



# Longsands College Newsletter

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## From the Principal

Dear Parents

The OFSTED inspection in the week before half term caused us to delay publication of this newsletter. Most of the material for the letter had already been gathered but it seemed appropriate to focus on preparation for the inspection and then modify my own input to take into account whatever was known about the outcomes.

Firstly, I should like to thank students and staff for the way in which they responded to the very short notice that is now given of a school-wide inspection. The first we knew of the intended visit was on Thursday 1 February and details were not received until the following morning. The whole of the Friday was spent in providing additional statistical information as requested by the Lead Inspector. On Monday, I briefed students from all Years about what was happening and set out the potential impact they could have on the inspection process itself. The inspection was then held the next day (Tuesday 6 February). Two inspectors were on site from about 8 am through to 5.40 pm. They observed several lessons and conducted a whole series of interviews with students drawn from Years 7, 10 and the Sixth Form; the Senior Leadership Team; subject leaders; student support leaders; other nominated staff. The emphasis throughout was on testing the reliability of the College's own self-evaluation processes.

At the time of writing, we still await the formal report, which will be published to all parents as soon as it is finalised. However, we have had indications already that there will be acknowledgement of the particular quality of guidance and support provided to students. The full text will contain quite wide-ranging commentary and a series of gradings based on Ofsted's somewhat restrictive four levels. Particular strengths and areas for development will be highlighted.

Overall, the report is likely to present a comprehensive view of the College. This is especially encouraging in view of the brief time the inspectors were with us, which afforded few opportunities for extensive exploration of issues. Indeed, from a professional viewpoint, the inspection process itself could be seen as having become unduly reliant on statistical input.

Any reservations about the Ofsted process do not diminish, however, the positive impression that students created in lessons and in interviews with the inspectors. This input is greatly appreciated. Teachers and support staff are also to be commended. One teacher at least was observed as well as interviewed on the day. Parents completed the questionnaire in their hundreds. Thank you to everyone involved.

Finally, it seems appropriate to record again here the sad death of Matthew Dean (11RKB). The In Memoriam pages we opened on our website received many moving tributes and messages from Matthew's fellow students. A significant number of young people also attended Mathew's funeral, where they conducted themselves with great dignity. Our thoughts continue to be with Matthew's family and friends.

Yours sincerely

Robert Whatmough  
Principal

### Richard III

On Tuesday 6 February students from Year 9 went to The Peterborough Key Theatre with Miss Riotto to perform a short version of Shakespeare's play Richard III. The whole of Year 9 watched the dress rehearsal, which was a great success. All students involved enjoyed the chance to show off their talent.

The audience at The Key Theatre was made up family, friends, members of staff and the general public. The performance was a huge hit!

Isobel Bruning

### Japanese Week 22 - 26 January

All Year 7 students took part in Japan Week. They took part in activities that enabled them to experience the Japanese culture, students learned about Japanese geography, and tasted sushi prepared by Miss Hopewell, though interesting, this was not to everyone's liking! They also had a go at origami, Japanese art and poetry.

All students I interviewed really enjoyed Japanese week and learned a great deal about Japanese culture.

Jenna Lewis

### Invigilation

If you are interested in joining our paid exam invigilation team please contact Mrs Carpenter on 01480 353535 ext 234.

# Year 8 Scientists Visit Crosshall School



On Thursday 19 October Mrs Murphy and six Year 8 students went to Crosshall Junior School to help with their Science Week. The Year 8s worked with Year 6 pupils on scientific experiments. After introducing themselves, the students took part in an experiment called 'Rainbow Fizz'. In this experiment, chemicals were mixed carefully to make the best rainbow possible.

Afterwards Mrs Murphy judged the best rainbow. The girls' team won again this year! The next experiment was an acid and alkali test with liquids such as lemonade and window cleaner. Mrs Murphy and three Sixth Formers then demonstrated the 'Exploding Can' experiment. The Longsands students all helped Mrs Murphy by assisting the Crosshall pupils to do the

experiments properly. The most exciting experiment involved going outside to make two chemicals burst into flames!

Tom Humphrey, James Payne, Matt Critcher, Ashleigh-Marie Coombes, Beverley Fletcher and Bianca Bromley were the students who assisted Mrs Murphy along with three Sixth Formers. All really enjoyed the trip and would like to visit Crosshall again.



Matthew Critcher & Tom Humphrey.

## Health Education



Longsands College has recently been awarded full National Healthy Schools status. Longsands is one of a very few Cambridgeshire

secondary schools to gain this recognition. We achieved this award due to the many Health Promoting activities that permeate our whole college community.

Our work has been based around five broad areas:

- Personal, Social and Health Education;
- Emotional Health and Well-being;
- Sex and Relationship Education;
- Health Eating and Physical Activity;
- Drug, Tobacco and Alcohol Education.

The award commits us to attaining targets in each of the above areas, meaning that development of all aspects of health awareness will continue to be a focus for development within the College.

Mrs Daw

## Horizon Science Trip to Germany

At the end of January, a group of Year 12 Biologists travelled to Germany to take part in a DNA fingerprinting workshop. Using some of the latest DNA technology, they identified the perpetrator of a gruesome murder. This involved detailed analysis of DNA found at the crime scene, and comparing it with the DNA of the suspects.

Living with German families and working with students of 4 different nationalities ensured that this was a valuable learning experience, not only increasing the understanding of the use of DNA in forensic science, but also of the life-styles of young people across Europe. Apart from the forensic workshop, there were also opportunities for sight-seeing, shopping, socialising and taking photos.



Teachers and students of 4 nationalities work together.

# Comenius 'Bhealthy Project'



Over the last few weeks, every form in Key Stage 3 (over 800 students) has completed an on-line Healthy Eating Survey developed at Longsands as part of the Bhealthy project.

To see the survey from the Longsands home page, click on:

Find out about - Horizon Association - Comenius Project Bhealthy.

**User name:** longsands\bhealthy. **Password:** bhealthy.

To view our results, click on:

Find out about - Horizon Association - Comenius Project Bhealthy, Survey results.

**User name:** longsands\bhealthyadmin. **Password:** 274b83.

This survey is also now accessible to students in our partner schools in Holland and Spain. We hope soon to be able to view and compare our results and theirs.

## Poster competition

As part of their ECM lessons, students in Year 8 are creating adverts that warn against the dangers of alcohol. These will be entered into a competition against our partner schools to be judged in March. (The first prize is a digital camera!)

## Video diaries

After the half term holiday, groups of students in Year 8 will be working in their English lessons to produce news reports that focus on health issues that are important to them. This is part of their work on the BBC School report which complements the work on the Comenius project. A group of Year 8 students will then be invited to go to Holland and Spain later in the year to shoot similar videos reporting on life as a young person in Holland and Spain.

In March, students from the two countries will be coming to Longsands to use our media facilities to edit video footage which they have shot in their own schools and to make a video record of their impressions of Longsands.

# Holocaust Memorial Day



concentration camp today: tour guides leading groups of giggling school children who are quickly silenced as they enter the camp and hear stories of the atrocities that were committed inside; Mauthauseners going about their daily lives talk proudly of their 'idyllic' town and their frustration

at the stigma attached to living there and tourists trying to make sense of the horror of the camp.

On Friday 26 January, 41 Year 11 History students commemorated Holocaust Memorial Day by attending an event put on by the Cambridge Film Consortium and City Council at the Cambridge Picturehouse.

KZ is a dramatically different and startlingly powerful exploration of a difficult and oft-explored subject taken from a completely different angle. There is no archive footage, no interviews with Survivors, no recreation of the camp's horrific past. Instead, Bloomstein presents camp life today and looks at how the town's inhabitants deal with the death camp on their doorstep and in their past.

Students were given a talk by guest speaker Eva Clark, a Holocaust survivor, who told the fascinating story of her family's treatment at the hands of the Nazis at both Auschwitz and Mauthausen Concentration Camps. Eva's testimony provided a personal connection between the students and the often unimaginable events of the Holocaust. Students then watched the first screening of KZ (KZ is the German acronym for concentration camp) - directed by Rex Bloomstein. The film is a powerful documentary which focuses on modern-day Mauthausen, a seemingly idyllic picture postcard town in Austria. Yet the town has a chilling history, being the site of a notorious Nazi concentration camp during World War II. The concentration camp has now become a tourist site, attracting thousands of visitors each year.

The film explores a day in the life of Mauthausen

at the stigma attached to living there and tourists trying to make sense of the horror of the camp.

This thought-provoking experience encouraged students to contemplate the disjunction between the reality of Mauthausen today and our ability to absorb it and learn from it. They were all a credit to the school on such a sombre occasion. Our thanks go to

Mr Seymour for organising the visit and Mrs Smith for accompanying us.

Miss Marshall





# BBC School News Report 21CC

On Wednesday 24 January Marissa Plumb, Robert Hannan, Harriet Haynes and Nathan Austin went with Mrs West to the BBC White City offices and Television Centre in London. We worked in a 21<sup>st</sup> Century classroom with around thirty flat screen computers. We were shown how to make comic strips on a computer programme called Comic Life. We took news stories that had happened that day and turned them into comics (or maybe we should call them E-Comics!). It was great fun!

The most popular news story was about an Australian man who had been bitten on the head by a ten-foot great white shark. He had to punch it in the eye to escape. Our second comic strip was about a flamingo



that was blown out of its enclosure by the gale force winds.

In the afternoon, we were treated to a tour around

the BBC Television Centre. We saw the BBC News 24 studios and Harriet could not believe her eyes - there must have been about a



thousand computers in there! Next, we saw Terry Wogan and Gene Simmons recording 'Terry Wogan Now and Then' (Mrs West got a little bit over-excited at this point). Our next stop was the set of 'Never Mind the Buzzcocks', followed by the studio for 'Mock The Week.' Finally, we visited the Blue Peter Garden with its memorials to their departed pets.

It was a great day out and we enjoyed every moment of it. We would like to thank Mrs West for taking us and the BBC for giving us the chance to experience such a brilliant day!

Nathan Austin & Robert Hannan

## We Will Rock You

On Wednesday 31 January Year 9 students went to see the West End performance of *We Will Rock You*. Every Year 9 student asked said that it had been an excellent show and would recommend it to anyone thinking about going to see it.

Year 9 had a great day and would like to thank the Sixth Form students who organised the event and the teachers that accompanied the visit.

Heather Parish

## World Book Day 2007

To celebrate the tenth World Book Day, and to promote reading, particularly to Years 7, 8 & 9, all students have been invited to nominate their top ten books. Hopefully all these books will be in the library by early March.

Tied in with this are visits from two well-known children's authors - Linda Newbery, who, along with being short listed for the Carnegie prize, has won the Costa Award (formerly the Whitbread Award) for best children's book this year, and Justin Richards, who is best known for his Invisible Detective and Doctor Who stories.

These authors will be speaking to students from Years 7 and 8 on Tuesday 27 and Wednesday 28 March, and will be available to speak to anybody in the library during lunchtime on these dates.

Waterstones of St Neots will also be in the library selling books by these authors, which students will be able to have signed (prices range from £4.99 to £7.99).

## The Uganda Project

Our partner school in Uganda, The Mackay Memorial College, has handmade items such as necklaces and key rings. These items will be on sale during Fairtrade Fortnight to raise money for the Mackay Memorial College. Fairtrade fortnight is taking place from the 26 February–11 March. All the money that is raised will be sent to the school and invested in ICT. In the next year we are hoping to develop the link with this school by setting up pen pals.

Gemma Bleakley

## Science: Advertisement

The major difficulty in understanding Science is the jargon and the use of extensive vocabulary containing words that have specific meanings. Help will soon be at hand. Dr Hirst has written a scientific dictionary that not only explains the meanings of over 12,000 words used in Key Stage 3 Science, but also provides summaries of the major areas of Science and gathers together the symbols, equations and tests that are part of the Science course. The book will be available from Resources after half-term at a special price of £12.

Dr Hirst

## Tesco Vouchers

Just a reminder that the Tesco Computers for Schools scheme starts on Monday 5 March. We will be collecting the vouchers in the library as in previous years. Old inkjet cartridges and old mobile phones can be sent from school to Tesco for extra vouchers.