

Science Christmas Shows

Wednesday the 2nd of December saw the traditional Science Christmas shows return to The Blue School with almost 200 Y6 pupils coming from our surrounding primary schools to gasp, shriek and laugh at the demonstrations including exploding cotton wool, a singing metal rod, a real life stink ray and a stunt Barbie getting a 40,000 volt shock. A special show was put on for some of our pupils from years 7, 8 & 9 as a small reward for the effort and enthusiasm they have worked with during the autumn term. Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves thoroughly, apart from stunt Barbie... Mr Ben Howarth

Blue School Poet Laureate - English Department

Congratulations to Natasha Kurle in 9MF who is our first Blue School Poet Laureate. Natasha won first prize in our poetry competition which was held to celebrate National Poetry Day, with her poem inspired by heroes and heroines.

Congratulations also to Robyn Wyatt in Y8, Adele Carr in Y7 and Eddy Pyne in Y11 who were runners up, selected from a staggering 120 entries - well done to all who entered. Look out for World Book Day events in March! Mrs Boxall-Legge

Wells Young Chef of the Year 2010

Congratulations to Laura Franklin, one of our students who is on a Programme led Apprentice Scheme for NVQ Level 2 in professional Cookery apprentices. She won the 1st round of the Rotary Club Young Chef of the Year 2010 which was held in the school's FEAST catering training centre on Wednesday 9th December. Special mention must go to Henry Peacock in Y9 for his entry. Laura will now represent The Blue School in the next stage of the competition. We will let you know how she gets on.

Y7 African Music Concerts

Since September, Y7 students have been learning African songs and drumming rhythms in music lessons, using African Djembes and percussion. Due to the high level of group work involved it has been a fantastic way for each tutor group to get to know its members as students settle in at the Blue School. Many classes created their own arrangements of songs from Ghana, South Africa and the Congo, and devised rhythms and solo parts to give individuals an opportunity to show their creativity. Each tutor group was involved in a concert in October at the end of the project at which they performed their work to the rest of the year group. Over £50.00 was raised through the sale of 'I love Africa' wristbands and through money donation boxes for Oxfam. Ms French from the Blue School Council also spoke to Y7 about the school's link with Ghana through the 'Africa Link Team' which is currently recruiting new members. Well done to Y7 for your enthusiasm, ideas and participation!

Our Survey of Wells

Y7 at the Blue School went into Wells for a survey. The information we collected helped our Geography project – settlement. Every Y7 class went into Wells over a period of two weeks, and each had separate places and streets to survey and examine.

We walked into Wells with a policewoman and our geography teacher(s), and arranged to meet at St Cuthbert's Church when we had finished our survey. The streets we examined were Sadler Street, both sides of the High Street, the Market Place, St Cuthbert's Street and the end of the High Street. We had one hour to finish the survey.

Most groups comprised of four pupils – two did a survey of the people in Wells, one did a traffic survey and the other noted down the different types of shop on their street. The survey of people showed whether or not the people lived in Wells, what could be done to improve Wells and how often the people visited Wells. The traffic survey was a tally chart showing how many cars, lorries, bikes etc. were coming up and down the street. The person that was noting down the shops had a number key that would help identify each shop type e.g. WH Smith would be number 5 (Bookshop), Greggs would be number 1 (Bakers/Groceries).

When we had finished, we waited by the church for the other groups, then walked back to school. I enjoyed the trip because we could have fun and do physical activities rather than sitting at our desks. We could also see what Wells was like during weekdays, as opposed to weekends and afternoons.

Our result of the traffic survey told us that the end of the High Street had the most pedestrians, the south side of the High Street had the most cars, and that hardly anyone cycled to Wells during the day! The survey of people showed that a lot of people wanted the High Street to be pedestrianised and a lot of people came to Wells to shop. The shop survey showed that a lot of shops in Wells were empty, and therefore needed to be filled. Joanne Park 7SB

Thales Employees Become Teachers for the Day

Blue School ICT students were shown how computer technology is used in the aviation industry this week.

Thales employees on the Thales Graduate Training Scheme became teachers for the day as part of their personal development programme.

"It was a great opportunity for Thales and the Blue School to work together" said Head of ICT, Ian Ramsden. "Students enjoyed seeing how their studies link to exciting real life situations, while the former graduates gained skills from planning and delivering their own training sessions!"

Thales staff also took time to talk with some Y11 students about university life and the benefits of studying science, maths and ICT.



6th Form Philosophy Conference

On Friday 6th November 20 Sixth Form students joined several hundred others for a Philosophy conference at the Westlands Complex, Yeovil. This was lead by Dr Peter Vardy, Vice-Principal of Heythrop College, University of London and Julie Arliss of Richard Huish College, Taunton.

So if you want to know about

- Proof & probability
- Types of atheism
- Miracles
- Body-Mind-Soul distinctions

The Y12 & Y13 Philosophy & Ethics classes are the ones to ask.

Y8 Church Visits

The whole of Y 8 visited 3 churches in Wells as part of their Religion & Philosophy studies. For three mornings three classes took their visit booklets and were shown around St Cuthbert's, SS Joseph & Teresa and the Wells United Church by members of those communities.

Y8 are now writing up their findings focussing on the similarities and differences they found on their visit.



Mufti Day

Mufti day on 27th November raised £1066.10 for the Freewheelers Emergency Voluntary Service which provides an out-of-hours emergency motorcycle courier service to hospitals in the southwest. This lifesaving service to the NHS is provided free of charge and is funded entirely by public donation and sponsorship. Thank you to everyone who contributed.

Senior Maths Challenge

On Tuesday 24th November four of our most able senior maths students went to Chippenham to compete in the regional round of the Senior Maths Challenge run by the UK Maths Trust.

The four students: Douglas Cooley and Rose Ventham Y12, Tim Grange and Arthur Scammell Y11 did very well and were unlucky to finish out of the medals coming 8th out of 20 but only a few marks away from 2nd and 3rd place.

This is the first time we have entered this competition and hopefully it will become a regular fixture in the calendar as the students thoroughly enjoyed doing 3 hours of rigorous maths and are already planning to do better next year.

The Governing Body

The Governors of the school are also Trustees of The Blue School Scheme of Foundation. They have asked us to make it known that they have at their disposal a limited amount of funds to disposal for scholarships, bursaries, maintenance allowances or grants to persons under the age of 25 years who are in need of financial assistance and who attend or have attended as a student at The Blue School. An information leaflet and application form can be obtained from the Clerk to the Governors, Mrs Jo Stitch.

PTA Update

The PTA have started fundraising to purchase a dedicated building for the Blue School Council, whose many student teams work hard in so many varied ways. Take a look at their website (www.blueschoolcouncil.org.uk) to see what they're involved with. We hope everyone will be very supportive – not least by joining the '100 Club' or renewing shares if they've expired. The 100 Club costs as little as £12.00 per year, with a draw held every quarter. Last quarter's first prize winner received £141.00, so it's well worth doing. Everyone should have received forms in the post recently; if not, contact Kaye Millington (PTA 100 Club) via the Blue School Admin Office for further details.

Our other sources of funding are the annual October Quiz Night, which this year raised in excess of £1200.00, and our Glastonbury volunteers, who are now based in three areas of the Festival. If you haven't volunteered for the latter before, please contact Robin Horton (via the Blue School Admin. office) and he can give you all the details.

Our next meeting will be on 12th January 2010, 6.30 pm in the Atom Café, Kennion Hall. Please do come along and meet us. Minutes of the previous meeting will be available on the evening but if you'd like a copy of these beforehand, please contact Jo Armstrong (joarmstrong@phonecoop.coop). If you'd like to be involved in the PTA but are unable to attend the meeting or would like any more information on the activities of the PTA, please contact the Chair, Di Harris (diharris@talktalk.net) or Jo.

Medical Conditions

It is very important that our records hold up to date information relating to any medical conditions or regular medications being taken by a student. Primary Schools are not required to pass medical information onto us so there may be some Y7 students, in particular, that we have no medical details for. If your child does have a condition that we should be aware of please either email:

office@blue.somerset.sch.uk or contact Mrs Karen Nicodemi our School Nurse on 01749 678799 ext: 249. Medical information can also be updated via your child's Data Collection Sheet. To date Data Collection Sheets have been sent out to parents of students in years 7, 8, 11, 12 and 13, with those for years 9 and 10 being sent home early next term.

Uniform Shop

"Christmas Holiday"

Last trading day Saturday 12th December

Reopens Wednesday 6th January 2010

Advance Notice of February 2010 closure:

Half-term

Last trading day Friday 12th February

Reopens Saturday 20th February

The shop will also be closed due to staff holidays from Monday 22nd February – Thursday 4th March inclusive but will be open on Saturday 27th February."

Wells Blue Sports Centre

Stuck for a last minute Christmas present? Contact Matt Daffurn and his team for some great ideas, for example "The Twelve Days of Christmas" offers someone 12 days of exclusive fitness membership for just £12.00. Membership runs between 28th December – 11th January 2010 and includes: fitness induction, free gym use, free court hire at any time (badminton, table tennis, tennis).

Join In January – Get a Month Free

If you join as a Direct Debit member in January you'll also get a free month! Adult membership is £26.00 per month.

From 1st January a new Joint membership is available. If you and a family member want to get fit together then this is the membership for you. Two adults can join together for only £44.00 and two concessions for £33.00.

Good Vibrations

We are pleased to announce the arrival of 2 power plates. Power plate training is one of the most exciting developments in the Health and Fitness industry in recent

times. Vibration workouts require little effort and achieve maximum results. A 10 minute session can be equivalent to a one hour workout!

Off Peak Rate

There are excellent off peak rates available for many activities: please contact the Wells Blue Sports Centre for more information 01749 836222.

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

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

Diary Dates

04.01.10 Return to School Start of Spring Term
07.01.10 Y11 Parents' Evening
14.01.10 Y9 Options Evening
04.02.10 Y9 Parents' Evening
12.02.10 Break up at 1520 for half term
22.02.10 Return to school
11.03.10 Y11 Parents' Evening
18.03.10 Y12 Parents' Evening
25.03.10 Y13 Parents' Evening
01.04.10 Break up at 1520 for Easter Holidays
02.04.10 Good Friday
19.04.10 Return to School Start of Summer Term
03.05.10 May Day bank holiday
06.05.10 Y11 Presentation Ceremony and start of study leave

Diary Dates cont.

- 07.05.10 Y12 study leave begins
- 28.05.10 Break up at 1520 for half term
- 07.06.10 Return to school
- 25.06.10 INSET Day – school closed to students
- 21.07.10 Students break up for the summer holidays

Remaining Inset Days for this year are Friday 25th June, Thursday 22nd July and Friday 23rd July 2010. Detailed school term and holiday calendars are available from:

www.theblueschoolwells.co.uk

And finally.....

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from everyone at the Blue

Back on Monday 4th January 2010