



# The Hemel Hempstead School

## News

13 March 2009

[www.hhs.herts.sch.uk](http://www.hhs.herts.sch.uk)

### HeadLines

It's nearly 13 years to the day since the Dunblane massacre of the innocents when Thomas Hamilton shot dead 16 tiny children and their teacher. A dysfunctional loner, his unspeakable and incomprehensible acts shocked a nation and indeed the world. But nothing short of keeping children at home in a bubble such as John Travolta inhabited in one of his earliest films gives any guarantee of safety. Even a few minutes of inattention can lead to tragedy as the James Bulger case showed us. Even when we think we know where the children are, we may be disastrously mistaken, as in the Soham murders or the disappearance of Madeleine McCann. It's a hard, cruel, mad, bad world out there and sometimes it's unbearable to even listen to the news. I don't mind admitting to displays of emotion despite the calm, neutral shell Headteachers are supposed to inhabit. On my way home from a governors' meeting last night, I confess to stopping the car because the windscreen wipers on my eyes weren't functioning as well as those on the car after hearing about the shootings in the German school, of the teacher trying to shield her students from harm, of the seventeen year old gunman whose only words were 'Are they all dead yet?' We ask: 'Why?' and the answers about unpopular boys out for revenge, the influence of the internet and online games and the availability of guns fail to give us an answer that will reassure us that this cannot happen again. The security rigour of the American system did not save the Columbine students or the Virginia Tech victims. Neither did I need to understand much German to know what the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, was saying on behalf of her country with the tremor in her voice revealing her distress and sense of hopelessness. I am not naive enough to claim that education is the answer and the panacea to everything. It will not stop the Thomas Hamiltons or Ian Huntleys or Tim Kretschmers of this world. But it will give the rest of us the power and wherewithal to value life and the views of our fellow citizens. It will give us an appreciation of what history can teach us. It will give us the skills, mathematical and scientific, to make sense of the world and how it works. It will allow us an aesthetic sensitivity to find ourselves through art and music not through toys and weapons. It will feed our souls with the language of poetry and literature through which we can aspire to higher values. Schools can be moral institutions where we learn to respect each other and to do what is right whilst having a strong sense of responsibility. Headteachers can make schools safer places to be and exercise our duty of care to the letter of the law and far beyond, but our job and that of all the staff at The Hemel Hempstead School is to ensure that education and learning in all its simplicity and complexity flourishes so that the progression from child to adult happens in a happy, caring, intellectually stimulating environment which benefits our youngsters, the community and the world.

A tall order indeed for a week in March but, without high expectations, this school cannot be what it seems to be. And for those of you who recognised the school motto in those words, I applaud you.

I applaud too our Science staff who have created such a fine range of activities during Science Week and Tim Jordan who illustrated in his assemblies how well Britain is actually doing in relation to the rest of the world in terms of Scientific and Mathematical ability. I say 'encore' to Matt Gill who for a second year arranged a wonderful X-Factor event to entertain the masses and raise loads of money for 'Comic Relief'. Matt is an exemplary student who exemplifies the best of us.

I usually buy a newspaper on my way to or from school every day. I couldn't bear to do that today. Tomorrow, as Scarlett O' Hara said, is another day, but the image I will retain in my head which reminds me of worlds elsewhere and timeless values and which is most pertinent for Science week is the view of the Crescent Moon and Venus so, so close together for a remarkably brief time in the night sky on Saturday. A vision of beauty and scientific discovery. My father gave me a telescope for my ninth birthday and my Physics teacher at school taught me to love astronomy. The mixture of family nurturing and school educating beyond the curriculum becomes the answer to many of the questions which underpin these headlines.

**Sandra Samwell, Headteacher**

#### Parent Governor Election

Steven Mansbridge was elected by a clear majority. Congratulations to him and thank you to the other candidates, Mr Cullinan and Mr Mayhew, for standing.

*S J Samwell, Returning Officer*



## BTEC Variety Show

I wasn't sure what to expect from the BTEC Performing Arts show on Tuesday evening. I had heard rumours that there would be circus skills, magic and dance. How would such a small number of students do all that?

The hall had been transformed for the evening, with the audience sitting around tables rather than in rows. Cartoon portraits of the performers decorated the hall. Our compere for the evening was professional magician Richard Pinner, whose tricks were breathtaking. The audience forgot to clap at many points because we were so amazed.

The BTEC students performed all manner of acts, involving singing, dancing, circus skills, comedy and drama skills. Every act was superb and was made to look effortless, despite the hours of rehearsal and planning that had gone into the production. This was indeed a variety show. One moment we were laughing at the human puppet, the next we were being amazed by juggling, then we were sharing the emotion of a dramatic monologue. The whole evening was wonderful. It is difficult to pick highlights. However, Sam Bateman's performance of her self-composed pop song 'Diamond Ring', with the other girls as backing singers, was fantastic. Kris Banks and Matt Bailey's 'Drance' routine had the audience crying with laughter. The magic trick featuring Jasmine Bond and Sam Flowerdew of Year 10 was unbelievable. You could hear the gasp of disbelief among the whole audience.

If you missed this show, you missed an absolute treat. Thank you to all the performers and their teachers for putting on probably one of the most entertaining shows I have seen at the school. *Mrs S Lutz*

## Comic Relief XFactor

Last Thursday night saw the XFactor Live Final take to the School stage in an event which 360 people attended to watch the ten Finalists compete for the title of 'Xfactor Winner 2009'.

After ten staggering performances, all of which were truly brilliant to watch, the votes were counted. In third place were Louis Bransgrove and Ian Patrick, in second place were Fusion (a Year 11 girl group: Alex Dobby, Sarah Nicholls, Emily Woollatt, Polly Taylor and Charlotte Bateman) and in first place was Joanna Toms, whose performance of 'Thank You For The Music' blew both the audience and the judges away. Special performances from Joe Suddick, Thea Simpkins and The Terribly Talented Trio (comprising Mrs Heale, Mrs Bailey and Miss Sepala) were all outstanding (in completely different ways)!

Congratulations to all the finalists and special acts who combined together to form an amazing showcase of The Hemel Hempstead School talent. We raised £1,419, including £250 of donations and £100 from the HHSA's profits from refreshments, all of which will go to Comic Relief. Thank you to everyone who attended and donated to this worthy cause. *Matt Gill 11A*

## House Drama Festival - Tuesday 17th March

The House Captains have worked hard in preparation for this event. Tickets are currently on sale in Student Services every break and lunch times and cost £2 each. The event is to be held in the main school hall starting at 7pm. Doors open at 6:30pm.

I look forward to seeing many of you during the evening.

*Mr J Mitchell*

## Vorsprung durch Technik!

Chromatography, measuring velocity, the solar system, litmus testing....all things which you would expect to see in a laboratory, not a languages classroom. However, during Science Week, languages classes have had a scientific theme. This has given us the opportunity to practise some familiar language in unusual contexts (e.g. adjectives and the solar system) and have fun doing something a bit different.

This has also been a good opportunity for us to remind students that, at university, many students combine a language with a science or engineering course, giving them a sandwich year in a foreign country. Look out for the photographs of our science-themed lessons on the school website!  
*Mrs S Lutz, Learning Leader: MFL*

## HEADTEACHER'S COMMENDATION

### *For Excellent Work in English*

Euan Varney 7A, Sophie Kinley 7A, D'Arcy Monk 7A, James Rollings 7A, Andrew Coe 9P, Glen Taylor 9F, Bradley Keeley 9C, Lillith Hickling 9N, Alex Burgess 9C, Tom Cullinan 9F.

### *For Excellent Work in Science*

Alice Stride 8F, Lucy Wiseman 8P, Sarah Cosgrove 8C, Rachel Lotts 8N, Abbie Burgess 10N.

### *For Speaking at the Triple Science Evening*

Matt Gill 11A, Samantha Rees 11P.

### *For Participating in the County Basketball Trials*

Jade Gardiner 8A.

## Sixth Form Excellence

Parents of Sixth Formers will receive a letter today, which highlights issues that are barriers to optimum success; namely, poor attendance, poor punctuality and poor standards of dress. I expect all three to be addressed with alacrity and none of them should be features of this high achieving school.

Full and swift action will be taken next week with any Sixth Formers who cannot adhere to the fundamentals of post-16 life at The Hemel Hempstead School. Sixth Form standards will be the equal of GCSE standards within a very short time for the benefit of the students.

The letter will also be posted on our website.

*Miss S J Samwell*

The following Yr 12 students have been commended on their enthusiastic and dedicated approach to their sixth form studies. They have proved to be excellent role models to our younger students in Chalfont.

Ryan Bellman-Jeffreys

Zoe Farrell

Emma Fredskild Green

Thomas Gavin

Gemma Mohajer

Jack Parsons

Harshil Patel

Ashley Petchey

Duncan Philpott

Amiee Spriggs

Connor Sutton

Charles Wood

*Miss N Black*

*Student Achievement Leader - Chalfont*

## Reprographics Assistant

**H1 £13,382 pro rata (£7.22 per hour)**

**30 hours per week: 8 am – 2.30 pm (negotiable)**

Term time + 1 week

We require a flexible teamworker to help provide a comprehensive photocopying and reprographics service.

You need to be computer literate with good keyboard skills. Experience of photocopying and printing work and the ability to offer advice on design and layout would be an advantage, but training will be given.

You must be an excellent communicator to enable you to deal with both staff and students.

The work can be physically demanding.

Further details are available on our website at

[www.hemel Hempsteadschool.co.uk](http://www.hemel Hempsteadschool.co.uk). Please apply in writing or online via letter of application and Hertfordshire Support Staff Appointment and Person Specification forms (available on the website) to Mrs S Cooper, Headteacher's PA.

Closing date: Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2009

## MFL Stars of the Month for February

**Year 7 French:** Charlie Mayhew, Gabrielle Cole, Campbell Russell-Mills, Georgina Bartlett, Owen Lloyd, Clarke Davis.

**Year 8 French:** Alice Markham, Emily Crawley, James Sweetnam, Ocean Foster, Craig Mogan, Daisy Stewart.

**Year 8 German:** Conor Blake, Chloe Capel, Torin Grey, Megan McKenzie.

**Year 9 French:** Taznin Islam, Carina Archer, Siobhan Elliott, Cauley Woodrow, Cale Tilford.

**Year 9 German:** Kenny Cook, Joe Eilbeck, Lamorna Hooker, Oliver Price, Kieran Duke.

**Year 10 French:** Marie Gorton, Pippa Hill, Alex Calver, Naomi Davis.

**Year 10 German:** Alice Head.

**Year 11 French:** Polly Taylor, Lucy Hughes, Stephanie Allen.

**Year 11 German:** George Loosely.

**Year 12 German:** Michael Holloway.

**Year 12 Spanish:** Sophie Wadmore.

## National Science Week Activity – Engineering Challenge

On Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March a group of 36 Year 7 students took part in a Science Challenge in the school hall. We made an egg saver – a device to stop eggs breaking when dropped from a height of two metres. Most of the group made parachutes, whilst some made different designs. Only two groups' eggs managed to survive. One group's eggs cracked very slightly and the others...well, let's just say it was messy!

We all had a lot of fun and I would like to take part in other activities like this in the future.

*Owen Lloyd 7L*

On arrival in the school hall Year 7s were excitedly curious about what they were going to do. After sorting out groups they were told what the day had in store for them. Egg saving. The Year 7s were given £1,000 (not in real money) to spend on items such as paper - £50, string - £30, pipe-cleaners - £100, sellotape - £100 and straws - £50, to build the ultimate egg protection device. After around 20 minutes of planning, the hour of building time was not quite enough for some groups. Some designs prevailed while some failed. For the big finale, Claire (one of the organisers) dropped the eggs in or over their safety equipment to see if the eggs quite literally exploded, or remained as safe as houses. The winners were presented with an Easter creme egg box. The mess was then tidied away and the cheerful children departed to the final ten minutes of fourth period.

*Sophie Kinley 7A*

## My Science Day

On 9<sup>th</sup> March some people from my form (Latimer) and people from other forms in Year 7 were chosen to do the Science activity.

We were put into groups of four and there were ten groups altogether. The objective of this activity was to create an egg saving carrier of some kind, or a landing for the egg so it wouldn't break if it were dropped from a certain height. We were given £1,000 budget that we could buy materials with. My group was called the E.G.G.S. – SAVERS and our egg saving machine was an egg carrier built with pipe-cleaners and wrapped in paper which had little bits of paper rolled inside it as well with a parachute that was also made of paper, which meant it was lightweight on top so it wouldn't fall so fast. Our group was one out of the two that kept the egg in one shape without it breaking. Sadly for our group, the engineers from Faber Maunsell decided that the other group was the winner because of their design.

All in all it was a great day and if there is another Science day in the future I would definitely like to be asked again. I would encourage anybody to be involved because it is a great teambuilding exercise.

*Zak McCarthy 7L*

I would like to add my thanks to Faber Maunsell for providing the stimulating engineering challenge.

*Miss J Harris, Learning Leader: Science*



## Dates for Your Diary

### \*\*\*Blue Week\*\*\*

**16<sup>th</sup> Mar** Years 12/13 Maths in Action Enrichment Day

**17<sup>th</sup> Mar** Years 12/13 trip to English National Opera

**House Drama** 7 pm

**19<sup>th</sup> Mar** Year 12 Government and Politics visit to Houses of Parliament

**20<sup>th</sup> Mar** Year 9 History visit to the Somme

**21<sup>st</sup> Mar** HHSA Jumble Sale

### \*\*\*Gold Week\*\*\*

**23<sup>rd</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> Mar** House Chess Challenge Week 1

Year 12 Geography Field Trip

**23<sup>rd</sup> Mar** Years 12/13 Dance A level Exam Performance, 4 pm

**24<sup>th</sup> Mar** Year 7 Parent Consultation Evening, 4.30 – 7 pm

**26<sup>th</sup> Mar** Year 12 Science visit to Body Worlds Exhibition

Year 12 Higher Education Information Evening, 7.30pm

**27<sup>th</sup> Mar** Year 7 (7A, 7C, 7F) visit to National maritime Museum

Year 11 Music GCSE Practical Exam

**29<sup>th</sup> Mar** Years 12/13 Dance Exam Preparation 11 am

## Gold Letters issued recently:

**Letter 150** D of E Bronze Expedition and Training 2009

**Letter 152** D of E Bronze Competency Day and Parents' Information Evening

**Letter 153** A Level Music visit to the Opera

**Letter 154** Year 8 Maths Set 5 visit to Watford Football Club

**Letter 155** Year 11 Sportspace Gym Sessions

**Letter 156** Year 12 Extended Project Qualification Information Evening

**Letter 157** Year 10 Work Experience

*All Gold Letters can be viewed on our website: [www.hhs.herts.sch.uk](http://www.hhs.herts.sch.uk)*

## PTA News

### Fundraising

Please will you help us to raise some money through [easyfundraising.org.uk](http://easyfundraising.org.uk)?

All you have to do is log on to their website, register your details, and choose Hemel Hempstead School Association as the charity / organisation you wish to support. Once you have registered successfully, make the site a 'favourite'.

Every time you buy something online – through Amazon.co.uk for example – you just log on to [easyfundraising.org.uk](http://easyfundraising.org.uk), find Amazon.co.uk, and make your purchase as normal. In this way it costs you nothing extra, but we get 2.5% of what you spend.

If you're not sure how or what to do, log on to [easyfundraising.org.uk](http://easyfundraising.org.uk) and read 'How it works', 'Using this site' or 'FAQ'. You'll soon get the hang of it.

So far just eight of our members have joined, and we have received a cheque for nearly £30 – for doing nothing!

Additionally, instead of using a search engine such as 'Google' please consider using [easysearch.org.uk](http://easysearch.org.uk). Don't forget to register Hemel Hempstead School Association as the charity / organisation you wish to support, then make the site a 'favourite'. You can also make [easysearch](http://easysearch.org.uk) appear in the little box in the top right hand corner of your Internet Explorer or Mozilla Firefox. Just ask if you have any problems.

### Jumble Sale

We desperately need jumble for the Jumble Sale – Saturday 21 March. Please bring contributions to Student Services at school, or telephone Judith on the mobile number below.

**Judith Stallworthy, Chair HHSA (01442 393266 or mobile 07749 727350), email [s.stallworthy@sky.com](mailto:s.stallworthy@sky.com)**

## National Science Week Activity - Nobel Prize Winner Talk

On Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March the Sixth Form scientists observed a visit from Dr Tim Hunt, a Nobel Prize winning biochemist.

As part of the AS Biology course we study mitosis (the process whereby a cell divides in two), and it was fascinating to hear more about it from the man who jointly discovered just what regulates mitosis. Being Science Week, Dr Hunt presented us with a mini-lecture on the subject featuring videos of mitosis and details of how he made his discovery, alongside revealing to us just what you can get up to with two electrodes, a doorbell transformer and a sea urchin in a beaker. His retelling of the story truly made the science come alive, and we would all like to thank him for his talk.

*Michael Holloway 12A and Richard Davis 12N*

## World Maths Day 4<sup>th</sup> March 2009

As Miss Samwell mentioned in her 'Headlines' last week, 4<sup>th</sup> March was World Maths Day and, as with any event, The Hemel Hempstead School students did themselves proud.

532 of our students pitted their wits (at speed!) against students from all over the world to contribute towards a record-breaking total of 452,682,682 correct answers in 48 hours by students from 160 countries.

Well done to everyone who took part. Our top students were:

1<sup>st</sup> : Andrew Sells (Yr 7) 3134 correct answers

2<sup>nd</sup> : Anthony Power (Yr 9) 2546

3<sup>rd</sup> : Chris James (Yr 11) 2312

4<sup>th</sup> : Fareena Asmat (Yr 11) 1336

5<sup>th</sup> : Campbell Russell (Yr 7) 1244

6<sup>th</sup> : Richard Metcalfe (Yr 8) 1037

7<sup>th</sup> : Charlotte Keene (Yr 8) 988

8<sup>th</sup> : Charles Hoskins (Yr 7) 915

9<sup>th</sup> : Amal Janason (Yr 7) 891

10<sup>th</sup> : Rosie Prestedge (Yr 12) 890

*Miss G May, Learning Leader: Maths*

From Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March to Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March students from all around the world have taken part in a World Maths Day challenge. Most year groups spent 15 minutes of their Maths lesson in an ICT room competing against students taking part all over the world, such as America or South Africa. The aim of the game is to answer as many questions as you could in the given time limit. By 1 pm on Wednesday a quarter of a billion questions had been answered, beating last year's record of 180 million. We found it really clever that all the countries knew about the challenge and we found it hard to believe that we were actually competing against students from so far away, with no delay.

*Poppy Haynes 10L and Pippa Hill 10A*

## Library Notices

### Scholastic C2C

Orders from the Scholastic C2C brochure need to be in the Library by the end of the school day on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March. Don't forget that you can use your World Book Day voucher on your Scholastic order.

### The Times/Sunday Times Books for Schools

Please remember that we can exchange The Times and Sunday Times Book tokens for free books of our choice from a catalogue of 170 titles. There are 12 tokens printed each week and with books starting at just 10 tokens you don't have to be a regular Times reader to make a difference to our collection. Tokens can be deposited in the collection boxes in Student Services, Reception and the Library. With your help we can make a real difference to our Library, ensuring that students have access to some of the very best titles available to help them to read and improve their literacy.

*Mrs E Krajewski, Librarian*

# SPORT



## FIXTURES

### Tues 17<sup>th</sup> March

Years 7/8 Girls Basketball @ Tring 3.30 – 5.30 pm

### Weds 18<sup>th</sup> March

Years 7/8 District Swimming Gala 3.30 – 6 pm

Year 7 Girls Football mini league @ Cavendish 3.30 – 5 pm

**Thurs 19<sup>th</sup> March** Years 7/8 Girls District Cup Football v

Kings Langley (A) 3.30 – 4.30 pm

**Sat 21<sup>st</sup> March** Years 8/9/10 Football v Cavendish (H) 9.30 am  
kick off

## RESULTS

Year 7 Basketball v JFK won 36-30

## SPORTS NEWS

Congratulations to Jade Gardiner 8A, who was invited to county basketball trials last week.

All Talented Athletes have now been issued with their user names and password for their Talented Athlete Passports. If there are any issues, please contact Miss Bevan or Mr Colquhoun.

*Miss E Bevan, Learning Leader: PE*

### Shelley Netball News

What a fantastic day for the Shelley Netball Club at the Watford Sunday Netball League! In reasonable weather (for a change) six teams were out that day. Shelley 5 had a convincing win against Watford Premier 3, with a score of 42-28 goals. Then Shelley 4 met Gateside Youth and finished with a win of 32-28 goals. This was followed by Shelley 3 against Watford Premier 2, who had a great win of 28-24. At the same time Shelley Juniors met the 'Development' team of Shelley 6 and, after a well matched game, Juniors came off the court as winners.

The St Albans Junior League began the same day and we are pleased that Shelley Year 7s were winners, against Hatfield Falcons, with a score of 9-8.

Well played everybody.

*Mrs K Worrell, MBE*

School policies can be viewed on our website under 'about HHS/School Policies'. If you require a hard copy of any of the policies please get in touch with the School Office.

*S J Samwell*

**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.