



From the Principal

Longsands College
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Longsands Letter Longsands Letter

Dear Parents,

I should like to start by congratulating Year 11 for their conduct in the week leading up to their leaving day and, moreover, for the way in which they helped to make the day itself so special. The good humour, care and affection shown in equal measure to each other and the staff who had supported them was exceptional. The leavers' assembly was a joyous occasion rounded off by a spirited rendition of (Is This The Way To) Amarillo by the form tutors, Mrs Pearcey and Ms O'Kelly. Thank you to everyone who helped with the assembly and associated events, especially Mr Robinson for the video.

A College that is already doing well in so many ways has the confidence to review and evaluate all aspects of its work. Sometimes the changes introduced are relatively low key and only affect particular groups of students. One very recent example is the way in which the Year 11 formal leaving date was immediately followed by an extensive timetable of revision and other input led by departmental teams. At other times, it is necessary to look at a more fundamental shift and this newsletter is accompanied by three consultation documents to which I should like to draw your attention.

The first is the College's response to the principal findings of our survey of parental opinion and concerns the pattern of parents' evenings. As you will see from the summary, most aspects of the survey were extremely positive. However, we would like if possible to respond to the expressed wish of parents to have more direct contact with form tutors and subject teachers. One suggestion, which draws upon the successful experience of many other schools, is to introduce an 'academic review day' in the autumn term.

The second consultation is about the structure of the Longsands learning day. We have been looking at this issue within the College for well over a year. There is a high level of consensus among teachers and others who support students directly that the current timing and structure are not necessarily the best that we can do in terms of promoting learning, good conduct and the effective use of time. The proposal now put forward is a compromise between the ideal of a much earlier start and constraints (mainly transport-related). Nevertheless, it offers the opportunity for a brisker beginning to the day and more focused attention on the core purpose of the College.

The third consultation concerns the Governing Body's policy on discipline. In most respects, this is a formalisation and tidying up of current policies. However, parents are invited to comment on this new draft. The reduced format is simply a way of saving paper; a full-size copy can be supplied on request.

May I emphasise that in all three cases developmental work is still in progress and that final decisions will not be made until the second part of this term.

Finally, we continue to be grateful to all those parents who do not take students out of College in term time for holidays. Indeed, the proportion of days lost in this way has actually decreased over the past 12 months - thank you.

Yours sincerely

Robert Whatmough
 Principal

Free School Lunch Eligibility

From 30th April 2005, children whose parents receive the following support payments are entitled to receive free school lunches:

- Income support (IS);
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance (IBJSA);
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999; or
- Child Tax Credit, provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income, as assessed by the Inland Revenue, that does not exceed £13,910;
- **Guarantee element of State Pension Credit.**

Children who receive IS or IBJSA in their own right are also entitled to receive free school lunches.

A Day in the Army

On the 18th & 19th April, 4 students from Longsands in St Neots visited the army barracks in Bassingbourne to make a film to advertise the British Army. The students all, 14, were **Amy Hawkes, Claire Kidman, Karl Harris** and **John Welton**. Major Driscoll (Army Careers Department) guided the students throughout their day at the barracks. The army will eventually use the film for careers advice.

The students spent 3 days making and editing their film, they acted as reporters, interviewing and recording their interviews. The follow-up day in college was an opportunity for them to edit their film.

The students wanted to make a film to let others know about what a career in the army involves. **Amy, Karl, Claire and John** explored the assault course, and watched the 16-year-old recruits work together. **Karl** commented, *"It was really surprising to watch the recruits as they were so disciplined and they were so young!"* **Amy** added, *"Yes, it was like being at school, it was odd seeing the 16 year olds as they are only a few years older than us. As soldiers they seemed very mature. It could so easily be us in a couple of years!"*

The students saw first-hand the army's new policies in action, which accommodate the modern individual. The army has adopted a progressive training regime. Young recruits have lessons in loyalty and obedience, they are asked to define what "for queen and country" actually means. **Karl Harris** said, *"The day made me really think about what joining the army is all about. I have a better understanding of what would happen if I join."*

The students filmed the assault course, learned about using video cameras and editing. By interviewing the recruits, they found that army life is based on teamwork and not simply an individual's effort. Although daunting at the start, interviewing the 16-year-olds was really interesting.

The Year 9 students spent their final day in the editing suite at the College working with Nigel Cooper from Dvuser.co.uk to edit their really professional film.



Photo L to R: **Karl Harris, John Welton, Nigel Cooper, Amy Hawkes and Claire Kidman.**

Students Spellbound

Over a hundred Year 8 students gathered in the library on Friday 20 May for the final of the Spellbound competition. Each KS3 school had three representatives, who had to spell words from 'aerobic' to 'zoological' aloud without a pen and paper. Mr Partington was the 'spellmaster'.



Claire Philp & Philip Leddington-Hill took the joint first-place after a ten minute 'spell'. **Emily Sharpe** was third.

All the contestants received a prize for participating.

Photos are of the winners and the crowd.



Science

Attention Year 9 Students! Could you please return your Key Stage 3 Revision Guides to your science teacher as soon as possible.

Thank you.

Dr Hirst

Supermarket wars!

Tesco and Sainsbury are both offering freebies in exchange for vouchers. For the first time many students have brought in Sainsbury's vouchers, so I have registered the college and we can receive sports equipment, depending on how many vouchers we collect.

The Tesco Computers for Schools scheme ends on May 15th, but we have until the end of June to send them off. This year's target is 43000 vouchers which will get us three new computers and a scanner. Please send your vouchers in as soon as possible, as counting them is quite a task! The collection boxes are in the library.

Thank you for your continued support. The Tesco scheme has earned us more than 15 computers over the years, so it's well worth it.

Andrew Hynes
College Librarian

Work Related Learning

Two Year 11 students, Lorraine Cadman and Donna-Louise Usher have completed the NVQ level 1 in Animal Care at the College of Animal Welfare at Wood Green. They have attended every Friday morning for the past 2 years as part of 'work-related learning' at the College.

Other students in Years 10 and 11 are completing courses in Mechanical Engineering, Motor Vehicle Maintenance and Hairdressing at Huntingdon Regional College.

Mrs Brodie

Calendar 05-06

Planning for the next academic year is fully underway. We hope to send out a calendar of events for the new school year with the July newsletter.



Cambridge Maths Challenge

Congratulations to: **Heather Hiles, Emma Ritchie, Jack Austin & Jacob Saxton-Smith**, who came 1st. **Blake Saunders, Peter Bunyan & Ryan Hodge** came 3rd in the Area competition.

The '1st' team will go through to the final at Cottenham Village College later in the month.

Longsands
evening courses
and classes
Require **EVENING CLASS**
TUTORS
(commencing Sept. 05)
all subjects and topics
considered including the
following:

- Astronomy
- Astrology
- Digital Film Production
- EFL
- Flower Arranging
- GCSE English
- German
- Italian
- Line Drawing
- Painting
- Personal Finance
- Photoshop
- Pilates
- Pottery
- Salsa/Latin Dancing
- Spanish
- Stress Management
- Tai Chi

Hourly rate £18 to £20
per hour
(including holiday pay)
qualifications are desirable but
not essential.

For further information on
delivering the courses above or
to offer ones not listed, please
contact Wendy or Andrew in the
LCAC office:
Tel: 01480 223348/386838
Email:
lcac@longsands.cambs.sch.uk

Spells Abound

Spellbound students at Longsands College have raised over £500 for the Premature Baby Unit at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital and a Sponsored Child in Malawi. This year's total was raised through a sponsored spelling competition by Year 7 students, who learned the spelling of words as varied as *psychology* and *liaise* over the Easter break. Mr Donnelly, who tested the finalists and with sixth-form help organised the competition, said, "Since we started this competition a few years ago, we have raised over £10,000. Every year the students seem to get better."

The winners were **Ryan Brown, Steven Ingle & Matthew Nelmes**, who beat nearly 300 students to take the top spots.



Years 7 and 8 have already raised £1545 this term in the annual Readathon in aid of Sargent Cancer Care and the Roald Dahl Foundation. This brings our total since the year 2000 to £8250. Each child was challenged to read at least one book over the two-week event and collect money for pages or books read. The English Department ran a series of events to run alongside the Readathon with each student giving multimedia presentations on their favourite books.

Spare time to fill?

Have you ever considered doing an evening class? At Longsands we run a variety of evening classes, from about 7-9pm. They are a pleasant way to learn something new, learn more about a hobby and to get to know new people with similar interests. Over the past year we have run very popular Makaton sign language and furniture restoration classes, more challenging French, Spanish and Maths GCSE, and on to English 'AS' level. CLAIT (computer literacy) is also popular. This year we have run a successful digital photography course for the first time. Next year, we are also hoping to run Digital Film Production, which would tie in with our bid for Specialist School Status, along with more relaxing Tai Chi and Pilates. The programme is not yet finalised as we are still advertising and interviewing tutors for new subjects.

The evening classes enjoy a pleasant sociable atmosphere and could be a diversion from your usual evenings. Our brochure should be available in early July from the College, the public library and other locations such as local shops, post-offices and surgeries. We will also advertise in the local press and the Longsands Letter.

Year 9 Science Morning

On Saturday 30th April, 50 students from Year 9 came into school for a free breakfast and a healthy helping of science revision. The students worked through past papers and learnt about exam techniques. They also saw Mr Wright's collection of wind up



toys, Dr Mulcahy's rather unappetizing 'pizza cell' and were shocked to see just how acidic acid rain could get. All the students got involved in the activities and it was fantastic to see just how much science they'd all learned in the past 3 years at Longsands.

The morning was a resounding success and we can't wait to get the SATs results to see just how much impact it had.

Did you know.....?

Mr David....

Likes: Arsenal, cars, sweets and crisps.

Dislikes: Ignorance and bullying.

Hobbies: Football, cricket and playing with his daughter.

Favourite food: Anything Greek.

Pets: Cat called Basil.

Family: Wife, daughter and new baby!

Year 7 Students



Young Enterprise Team Triumphs

Three Young Enterprise teams took part in the Area Heats of the Young Enterprise Competition on 25th April at St Neots Community College. All teams were questioned on their business practices, successes and challenges by a team of judges made up of business entrepreneurs.

The teams then gave a 10-minute presentation of their experiences, along with 19 other teams from most of the local schools in the area including Kimbolton, Hinchingsbrooke and Hills Road.



Gekko



All teams performed very well but only Nusic Promotions made it through to the Regional Finals along with the other 5 finalists (see below). Nusic promotions represented Longsands at the Cambridgeshire Regional Finals on Wednesday 11th May held at Robinson College Cambridge.

Nusic

The team made it through fiercely contested regional heats and was one of six teams at the Finals from an original field of thirty. Nusic narrowly missed out on the Best Overall Company award but were delighted to scoop the award for Corporate Governance, reflecting their efficiency in dealing with the day-to-day running of the business.

Students & The Big Apple



Sunsmart

Sunsmart is Capital Research UK's campaign to alert all of us to the dangers of skin cancer.

On the 24th April the History and Geography departments took 40 'A' level students to the USA, visiting New York, Philadelphia and Washington DC. The students were able to enhance their knowledge of the USA's historical, political and geographical development through walking tours of the cities and visits to sites including Independence Hall, the US Capitol and the American Museum of Natural History. The students had a fabulous time along with four teachers from the college; Mr Donnelly (Head of Geography), Mr Seymour (Head of History), Mrs McCusker and Miss Watson.

Skin cancer is one of the most common cancers in the UK, with incidence of malignant melanoma (the most dangerous form) trebling in 15-24 year olds over the last 25 years. The good news is that up to 80% of these cases could be prevented by people adequately protecting themselves from the sun. Sunburn that occurs when people are young can double their risk of skin cancer in later life.

This is the second visit to New York run by the college – it is alternated each year with a trip to Moscow and St Petersburg.

We encourage our students to think carefully about their exposure to the sun in the summer months. Obvious precautions include:

- wearing wide brimmed hats when outside;
- wearing UV protective sunglasses;
- using sun screen of an appropriately high protection factor (factor 15 plus).



Sun screen is the last line of defence but it is useful for covering exposed areas of skin when shade and protective clothing are not practical. Students are allowed to bring their own personal supply of sunscreen to College. The only requirement is that they be sensible in its use.

Please would you discuss with your son or daughter how best they can protect themselves from the sun while at the same time enjoying the summer period safely.

The College currently has vacancies for the following support staff:

Maintenance Worker: The ideal candidate will be competent at basic DIY, as the job will involve routine repairs & maintenance, as well as working on specific projects. It is anticipated that this post will also involve opening & locking the College on a rota basis. Salary £13458 - £14106, plus overtime. This is a full-time position, 37 hours per week, 52 weeks per year.

Cleaner

Cleaner required for 2 hour shift, either morning or afternoon. Term time, plus 2 weeks during holidays. Salary £5.64 per hour.

For further information, please contact Mrs A Christie, Finance and Facilities Manager on, **01480 353535**. The closing date for applications is Wednesday 1st June, with interviews being held the following week.