



Longsands College Newsletter

www.longsands.cambs.sch.uk

From the Principal

Welcome to our first newsletter for the academic year 2008-2009.

I am pleased to report that we have started the year fully staffed and with our new building ready to be used by students from across the College. We welcomed 275 students into year seven at the start of term and, subject to final course enrolment, we anticipate a total sixth form of over 300.

The College's examination results as announced in July and August were again very pleasing. With regards to KS3, parents will have seen reports about the problems encountered nationally in the marking of English. We have requested some remarking of the Writing paper. Subject to confirmation, results in English appear to be at least good and those in Mathematics and Science represented a further advance on last year's strong performance. Over 41% of pupils obtained level 7 or above in Mathematics – an outstanding figure.

Several subjects matched or exceeded their 'personal best' at GCSE level, with the overall

proportion of year 11 students obtaining five or more A*-C grades standing at 72%. Nearly every student (99.7%) obtained at least one GCSE pass, which is an indication of the College's inclusivity and the guidance students receive.

Results at AS level were mixed. There were many successes but considerable time has been devoted over the first days of term to counselling a number of students about progression into Year 13. It may be that the College will need to intervene a little more firmly with those students whose approach to sixth form study does not make the most of their potential. Certainly, at full A2 level students did very well indeed, with the College's overall pass rate increasing to 98.6% and 29 of 35 subjects securing a 100% pass rate.

Behind each of the statistics above lie many stories of individual effort to overcome obstacles and achieve the best possible success. We congratulate every student whose results reflect

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This term at Longsands...



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Open Evening

Our annual Open Evening for parents considering Longsands as the secondary school for their son/daughter is on Tuesday 14 October 2008. Many students from across the College will be returning in the evening to assist in subject areas and act as guides.

Timings of the day will be adjusted as follows:

| | | |
|----------------|---|--|
| 1 pm | : | lunch available and formal end of school |
| 1.30 pm | : | buses depart |
| 1.30 – 3.30 pm | : | study facilities available |
| 5.45 pm | : | student helpers in position |
| 6.15 pm | : | start of Open Evening |
| 8.30 pm | : | end of Open Evening. |

From September 2009, the College's Published Admission Number (the limit of its intake) will be 290 students.

Academic Planning Day - Advanced Notice

Building on the success of previous years' Academic Planning Days, we will be holding this event again on **Thursday 27 November**. Some interviews will also take place on **Tuesday 25 November**. Thursday 27 November will be a non-teaching day for all students. Students will have an appointment with their form tutor to discuss their progress so far this year and set targets for the rest of the Academic Year. Students will reflect on previous targets and set new ones for the rest of the Academic Year. Parents will be invited to attend their child's interview. A letter outlining more details of the day will be sent out later this month. This is a valuable opportunity for students to discuss their learning and to set new goals. We look forward to your support.



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Key Policies

Please note that copies of College policies that may be of particular interest to parents are available via our website: www.longsands.cambs.sch.uk

Please follow the links for Parent Info at the top of the Home page.

Documents that can be downloaded include policies on: Mobile Phones; Discipline; Use of Images.

Using Mobile Technologies



Government funded research has brought Longsands College Science Department and Nottingham University together to review the use of mobile phones within the classroom. Working with an Applied Science GCSE class, Dr Millington used a few of the

functions offered by most mobile phones to support students as they developed their portfolios. In particular, the camera function was used to produce

digital images of experimental set-ups and in the monitoring of plant growth, whilst the stopwatch and calculator functions were used for experiments on pulse rate.

Students were very positive about their experiences and the published research has generated considerable interest being reported on radio and in the local press. This work is the latest of a series of initiatives where the College has collaborated with universities to review how technology can support learning.

Launch of the 'Student Leaders Scheme'

Eighteen students in Years 10 and 11 have successfully applied to the new scheme designed to offer Key Stage 4 students the opportunity to gain confidence and leadership skills through working with younger students in Key Stage 3. The new 'Student Leaders' proved to be a big success on the Year 7 induction day when they were attached to a Year 7 form for the morning and assisted the tutor in introducing the new students to Longsands College. This is only the beginning of the scheme and the Student Leaders will work on many more exciting tasks throughout the academic year.

The student Leaders are: **Stacey McKee, Lauren Marks, Alex Bing, Richard Curr, Jessica Lindop, Charlotte Radley, Chloe Wales, Jade Lioce, Harriet Morton, Emma Christie, Grace Richards, Francesca Cannon, Marissa Plumb, Ryan Hanson, Taylor Curtis, Luke McMinigie, James Chapman and Tom Humphrey.**

Level 2 Community Sports Leaders Award

Sixteen members of Longsands Sixth Form have successfully completed and passed their Level 2 Community Sports Leaders Award. The students spent one year completing the course and have developed excellent leadership skills in the field of sport. They have worked with Key Stage 3 pupils both in PE lessons and in community sport events that involved local primary schools. The course designed to develop leadership and coaching skills ensures candidates gain an excellent stepping stone into coaching or teaching sport in the future.

Well done to the following students who are superb sporting role models: **Abigail Jones, Matthew Jarvis, Michael Stannard, Yasmin Hall, Hannah Taylor, Zoe Kilpatrick, Darryl Cleary, Kathryn McCarthy, Sarah Monger, Danny Love-Fulton, Rachael Crockford, Katie Entwistle, George Huckle, Tom Blackburn, Nicole Zoylinos, James Huertas, and Stuart Pink.**

Miss Smith



Years 5 & 6 Tag Rugby Festival

St Neots Rugby Club

24 September 2008 (4.00 pm - 6.30 pm)

A group of twenty-one Year 11 students has been working with Lee Adamson (East Midlands Rugby Union Development Officer) in a bid to gain the Rugby Leaders Award. The students need to set up and run a festival for primary school aged children in order to pass the course. All Year 5 & 6 pupils in Longsands' feeder schools have been invited to attend a Tag Rugby Festival at St Neots Rugby Club. The festival, planned and led by Longsands' Community Rugby Leaders will, it is hoped be a huge success and photos and a report on the festival will be published after the event.

MEND (Mind, Exercise, Nutrition, Do It...)

Starting on 30 September, Mr Bircham and Miss Hingle will be assisting a nutritional expert in delivering the MEND project at the College. The project invites Year 6 pupils who want to take greater control of their health, along with their parents, to attend a ten week course at Longsands. The project aims to re-educate pupils and parents, encouraging them to lead a healthy, active lifestyle. The Longsands MEND project coincides with a number of other projects that are happening nationally.

For further information on either of the initiatives above, please contact Mr Bircham at the College.



Emergency Closure

There is no change for the time being to the procedures that will be operated for emergency closures, eg as a result of adverse weather conditions. Over the course of the year, we will be establishing the possibility of contacting parents by email or text message. However, for the moment, local radio is likely to be the principal means of communication.

The decision on whether or not to close has to be based on the likelihood of sufficient staff being able to get to work for us to be able to deliver a reasonable curriculum. Because many staff live some distance from College, conditions in St Neots itself may not be the determining factor.

These are the key points from previously issued advice:

Emergency Closure Before School

If the College is to be closed, we shall inform the local radio station at the earliest opportunity. Our main line of communication will be through Radio Cambridgeshire on 96.0 FM. We may also use Chiltern Radio (96.9 FM) and, if possible, our website.

Closure During the Day

It is essential that each student knows what she or he is to do if the College has to close early in the interests of safety. The temptation is to say, "Wait at College until I can pick you up." However, if roads are blocked or trains cancelled, this option can be far from satisfactory. For most young people, waiting for you to pick them up in the warmth of a friend's home in St Neots where telephone contact is relatively easy and there could be a bed for the night is a far better prospect.

The health and safety of students will always be our first consideration. However, experience tells us that students get very anxious indeed when they are left in school. The situation of staff who stay behind to look after students but who also have families waiting for them needs to be borne in mind. Sometimes coach companies ask for students to be released early – a request that has to be met in fairness to the drivers and the majority of students living in a particular location. In this case, students need a refuge near home if they cannot gain access to their own house.

It would be most helpful if every parent discussed with their son or daughter the course of action to be followed as suggested above.

Nick Makes UK Top Ten!

Former Longsands student Nick Botham, who completed Year 13 at the College last summer, has been praised by Edexcel on of the UK's largest awarding body.

Nick sat the Media Communication and Production exam earlier this summer here at Longsands and the results issued last month, show that out of 602 candidates, Nick achieved one of the highest overall marks.

Jerry Jarvis, Edexcel's Managing Director, commented: *"This is a tremendous achievement and testament to the hard work students put into preparing for their exams. We send our congratulations!"*

Nick is gifted technically and his management skills are outstanding, his achievement in Media Communication is testament to the dedication and professionalism he displays at all times. He has been a pleasure to work with, and Longsands wishes him every success for the future in his Film-making career.

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this determination and thank their parents and teachers for providing so much encouragement and support.

The official opening of our new building took place on 12 September 2008. Proceedings were led by Cllr Tony Orgee, Chairman of Cambridgeshire County Council, who welcomed The Lord Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire, Mr Hugh Duberly CBE, as our principal guest. This special ceremony gave us an opportunity to thank the individuals and organisations who have worked together to create such an excellent new facility. These included: the contractor, RG Carter; the architect, Mr Dean Clark; the members of Cambridgeshire County Council, who supported the idea of the rebuild project and financed this first phase. Our ambition to have the new building open and operational from the start of term also required considerable input from our own premises team, the Facilities and Finance Manager (Mrs Christie) and a significant number of teachers who came into College during August to set up their rooms and organise departmental resources. Thank you to all involved.

One other person, who played an important part in the opening ceremony, should be mentioned: Mrs Ruth Clapham, MBE, for whom the event represented not only the culmination of years of making representations on behalf of the College but also her final act as Chairman of Governors. Mrs Clapham joined the Governing Body of Longsands in 1976 and she has been chair for the past 8 years. Her service to the College as a governor has been

utterly exceptional. She has been a constant source of advice and guidance to the three Principals with whom she has worked. Her influence can be seen in many areas of College life and her insights and enthusiasm will be much missed.

There is much to look forward to in the new College year. The Creative Exchange at the Longsands Road end of our site is due to open in a few weeks' time. The revised curriculum for students in years 7 and 10 is now in place. In both years 10 and year 12, we are implementing the new Creative and Media Diploma. We have also initiated a consultation within the College about the best use of the larger than expected social, sport and play area behind the new building.

Finally, I am required each year to draw the attention of students and their parents to the Governing Body's Discipline Policy and associated statement about discipline from me, which appear on our website (paper copies available on request). The College's policy on Use of Images is also available and has been distributed as a paper copy to the parents of students in our new intake. Please note that, as in previous years, the default assumption will be that parents give consent for the use of images unless stated otherwise.

I hope we can all look forward to a happy and successful year.

Robert Whatmough
Principal



News from the Science Labs!

Students continued to perform at the very highest levels in their recent GCSE exams. The new Double Award Applied Science course, which combines coursework and vocational aspects, was particularly successful. Three students achieved double A grade passes due to their outstanding efforts. Meanwhile in Year 10, several students achieved full marks in one or more of their Double and Triple Award papers, with one individual achieving the maximum 100/100 in Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

Year 7 MFL Trips

The Modern Languages Department is offering two trips to Year 7 students to visit The French Christmas market in Lincoln on Saturday 6 December and a German Christmas market on Saturday 13 December. Letters will be out soon and the cost will be £16. It is hoped students will get a flavour of another culture and hopefully a chance to practise their languages skills and of course do some shopping!

Partnership Governor

A vacancy for a Partnership Governor has arisen as a result of the retirement of Mrs Clapham. In addition, the term of office of a Partnership Governor, Tony Hyde, is due to come to an end in October 2008. Mr Hyde has indicated willingness to continue in his role should the Governing Body wish this to happen.

As a parent of the College, you may nominate a Partnership Governor. Persons nominated must live or work in the community served by the College and must be committed to its good governance and success.

However, some people may not be appointed as Partnership Governors. These are:

- registered pupils at the College;
- parents of students currently at Longsands College;
- people employed to work at Longsands College;
- elected members or employees of Cambridgeshire County Council.

Please contact Mrs Scott, Clerk to the Governors, for a nomination form.