



# Manshead School

## Newsletter

### Welcome

Welcome to the first edition of our Newsletter for students, parents, governors and the community. As you know we made a decision earlier this term to change our fortnightly Newsletter to a weekly news bulletin. The news bulletin contains short pieces of important information that parents and students would need on a weekly basis whereas the Newsletter will be published less frequently but will cover in more depth the major events in school. We hope you enjoy reading the new style Newsletter.

This Autumn term has, as usual, been an incredibly busy one. There have been a number of really exciting trips and visits and events in school this term and a number of individual and sporting successes to celebrate. It has also been a very important term for the school as we had our Ofsted inspection. I expect that many of you will have read the recently published report and that you will have noted the key judgements that the inspection team made. Most importantly they saw that teaching was good, behaviour was good, all aspects of the sixth form were good and that the leadership of the school was also good. Manshead is in a very strong position in our local area and we can be proud of our achievements. We are of course never content with our performance as a school so we are continually reviewing everything we do as we plan our next steps to improve the school further. Part of this work is through the newly established Learning Partnership of ten local schools covering the full 2-19 age range (see page 2 of this newsletter). The Learning Partnership aims to ensure that all the children and young people in our community have access to excellent education in all of our schools. Look out for further information about the work of the Learning Partnership next term.

Jim Parker  
Headteacher.



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## Learning Partnership

The following schools have decided to establish a Learning Partnership that aims to provide excellent education from the age of 2 to 19 in the local area.

- Ashton Middle School
- Caddington Village School
- Kensworth Lower School
- Slip End Lower School
- Streetfield Middle School
- Ashton St Peters Lower School
- Downside Lower School
- Manshead Upper School
- St Mary's Lower School
- Studham Lower School

At Manshead we are really excited about the opportunities that will arise for children living in our area and who attend our schools. All the schools in the Learning Partnership are committed to providing excellent education at all ages and strongly believe that education is best when thought of as one journey from the age of 2 to 19 years old.

We know that many children worry about what will happen when it is time to move from Lower School to Middle School and from Middle School to Upper School. We also know that parents worry about their children moving schools too. Schools in the Learning Partnership are committed to working more closely together to make sure that children find moving schools a positive experience and that they make really good progress as they move from one school to the next. An important part of the partnership's focus will be to work harder to ensure that no child falls behind at any stage of their education.

The Learning Partnership will help all the schools in the partnership to improve and to maintain high standards across our area. We hope that parents will understand the benefits of their child attending a school that is part of a larger partnership that provides better access to high quality education.

Each school in the partnership will continue to be an independent organisation, with its own Headteacher and Governing Body. Each of the ten schools is an equal partner in the Learning Partnership.

As the Learning Partnership develops over the coming months we will be writing to you again with news of activities and projects that are taking place in the 10 schools. We hope that parents and the local community will wish to have involvement in shaping the Learning Partnership. For more information about the Learning Partnership please contact your local Partnership school.



## Sports Report mid-season highlights

Girls U15 Football - unbeaten this season and still in the County Cup

Boys U15 Football - unbeaten this season and still in the County Cup

Girls U14/U15 Netball - unbeaten this season

Girls U14/U15 Hockey - unbeaten this season

Boys U15 Rugby - unbeaten so far in the County League and now in the play offs. Still in the County Cup

Leadership Academy - The 12 students have done extremely well this year. They have assisted in middle schools, a badminton festival and table tennis competitions. A special well done and thank you to Jordan Marshall and Leah Maguire for the excellent leadership they demonstrated at the Badminton Festival.



# DofE Awards

After a gap of quite a few years we have re-established the Duke of Edinburgh Award Programme at Manshead. We wanted to start with just a small Bronze group for our first year but the students had other ideas - a large Bronze group and a Gold Group too!

Our 24 Bronze students have thrown themselves into activities as diverse as helping with Brownie packs, working behind the desks at Libraries, Keep Fit, Dance, Acting, Football and Tennis, and on their expeditions struggled with rain storms, bendy tent pegs and aching feet, but compensated by lots of sunshine too, great scenery and big campfires. And in spite of DofE being strictly non-competitive the first question every group always asks when they get to camp is still 'Are we first?'. We received some great presentations from the groups after their final expedition and lots of you will have seen some of the video material on the display screen in Reception. Even the Bronze Award requires four activities to be completed so it does take a fair bit of time and commitment, but we now have our students starting to complete their Awards. First was Rebecca Fitzgerald, followed by Samantha Patel, but even with something as activity-based as DofE there is still that annoying paperwork for the students to get straight before they can actually be presented with their certificates.

We now have our current Year 10's starting their Bronze and having just about coped with 24 students last year we agreed to offer 24 places again this year. So the group has ended up at 32! How does that happen?

Our Gold group was more a case of us being mugged if we are quite honest; we had no plans to run a Gold group straightaway but in the face of such enthusiasm all our well-argued reasons for resisting kept being beaten down. We ended up on a four day expedition in April in extraordinary wall-to-wall mountain sunshine, including a wild camp by a tarn, and then managing to coincide the group's Assessed Expedition with the arrival of Hurricane Irene and winds topping 90mph on the more exposed slopes in Snowdonia. The group had three nights without sleep because the wind was as deafening as a fighter jet but they all showed the same stubborn determination in the face of the weather's onslaught as they had when they would not take No for an answer from us initially. Here is a quote from their Assessor's report - "Overall I think they have been brilliant. Probably the strongest assessment group I have seen, especially considering the weather that could easily have broken many lesser groups". All six have now finished their Gold and will be on their way to the Palace to receive their certificates (once they get their paperwork tidied!). Our Gold Group were Hannah Winton (mugging group leader), Chris Rhodes, Chantelle Howell, Laura Donoghue, Tom Firth and Myah Guild.

The photos here include some of our Bronze and Gold groups on their expeditions.



# Challenge Week

What's the link between Sean Connery, Indoor Skydiving, Hangman and Oxford University? Challenge Week of course! This term saw the first ever 'Challenge Week' where students were encouraged to stretch themselves academically and get involved in a range of challenging activities.

The week started off with a visit from a Postgraduate student from Wadham College, Oxford University who pitted small groups of Year 10 and Year 11 students against each other in a public speaking task. The activity was designed to develop the types of skills needed to study at a top-tier university. The students also enjoyed a short admissions talk which hopefully gave them food for thought in relation to their academic future. Thank you to Pippa Byrne from Oxford University for giving up her time for Manshead students.

During Challenge Week we also welcomed Gifted & Talented ICT students from one of our local middle schools Caddington Village School. We had approximately 20 students that spent the entire day with Ms Dalgleish and Mr Shafi on a crash course in programming 'Flash' animation software. The students successfully created an interactive 'Hangman' game and took their new knowledge back to share with other students at their school after a very rewarding but exhausting day! Thank you to all the Manshead staff and students that helped make this day so successful.

In addition to these activities, we had a programme of 'Visiting Sixth Form' opportunities for Year 10 and Year 11 students, where small groups were invited to participate in Year 12 and Year 13 lessons in Mathematics, ICT, PE, Chemistry and Physics. These were very successful sessions and gave some students a very real intellectual challenge!

Gifted & Talented Year 11 artists were invited to attend the annual sixth form 'Tate Gallery' trip during Challenge Week, providing them with important first-hand access to dynamic art exhibits which should enrich their GCSE coursework sketchbook work.

To launch Challenge Week, all students throughout the school were invited to participate in the Challenge Competition. Every single subject area devised a 'Challenge Question' which was an open question that students could answer in any way they chose. Students must submit their 'Challenge Response' by the end of term (December 16th) to their subject teachers for the chance to win some Airkix Indoor Skydiving vouchers - a high flying prize indeed! Watch this space for news of the winners in the new year.

And finally back to Sean Connery whom we thank for the wonderful quote 'There is nothing like a challenge to bring out the best in man'. Thank you to all staff and students that supported and participated in Challenge Week





## College Cabaret 2011

Ahoy me hearties, shiver me timbers what a marvellous evening's entertainment we all had at College Cabaret 2011 on Thursday 17th and Friday 18th November. College Cabaret is now in its fourth year and going from strength to strength. It is an inter-college competition, which sees them pitted together to see which one can make the best all dancing, all singing and all acting extravaganza of a performance. The colleges are paired up to make three teams, led by Year 13 students who are in charge of writing and directing the performances, this year the pairings were Picasso and Grey-Thompson, Dylan and Campbell and McCartney and King. Each year they are given a theme, and this year it was Pirates.

After weeks and months of rehearsing, the standards were high and we were all expecting two swash buckling evenings, and we were not disappointed. All three performances were extraordinary and some of the best College Cabaret performances we've seen to date. There is no doubting the strength of this competition, or indeed the strength and depth of talented young people we have in this school when one sees the high standard of performance work they have created.

Whilst no one was left to walk the plank that night, there were winners - although the judges on both nights found it very difficult to find fault with any of them - the overall winners were Dylan and Campbell, who created a piece that (and all the judges were in agreement on this) flowed from the beginning to the end and didn't leave the audience for one minute without something to watch, listen to or be entertained by. A truly spectacular piece of theatre. The other colleges also picked up prizes, with Best Music going to Picasso and Grey-Thompson and Best Use of Chorus going to McCartney and King.

Whilst, so many students and teachers took part this year and a very big special thank you and well done needs to go out to everyone, there were some special prize winners. Luke Pearce, for example, won Best Male Actor with Peter Lawrence as runner up. Ami Bianchi and Sophie Kesterton shared Best Female Actor award with Gemma Johnson as runner up. Connor Blennerhassett won Best Newcomer Award. Finally, Miss Rudling and Mrs Goulding won the Best Teacher performance, although it must be said that without Mr Carter's fantastic act there wouldn't have been a performance from Picasso and Grey-Thompson.

Well done to everyone who took part and I'm already looking forward to next year!

Mr B

Keith Burt

Learning Manager of Drama and School Improver, Manshead School.

# Middle school liaison trip to Kingston University to trial GIS

## 2nd and 3rd November 2011

At the beginning of November Manshead lead a trip to Kingston University where students could trial GIS (Geographical Information Systems) and learn a little more about university life. Whilst there they had an opportunity to learn about the making of Google Earth, Google Maps, GPS and other modern systems that we cannot live without to help navigate our way around the world. The trip was aimed at keen Geographers from Year 8 to Year 10, as part of our continuing collaboration with Streetfield, Priory and Caddington middle schools, who also sent students along to join in the fun. Here's one students account of the trip...

"On Wednesday 2nd November 2011 I went to Kingston University with the school to get an insight in what is known as GIS (Geographical Information Systems). When we arrived, we went into one of the computer labs and in the session we learnt about how GIS helps us do many things we now take for granted such as find restaurants for our meals, get to where we need to go for our meetings and not get lost in new towns. We also learnt about how GIS helps save lives in natural disasters such as the Haiti earthquake. For example, rescue workers would use GPS systems to alert other rescue team members to where people needed help and to mark places where there were signs of possible survivors. After watching a video of this we went on Google Earth to look for various locations and coordinates to experiment with where they would take us. To conclude the session we went on to a website that enabled us to find the value of houses in specific postcodes.

After that we toured the campus and went into a very modern building for a spot of lunch. Later we were shown how 3D effects are made and the workings of 3D mapping. We then got to experiment with special 3D glasses, looking at maps from different angles. To conclude the day we listened to an interesting talk on general university life and the opportunities to work towards a GIS degree (Kingston being one of the few universities offering the course). Overall I felt it was an insightful day which gave us knowledge on many matters we need not only in geography but for life in general."

By Daniel Kearney Yr10



# Year 12 residential trip to Swanage

9th - 11th November 2011

As part of our continued collaboration with Queensbury, Year 12 Geography students went to Swanage in Dorset for a 3 day residential trip as part of their unit 2 exam - Geographical Investigations. Here is a short idea of what we got up to for those thinking about Geography as a sixth form option.

Day 1 - Arrived at Swanage and carried out transects of the local area that we then analysed in the evening. We were still working at 9.30 in the evening, but the work was fun and interesting

Day 2 - Visit Studland sand dunes - carrying out further transects on a fragile ecosystem and sampling different techniques to measure footpath erosion. In the afternoon we walk from Lulworth Cove to Durdle Door to explore a coast line that is designated an area of outstanding natural beauty (and which is also pretty steep and tiring!)

Day 3 - We visited to Boscombe reef to look at the development of the artificial surf reef and the impact it has had on the surrounding area. We assessed the risk of erosion by looking at beach profiles and then we visited Barton-on-Sea to view the impact of failed sea defences and to consider a holistic shoreline management plan.

As preparation for the trip students had undertaken research into Swanage and the issues surrounding coastal management and coastal resorts. Although it was a tiring trip with lots of work and lots of walking it certainly was beneficial for all of those involved and has helped improve student understanding of exam questions and the techniques needed to answer them.

Later on in the year Manshead and Queensbury will again be "teaming - up" at sixth form level for two other trips - one around Luton - to look at the developments in and around this area and the second to London- to assess the success of rebranding schemes at St Pancras, Greenwich Millennium Village and the Olympic site in Stratford.



## Congratulations

All year 9 students have 3 library induction lessons to introduce them to our library and to teach them how to use the library independently.

During their final lesson students produce a poster about a famous author; these are displayed in the library and the English department and the best 2 win a prize.

I am delighted to announce that this year's winners are:

Jed Willis and Janiece Jackson

Please come to the library to collect your prizes if you haven't already!

Mrs Yates  
Librarian



# Cambridge Chemistry Challenge

Matthew Johnson has received an award to acknowledge an outstanding performance, achieving one of the highest marks in a new competition called the Cambridge Chemistry Challenge, which was taken by 3000 students in 250 schools across the country this year. Matthew was amongst 30 students across the entire country who achieved the highest marks in the Challenge. All award winners were rewarded with a trophy by Cambridge MP and research scientist, Dr Julian Huppert at an event in the Houses of Parliament.

The Cambridge Chemistry Challenge is the brainchild of Dr Peter Wothers who is a chemist at the University of Cambridge and is made up of a monthly online competition which is open to anyone, any age from anywhere in the world and is designed to push boundaries and stretch students' science knowledge. At the end of the online competition the Cambridge Chemistry Challenge team, made up of teachers and university chemists, set a written exam for Year 12 students at schools in the UK (Matt was in Year 12 when he sat the paper).

Dr Peter Wothers said: "At school students are taught the facts but here they have to apply knowledge of other subjects and think creatively - these are exactly the kind of skills which are needed for university." Ann Puntis, Chief Executive of University of Cambridge International Examinations added: "I'm delighted that this competition has proved to be so successful - engaging and inspiring thousands of students around the world. These are our young chemists of the future. Through participating in the Challenge they demonstrate an interest in chemistry which goes beyond the classroom, preparing them for success at university and beyond."



# Unconference

Several of our brightest Year 13 students attended a special event at the Royal Institution.

This was designed to see how our young people view science at present, and what we can do to make our future more positive by using our understanding intelligently.

The students were asked to listen to a number of keynote speakers, and then work in small groups with other students to put together a presentation on a science related issue.

The conference was recorded, and will form the basis of a briefing for MPs.

Our students may well be having a significant impact on the future of science in this country!



## Sixth Form Visit

Following the sixth form visit to the Tate Modern all students wrote about the work they saw whilst there, below is a section of an excellent example by a Year 13 student; Charlotte Stewart-Bean.

At the Tate Modern I took part in a workshop that focussed on the work of Tacita Dean, the piece was simply called Film (shown to the right), and was featured in the Turbine Hall. This setting fitted in with the piece, as Dean had made a film, not through digital means, but on physical 35mm film, which is no longer processed in the UK. It is a silent film that runs on for 11 minutes, projected onto a vertical monolith that was 13 metres tall. This vertical sense fits with the image content of the film. As Dean shows tall mountains, of her own making; not true images of mountains, tall trees, a running waterfall and a towering chimney The windows that were behind the projection of the film featured in it, and this use of the Turbine Hall emphasises the vertical sense of the whole film.

How certain things become outdated and obsolete within time and movement was a key theme in this piece, as it illustrates both through the process and through the outcome. This is done using 35mm physical film (analogue film-making) to record the piece itself, and the fact that the setting of some images in the film feature the back wall of the Turbine Hall; this represents how these things are no longer used.



## National Art & Design Saturday Club

run by Central Bedfordshire College

This year there are 700 Club members taking part in the Saturday Club. In November many of the students travelled to London with their tutors for the launch of the Club's third year. They visited Somerset House for an official welcome from John and Frances Sorrell, received their membership packs and took part in a pop-up exhibition of their self-portraits. The groups will also visit some of the capital's best museums and galleries including the Courtauld Gallery, the V&A, Tate Modern and the Saatchi.

Here is a comment by one of our students, Jordan Copeland

I am so glad that I was chosen to partake in the Saturday Art Club run by the Sorrel Foundation. It has given me a chance to do things in art that I would not do in normal art lessons. Seeing a piece of my work up in a gallery and having others look at it was a bit surreal, everyone was telling me how amazing it was to have work in the Somerset House gallery but actually seeing it there was amazing. We got the chance to look around one of the galleries that were already up at Somerset House and it was called Real Venice. This gallery had photos from renowned artists. These photos include wide panoramas of Italy from across a river to a whole village in one photo. I am thoroughly enjoying my time on this Saturday club and since starting I have taken a liking to one of the techniques we have done at college which was printing. I also visited Tate Modern Gallery and the National Portrait Gallery.



# BIMA Awards

## (British Interactive Media Association)

Sometime during February 2011 two lovely chaps named Chris and Max visited Manshead to talk to our art class about their business Kempt. Chris and Max told our art class about Kempt and what they specialise in, clients they've worked with and games they've created. Kempt are one of the UK's leading specialists in creating playful, engaging advertising creative - largely in the form of games. During this session Chris began to talk about BIMA and asked that anyone interested in the project join them in the clay room to discuss the project. A couple of weeks later Mrs Cawte told me that Chris had offered Annalise and I a work experience placement in their offices which both of us said yes to.

The work experience took place during the half term of February and throughout the week I learnt some new tricks in Flash and started work on the BIMA project in which I'd be creating a series of stop-motion animations using a variety of children's toys bought around the town and a few things found around the office. So to say the least, the week was good, it was quite a laugh and I was able to see how amazing professional flash games were created. It scared me.

Later in the year our project was nominated for an award at the 2011 BIMA Awards which we travelled to Channel 4's main offices in London to attend (yes they had a showroom). We came second overall which was brilliant. We won some cool prizes and also an awesome Wacom Bamboo Tablet for the school.

Not too long ago during September I worked for Kempt yet again for about four days taking screen grabs of many applications that were either nominated or winning awards at the 2011 BIMA Awards (different to the awards we attended) . It was a long process but quite a funny few days in their offices (and I left with a nice sum of money in my pocket).

*Daniel Kearney*

Our photo is of the complete project team of students - Amit Vadgama, Rebecca Newton, Faith James, Imogen Snee, Ryan Bugg, Daniel Kearney and Annalise Dowdall.



# Our DofE Volunteering

## in the School Library



There is a group of 4 of us that volunteer in the library for our Duke of Edinburgh award. We spend one lunch time each week in the library helping the librarians. It's always a really friendly atmosphere and it's a great opportunity to learn new things and it's also a different experience. The librarians give us lots of things to do and they are very helpful and kind and we are not put under pressure at any time. It's a great atmosphere to learn in and there is always something new to learn.

Brittany Hiom & Amy Webb – Year 10

## Paris Art Trip

A group of 22 Year 11 students spent a week in France

This was an art trip to prepare for Year 12 coursework

The students visited a wide range of places including Monet's garden, Notre Dame, and the Musee d' Orsey.

Painting in Paris by Imogen Snee

The trip to Paris was great; we were only a street away from Mika playing a concert. Although the journey took quite a while we managed to stay awake listening to his music. Although we were there to view art work and do our own we also got to see the fireworks from our room on Bastille Day. The Pompidou Centre was one of my favourite places to view the art. It was modern and bold whereas the L'Orangerie had more of an authentic look to the place as it had huge canvases and big sculptures. The art trip was most definitely worth going on as you get to make new friends at the other schools and I finally got to the top of the Eiffel Tower.

