



The Hemel Hempstead School

News

13 June 2008

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HeadLines

With a school whose history dates back nearly 80 years, there are bound to be views of traditions and 'what we have always done.' There isn't actually too much evidence to support this theory or some of the nostalgic perceptions which accompany any review of The Hemel Hempstead School's illustrious past. There are a handful of things which have been retained in the post-war period and almost nothing from the pre-war years. The school has tended to run on initiatives which have extended through five year periods and then moved on to the next stage. These phases have coincided with national educational changes or with changes of headship. As you know I have a keen interest in remembering our history and celebrating the unique qualities that make this school what it is. I also have a job to do, which is to ensure that The Hemel Hempstead School of today is a place where achievement for all is a certainty and where we move from a mixture of 'good and outstanding' to 'outstanding across the board.'

Our recent Ofsted and the many accolades heaped on the school over the past year show that we are well placed to attain that lofty ambition and indeed, part of my strategy for fulfilling the prophecies is to set our sights high. I don't want to improve a little; I want us to compete with the best schools nationally for the benefit of all of our students.

In the midst of all that, we must never lose sight of the other things we do well, the things which provide the cement to hold together the building. These include the care and personal development of our youngsters and the extracurricular opportunities given to the students, so emphatically applauded by the inspectorate. The fact that our students are so articulate and positive about their learning is not a fluke. The ethos of the school provides fertile ground for such growth and development by providing both quality teaching and learning and a range of experiences which enhance student leadership. None of this is possible without the committed, passionate, dedicated staff we possess.

Two of the parts of the school structure which support the ethos so effectively are the pastoral system and the house system. Next year will see a further enhancement and embedding of these strengths of the school in order to improve achievement further, to enable more students, particularly Sixth Formers, to take on leadership roles and to enable our Student Achievement Leaders to track and monitor students more effectively.

As you know your sons and daughters are already placed in tutor groups which are named according to house. That will continue and the majority of students will have the same tutor next academic year. Clearly, there is staff turnover every year and some of the new teachers will take over groups. As usual, staff turnover here is one of the lowest in the county and we are fully staffed for 2008-9 with excellent teachers. We even have one of our best loved teachers, Mrs Hayley Redfern, returning to us in a promoted role after a year at a different school and, of course, the much loved Miss Sharon Sepala is coming back following her sabbatical in Canada.

The tutors and the Student Achievement Leaders do a wonderful job. Next year, the collection of tutor groups which, together, comprise each house will be overseen by a Student Achievement Leader. This will replace the year system. Students will see very little difference initially except some will have a different Student Achievement Leader overseeing their interests and most assemblies will take place in the house arrangement not the year configuration. Activities which need to take place in years will continue to do so. May I reiterate that there will be no changes to the way we organise tutor groups or the way that Miss Black, Miss Culliton or Mr Chappelow give such exceptional service as SALs. Miss Dayton, who has been such an excellent Head of Sixth Form will join the group of SALs leading houses, as will our brilliant Head of Art, Mrs Lane and our fantastic Subject Leader for Key Stage 4 English, Mrs Evans. I wish Mrs Hartley, who led the Year 11s so well last year and has been a superb Student Achievement Leader for Year 7 this year, every good wish during her maternity leave and I pay tribute to the wonderful work of Mrs Cracknell who retires as SAL/ Head of Year this year but, thankfully, will be returning to us to teach part-time in September. It just wouldn't be the same school without the Cracknell family as part and parcel of all we do.

Any changes to the person you need to contact in relation to the your son or daughter will be notified to you, but Mrs Allen, our receptionist of long-standing who knows all the students so well, has become the personal assistant to the Student Achievement Leaders and will be able to field any queries or requests for meetings next academic year.

And that brings me back nicely to the initial theme of my lengthy headlines this week, less 'headlines' and more 'feature article' one might say. I have no intention of tampering with the traditions of the school. I may have been here for coming up to three years, but I live and breathe the school motto and the roll of honour means as much to me as anyone. I genuinely feel like the guardian of the legacy of the school, but I also know that our success this year will not be replicated year on year without innovation; developing our existing structures and taking on the best of ideas for our future. Strengthening our house system and enabling our Sixth Formers to take on leading roles mark this school as a true 11-18 establishment where the older students role model effectively for the younger ones and where achievement for all our students will happen conclusively.

Sandra Samwell, Headteacher

Tesco Computers For Schools Vouchers

Thank you for your help in collecting and donating Tesco vouchers to our school. The most recent voucher scheme has now ended. If you have any further vouchers, we would be grateful if you would send them in to school as soon as possible.

IT Department

Gold Letters issued recently:

Letter 190 Year 13 Biology Field Course

Letter 191 Year 13 Geography Fieldwork Investigation

Letter 192 Year 9 Introducing Careers Resources

Letter 193 Year 7 Big Arts Week – Gospel/Performance Workshop



arts colleges

BIG ARTS WEEK WORKSHOP

Lunchtime workshops will be available for all students on Monday 23rd and Tuesday 24th June.

Students will have a choice between four different workshops, for example:

Monday 23rd – Chinese Calligraphy in Art 1
Rangoli in Art 2

Tuesday 24th - Chinese Zodiac in Art 1
Chinese Paper Art in Art 2

All workshops are free of charge.

Please sign up at Student Services if you are interested because only a limited number of places are available for each workshop.

Mrs Ramnarine

ARTS NEWS

Earlier this year, five of our students entered a play-writing competition run by the National Theatre New Connections programme. The competition, called 'The Theatre Debate' is open to young playwrights across the country and they were invited to pitch an idea for a play. The successful applicants will be teamed with an established playwright who will work with them to develop their idea.

We are delighted that one of our students has been successful. Polly Taylor (Year 10) will be going to London for two days in September to take part in a play-writing workshop, during which she will be working with others to transform her idea into a script.

We wish Polly luck and hope that we will get a chance to see her play performed in the future, maybe even at school – if she will let us!

Miss Keen and Mrs Heale

Review of 'It Snows' Hampstead Theatre, 4th June

Having very much enjoyed the school-based performance of 'It Snows', I was really looking forward to its debut on the London stage. However, as the date drew closer, I grew a little apprehensive. How would the students cope transferring the production to a professional theatre space with only a day to set up? How would we compare to the other schools performing? Would a cast drawn from all parts of the school be able to commit during the exam season? Would I be the only audience member representing The Hemel Hempstead School? As I drew near the Hampstead Theatre, it was clear that my fears were groundless. I was greeted by two happy and relaxed cast members who had clearly enjoyed an excellent day's rehearsal and, inside the theatre, I encountered many more HHS students looking very much at home in the little outcrop of Theatreland that is Swiss Cottage.

The performance was every bit as outstanding as its predecessor. With the audience sitting almost on top of the stage, the principals had to be good enough to exert an emotional pull on us and Max Farrelly, Sarah Nicholls and Rosie Hoskins were more than equal to the challenge. They were very well supported by a boisterous cast, who were required to terrorise, nag, snowball and party their way through the play. It is not fair to pick out individuals but credit must go to Brad Sarginson for committing to the play in the thick of his A2 exams. In fact, the difficulties concerning the timing and staging of the play made the team stronger according to members of the cast I spoke to. They know the play so well now that they are able to fill in for each other.

Don't just take my word for it! Cast members from a rival production were sitting just behind me and made up a most appreciative audience who chortled and hooted, cooed and groaned appropriately. They described our performance as 'brilliant' and I am sure that our students would have formed a similarly receptive audience for their play. I was proud to be part of The Hemel Hempstead School that night and would like to congratulate cast, crew and staff on a wonderful production. Thanks must also go to the Posner family (and other parents) who made the long trek up the Met Line on a warm summer's evening to support the school.

Mr Jordan, Deputy Headteacher

Welcome to Afghanistan!

For many years, in order to excuse my habit of hoarding excessive quantities of bedding, I joked to my family 'I am waiting for the refugees to arrive'. Well in August 2006 – at last they came!

Six months earlier I had read a wonderful book – 'The Kite Runner' by Khalid Hosseini, in which he portrays the Afghan people as brave and fearless but who, despite their harsh lives and suffering, were known to be the friendliest people on earth. 'If a Pashtun is a friend – he is a friend for life'. I had never met a Pashtun in my life.

One night I received a call from the Emergency Duty Team.

Typically, a bed would be required for a fifteen year old girl, possibly drunk, damaged and angry, occupying a cell in the local police station. However on this occasion they needed an urgent placement for five young males from Afghanistan. I was later to discover that they were Pashtuns.

Imagine my excitement! Out came the bedding at last! I raided the freezer and cooked enough chicken and rice to feed an army. At 11.30 pm they arrived, tired, hungry and grateful for a hot shower and a clean bed. The only thing I tried to tell them, with limited success, was 'you are safe here now'.

That night I couldn't sleep. The boys laugh now when I tell them that I locked my bedroom door and wondered if they might all have disappeared by the morning. I'm so glad they didn't.

The last 19 months have been a roller coaster. With the help and support of the Children's Asylum Seeker and Refugee Team, three boys were allowed to stay with me.

My house had been filled with fun and laughter, and MUSIC – LOUD MUSIC, Pashto, Farsi and Hindi. Sometimes when my friends call I say 'Welcome to Afghanistan'. I am sure there is no such thing as a quiet Afghani!

Of course we have had our different cultural expectations – to put it politely. Should I insist that they use a knife and fork at the table? Do I really have to enter their bedrooms barefoot? They have sometimes become very exasperated with me. Good Afghani mothers do everything for their sons, good English mothers teach their teenage sons to look after themselves – or try to! I've been in tears on a number of occasions but overall it's been one of the best experiences of my life. We've had so many funny moments, Zabi likes to cook Kabuli Lamb Palau and fries it up with an iron - 'No Zabi, an ONION'! I cannot tell you how many litres of oil, loaves of bread and pots of yoghurt we eat in a week.

Over the last year and a half the boys have done so well. The Hemel Hempstead School accepted them and has given amazing help and support. Two of the boys spoke no English when they arrived but now we are able to have really interesting conversations about their lives and families. They have known much sadness and suffering but I haven't fostered many teenagers who sing at the breakfast table.

Umar has won a trophy, 'Batsman of the Year', from a local cricket team. Fazal took gold in two recent Karate competitions. Zabi has a part-time job in a pizza shop and sends some of his wages back to his unwell, widowed mother to help pay for doctors' bills – he says she is 40 but looks 70 years old.

How lucky we are to be born in England. Immigration is a controversial and complex issue, but in my heart I believe that these lovely boys deserve a chance. I have two beautiful daughters but I would be proud to have these boys as my sons.

P.S. I have just seen the film 'Kite Runner' and can recommend it, also 'The Kabul Beauty School', by Deborah Rodriguez.

Lyn Bowen, Foster Carer, West Fostering, April 2008

WALK TO SCHOOL DAY

International Day of the African Child

Monday 16th June is the anniversary of the 'Soweto Riots' in South Africa in 1976. The pupils of Soweto took to the streets to protest against being forced to learn Afrikaans, the language of the Dutch Rulers under Apartheid. Many children were killed and injured on this day. Thankfully, Apartheid no longer exists and the children of our Partnership School, Mgezwa learn in English.

However, their lives and culture are very different to ours and they often walk miles to school each day, as they have no choice. This obviously promotes a healthy lifestyle and to acknowledge this we are having a 'Walk to School Day' on Monday 16th June. Many of our students already walk to school but we would like as many students as possible to walk to school on this day, even if it is only part of the way. In the current climate, with the price of petrol, this might have added benefits, including supporting a cleaner environment.

Risenga Makondo from South Africa is coming in to school to teach workshops to 7F, 7N, 7P and a group of students from South Hill Primary School. The workshops will be in groups of 24 during lesson 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. Students are asked to bring in their own gumboots (Wellingtons) on this day, if they have them. Our students have seen on video our Partnership school students performing the 'Gumboot' dance and will have an opportunity to share in their culture.

This year's Fun Run also sees a 'first'. Mgezwa School are also doing their first ever Fun Run, starting at the same time on the same day. Each of our students will be paired up with a student from Mgezwa and they will be running 'together' even though 6,000 miles apart! Some of the sponsorship money raised will go to the Partnership between HHS and Mgezwa.

Mrs Botha

HEMEL AT WAR

Do you have a relative or friend who lived in or around Hemel Hempstead during the war? Or who fought on the front lines? Or who has any memorabilia such as photographs or letters? If so, the History Department wants to hear from you. We want to record the experiences of local people during World War Two. Our pupils will interview people and collate material and then upload the information to a public website. Pupils will be given full training and of course, child protection will be paramount. We believe this will be not only a fantastic chance for our pupils to learn more about oral history and primary sources, but also a wonderful resource for the wider community beyond the school. So if you have any relatives, friends or memorabilia which could help, please contact any member of the History Department.

Miss Akeroyd, History Department

PTA News

SUMMER FAIR - TOMORROW

SATURDAY 14th JUNE 2008 - 2pm

If you have raffle tickets still at home, can you please return the stubs and money as soon as possible so they are included in the draw.

AUCTION

We will be holding an auction at the fair with the following items up for bids:

A signed WATFORD FC pennant

A signed photograph of Theo Walcott

Tottenham Hotspur Shirt signed by Robbie Keane.

Bids will be taken at any time leading up to the fair and on the day.

We still require donations from you to help swell the Tombola stall, cakes to sell and most important of all your HELP.

We would love to see you on the day, and we will help you spend your money.

Lots of attractions have been booked including our own version of Hemel's Got Talent, which is being organised by Miss Samwell.

BBQ is once again being cooked by Mrs Cracknell and Mr Chappelow, aided by Mr Stuart and Miss Black.

We really hope to see you there.

Judith Stallworthy, Chair HHSA (01442 393266 or mobile 07749 727350) Email s.stallworthy@sky.com



Dates for Your Diary

*** Blue Week***

- 16th - 18th Jun** Yr 10 School Exams (core subjects)
16th & 17th Jun Yr 7 Geography trips to Chilterns
17th Jun Yr 8 Science Carbon Challenge Roadshow
18th Jun Yr 12 Biology pre-fieldtrip meeting (Yr 13 trip)
5.30 pm in Library
Yr 9 Lake District trip information evening
7 pm in Sixth Form Study Centre
Yrs 10/11 Geography pre-fieldtrip meeting
5.30 pm in Library
19th Jun Yr 11 D of E Silver Award Training 12 - 3.30 pm
Yrs 6, 7 and 8 Dance/Drama Festival rehearsals

Gold Week

BIG ARTS WEEK

- 23rd Jun** Yr 7 Gospel Workshop
24th Jun Dance/Drama Festival
Yr 12 Higher Education Convention
25th Jun Yr 7 Gospel Workshop in afternoon
Extracurricular Art trip to Royal Academy of Art
26th Jun **SPORTS DAY**
Yr 6 Parents' Evening in Hall, 7.30 pm
27th Jun Yr 7 Gospel Workshop - lunchtime
Yr 11 Prom

Summer Term Calendar amendments:

The House Music Festival has moved to Monday 30th June.

Years 7, 8 and 9 Prizegivings have moved to Friday 4th July.

Year 10 Prizegiving has moved to Friday 11th July.

MFL Department Stars of the Month for May

The people we picked for their great work or outlook this month were as follows:

Year 7: Kathryn Tyne, Lewis Ashby, Torin Grey, Rory Tinker, Daniel Ford, Chloe Hann

Year 8: Katie Towse, Ryan Bailey, Charlotte Blair-Smith, Ollie Gill, Andrew Coe, Adam Amamou, Sydney Clark, Ross Briden, Kenny Cook, Becky Walshe, Tom Cullinan

Year 9: Lewis Jewell, Bridget Philpott, Naomi Messenger, Ashley Heather, James Tavener, Rebecca Armorgie, Charlotte Edmonds

Year 10: Harriet Bullock, Jo Lovell, Steph Ferguson, Rob Fenemore, Joe Welton.

Winners of the Maths Puzzle of the Month for May

The winners for May were Amelia Wright 9A and James Taverner 9P who both correctly made 666 by inserting + signs into the number string 123456789 and 987654321 respectively. Well done to you both! Come to the Maths office at break or lunchtime to collect your prize from Miss Bandle.

The puzzle of the month for June has a seasonal flavour, as it involves the number of runs scored by a cricket team. Given fractions of the whole total by the top batsman, you need to calculate the total number of runs. Think back to the work you have done on the addition of fractions and finding the common denominator. When you have worked out the answers, give your entry to your Maths teacher.

Miss Burgess, Maths Department

Maths Star of the Month

Sarah Kay (9A) was Maths Star of the Month in her group for both April and May but, unfortunately, her name didn't appear in the Newsletter.

Apologies, Sarah, for this omission and a huge well done from all the department. Keep up the good work.

Miss May, Learning Leader Maths

Sickness/absence line

Please will all parents contact us daily if your child is sick, going to be late in due to a medical appointment, or is absent for any other reason. Please call our sickness/absence line on 01442 390103 by 9am if possible.

Sport

FIXTURES

- Tues 17th** Yrs 7/8 District Rounders Tournament
@ Kings Langley School 3.30 pm
- Weds 18th** Yr 10 Peter Wright Trophy Cricket v Boxmoor CC (A) 5 – 9 pm
Yr 8 District Cup Cricket v Kings Langley (A) 3.30 – 7 pm
- Thur 19th** Yrs 9/10 Rounders @ Ashlyns
Yr 10 Sports Leaders Tri Golf Festival 1.30 – 3 pm

RESULTS

Cricket

Yr 10 Cricket v Cavendish won by 88 runs.

Athletics

Yrs 8/10 County League Results 4th June

Yr 8 Boys 3rd 50 points Yr 8 Girls 2nd 40 points
Yr 10 Boys 1st 58 points Yr 10 Girls 2nd 41 points

Yrs 8/10 County League Results 9th June

Yr 8 Boys 1st 54 points Yr 8 Girls 2nd 41 points
Yr 10 Boys 1st 53 points Yr 10 Girls 2nd 40 points

(see individual results below)

Years 8 and 10 County League Athletics Individual Results – 4th June

Year 8 Boys

200m	B McFarlane-Barnes 2 nd	Pole Vault	T Butler 3 rd
400m	K North 2 nd	High Jump	J Hobbs 1 st
800m	S Izzard 3 rd	Long Jump	D Brangrove 1 st
Relay	3 rd	Triple Jump	Z Booth 1 st
Discus	A Amamou 3 rd	Shot	A Austin 1 st
Javelin	A Suqlain 1 st		

Year 10 Boys

Hurdles	M King 1 st	Pole Vault	J Stratford 1 st
100m	C Hart 1 st	High Jump	J Harris 1 st
200m	G Loosely 3 rd	Long Jump	C Hart 1 st
800m	D Twine 1 st	Triple Jump	M Dwight 3 rd
1500m	M Wadlow 2 nd	Shot	S Bailey 1 st
Relay	1 st	Discus	M Wadlow 2 nd
		Javelin	R Khan 2 nd

Years 8 and 10 County League Athletics Individual Results – 9th June

Year 8 Boys

Hurdles	A Austin 1 st	Shot	A Austin 1 st
100m	D Brangrove 3 rd	Javelin	A Suqlain 2 nd
200m	J Hobbs 1 st	Pole Vault	N Jones 1 st
800m	J Eykelbosch 1 st	Triple Jump	Z Booth 1 st
1500m	R Taylor 1 st	Long Jump	D Brangrove 2 nd
Relay	1 st	High Jump	J Hobbs 2 nd

Year 10 Boys

Hurdles	M King 2 nd	Shot	S Bailey 2 nd
100m	C Hart 1 st	Discus	M Wadlow 1 st
200m	G Loosely 2 nd	Javelin	D Twine 1 st
800m	J Stratford 3 rd	Pole Vault	J Stratford 1 st
1500m	M Wadlow 3 rd	Triple Jump	G Loosely 2 nd
Relay	1 st	Long Jump	C Hart 1 st

SPORTS NEWS

Congratulations to Sarah Grover and Courtney Hart who have both achieved personal bests and broken school records at recent county league athletics meets. Sarah equalled the high jump record held for over 20 years by Frances Webber, jumping 1.48m. Courtney set a personal best of 11.4 in the 100m and broke the school long jump record previously held by Mark Swales, now a PE teacher at St Columba's College, jumping a massive 6.14m.

Good luck to those pupils taking part in the County Athletics Championships on Saturday:

S Grover, R Armorgie, A Eykelbosch, S Morris, P Minter, K Calcutt, P Foscoe, C Hart, Z Booth, J Eykelbosch, S Izzard, R Taylor, K North, S Watson. If these pupils achieve 1st or 2nd place and achieve English Schools Qualifying standards, they could go to the English Schools Championships in Gateshead.

Thank you to all those who helped with the Fun Run, bringing in water bottles etc. Could all sponsorship now be collected and sent in to school as soon as possible. Thank you.

Mr Bryson, PE Department

Year 8 Girls

Hurdles	M Cornelius 1 st	High Jump	S Grover 2 nd
100m	D Craig 2 nd	Long Jump	S King 2 nd
200m	S Rance 3 rd	Javelin	L Harris 3 rd
800m	S Morris 1 st		
1500m	A Eykelbosch 1 st		
Relay	2 nd		

Year 10 Girls

400m	R Payne 2 nd	High Jump	R Theobald 2 nd
800m	R Armorgie 1 st	Long Jump	I Hudson 1 st
1500m	B Philpott 3 rd	Shot	L Hughes 3 rd
		Javelin	A Hatt 1 st

Year 8 Girls

100m	D Craig 1 st	Discus	S Berloth 2 nd
200m	O Scott 3 rd	Javelin	S Elliott 3 rd
800m	S Morris 1 st	Long Jump	S Rance 3 rd
1500m	A Eykelbosch 1 st	High Jump	S Grover 1 st
Relay	1 st		

Year 10 Girls

200m	E Phillips 2 nd	Shot	S Bullock 1 st
300m	R Payne 2 nd	Triple Jump	H Pestaille 3 rd
1500m	R Armorgie 1 st	Long Jump	I Hudson 3 rd
Relay	2 nd	High Jump	R Theobald 3 rd

