



THE RIDGEWAY NEWS

December 2011

www.ridgewayschool.com

Issue 145



The Moat Art Mosaic Project

Year 10 GCSE Art students have been working extremely hard on the Moat Art Mosaic Project which has involved them working to a brief given by the local council with the theme of 'Wroughton today'. The Moat Art Mosaic project is part of a scheme to redevelop the Moat area in Wroughton. Full story on page 29...

Keep up to date with your child's performance at
<https://frog.ridgewayschool.com/parentsingup>





Season Greetings from the

...Headteacher



Dear Parents/Carers

On August 1st 2011 The Ridgeway School and Sixth Form College became an Academy. You are unlikely to have noticed any difference as far as daily life is concerned and this edition of The Ridgeway News will confirm that the usual high level of activity continues to be a key feature of life at the school. Behind the scenes being an Academy has had considerable impact in terms of finance and being able to determine what we spend all our money on. We now have control of all our £6m budget and we can spend it where we believe our students need it spent. An example would be that for the past few years we had to contribute £43,000 to an offsite provision for students finding school life difficult and we have not been able to recommend enough students to fill our five places. This year we have purchased counselling services and targeted mental health support which we believe is what our students need more speedy access to. We have also been able to employ a few more Learning Support Assistants to support students in their work. These are difficult financial times but we hope that as an Academy we will be best able to deal with cuts and the hard times ahead.

We continue to be highly successful in training potential teachers with a skilled team of mentors who lead the trainees through the initial stages of lesson planning and delivery. This term we have had six trainees from the University of Bristol and four from the Swindon School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT). All trainees rated their practice here at The Ridgeway as outstanding, remarking on the many opportunities which had been afforded to them and the way that staff often go beyond the call of duty to help and guide. In addition to being in a faculty, all trainees are encouraged to enter into whole school activities as well as being attached to a mentor group. Many have accompanied trips, entered in to the training sessions on TD days, and been invaluable during Immersion Days. We are pleased that a Maths trainee has secured a full time post here in September 2012

The Ridgeway School has formed a cluster arrangement with Kingsdown for the purposes of developing a **Middle Leader Development Programme** which will be implemented for the first time in January 2012. Ron Piper from The Ridgeway School and Alison Evans from Kingsdown will be facilitating a National College for School Leadership accredited programme aimed at developing the leadership skills of established and aspirant middle leaders and at the same time closing the gap between students' performances both within and across schools.

We have also been delighted to be invited to be part of the Outstanding Facilitator Programme launched by the National College. Three members of staff, Ron Piper, Heather Siebenaller and Claire Hockin have recently undergone intensive training to deliver this new programme which will support other schools in improving teaching and learning.

In August the government announced a new Partnership for Schools Bid that could see up to 300 schools benefit from a rebuilding programme. There is not a lot of money available for this programme but working with the Local Authority we have placed a bid and hope that if not in this round we will have made our mark for the future. We are very aware that some parts of our building are not the best and will one day end their useful life. We are now working to address this issue and also to be ready to take the increase in numbers that the Local Authority predict will be necessary from 2017.

Continued....

Comenius Update

The school are currently looking into participating in four different projects via the Comenius links, this will increase as the decision regarding funding is finalised.

1/ Geography Project. Students in Key Stage 3 are undertaking a local area study, highlighting areas of interest, historical importance, tourist attractions, industry and transport links. Students from each of the participating schools will produce an information booklet (tourist guide) for their own area and present at the meeting in Westerlo (end of March). When all the schools have completed their own research work it is anticipated that the Elvis group as a whole will combine their work into an 'Elvis guide to Europe'. The project leader for this is Alex Curtis-Slater (Ridgeway School).

2/ Inventors Club. Students from all European partnership schools are going to participate in this project. This is aimed at higher Key Stage 3 and lower Key Stage 4, and expected that students participating will have a design and physics background. Students from each of the schools will be researching and designing a new product and it is anticipated that the majority of the products will be made. The students from the club will then present their designs/products at a future meeting and discuss/compare how the products vary dependant on their country of manufacture and source of inspiration. The Design Technology department has expressed an interest in developing a range of smart phone apps to aid students learning and revision (Kate Harding/Saul Willis). The project leader for this group is Saul Willis (Ridgeway School).

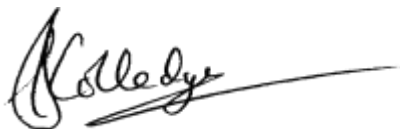
3/ Btec Engineering. There is a possibility of a trial international 'virtual school', through some of the linked schools, (interest from Lecce, Gulpen, Westerlo). Edexcel has been contacted regarding the possibility of The Ridgeway being an international school with the Technology Department being able to put all Btec resources on the Elvis VLE, which means that the students participating will be able to access and complete all necessary assignments. As a qualified internal verifier, Saul Willis will then be able to collate and mark all assignments, which will lead to the students gaining a Qualification. This project has been started with the current Year 10s in anticipation of a favourable response from EDEXCEL. This is also running in conjunction with the STEM group and has developed a very good inter-department relationship within school. (Design Technology/Physics and Maths). The project leader for this is Saul Willis (Ridgeway School).

4/ Dream School. All schools participating in this round of Elvis projects are expected to contribute to the DREAM School project. This is where the Elvis community produce a report on the viability of the Dream School. It is intended that questionnaires are sent to all students, parents, teachers and governors to discover what the vision of a European Dream School is. This is to include all resources, including the buildings, teachers, curriculum and hours of education. The project leader for this is Hans Venderbos (Sophianum).

5/ New Technology Trial. An extra to the Elvis projects is the possible development of a one-off international research project. Between the Ridgeway and Westerlo we aim to purchase and trial the use of Tablet PC's in each of the departments. A small number will be purchased (Up-to 10 at first, which we are currently getting 3 on trial to use), and once each department throughout The Ridgeway has used them, we aim to produce a report between ourselves and Westerlo to explain our findings. Are tablets an education tool of the future or a gimmick? The project leader for this is Saul Willis (Ridgeway School).

We have allocated 4 Comenius ambassadors for The Ridgeway School that will participate in all the projects and aid the running of any extracurricular activities. These students will then represent The Ridgeway School at future international links meetings: Charlie Green Year 12, Leanne Anderson Year 12, Jade Benham Year 10 and David Williams Year 10.

May I take this opportunity to wish you all a Happy Christmas and a very peaceful New Year.



Steve Colledge, Headteacher



Design Technology News



The recent coffee morning held in October was a huge success with many Grandparents attending the morning to enjoy refreshments made by the Year 11 Health and Social Care group.

Emphasis was put on using local or British ingredients together with free range eggs as we also embraced the Compassion In World Farming ideas. Locally grown apples, Dove Farm flour, Berkeley Farm butter and milk were served and used in the dishes showing that we are very fortunate in this area to have many high quality products available.

Students excelled themselves by meeting and greeting the visitors before giving them a taste of the delicious dishes they had produced. The art of good communication is key to a morning such as this. We are delighted to say that all students fully involved themselves conversing with our visitors and being particularly good hostesses. I have no doubt that many of this class will go on to be very successful in the caring sector if they should choose this for a career. Mrs R Cairns

Can you cook for yourself?

It may come as little surprise to many parents but research has found that a large number of university freshers are clueless when it comes to cooking, cleaning and doing the laundry - one in seven are unable to boil an egg.

A survey of more than 500 first-time students found that many lack basic life skills. 20% have never washed their own clothes and 13% have never ironed. As they prepare to live away from home for the first time, one in ten said they have never cooked before, more than a fifth have never shopped for food and 14% cannot boil an egg.

Sign up for extra, fun practical food sessions, ready for when you leave home

See Mr Lanigan or Mrs Cairns for details.



The Ridgeway Sixth Form College



'Live Your Dream and Realise Your Potential.'

So much has been going on since September it is difficult to know where to start. Below are just a few of the highlights...

As ever our students are showing responsibility for their own area by redecorating the Quiet study area for the start of 2011. Thanks to our Head Girl Laura Talbot for organising this. There are also plans afoot for a revamp of the main communal area and the stairs up to the common room.

Our university UCAS applications are in full flow. We have 3 applying for Oxbridge, 4 applying for medicine/veterinary courses, 1 for dentistry and 2 for pharmacy along with many other course including Chinese. Selected students had a talk from an Oxford university representative and practice preparatory interviews are being held at the moment for all students when an interview has been requested by a university.

A very successful Open Evening took place on Thursday November 10th. There was a very positive atmosphere and all who attended commented on the friendly warm vibe. There were significantly more external prospective applicants in attendance.

After last years' success of getting to the Debating Matters National final, this year's new debating team won their area heat and are now through to the Southwest and Wales area final in March. This is the first time The Ridgeway Sixth Form have succeeded in doing this 2 years in a row.

The Sixth Form organised a fashion show to raise money for the school. It was an amazing evening organised and run by The Friends of the Ridgeway and our Sixth Form. Over £420 was raised.

Mr A Lanigan, Head of Sixth Form



World War II

We were delighted that Professor Martin Parsons who is an expert in Second World War history came and worked with a Year 9 RE class this term. They have been studying the Holocaust, thinking about the effects of suffering on man kind. Martin discussed the on going work with which he is involved, where he travels extensively speaking with victims from many of the camps which were set up in Germany and Poland. He also discussed the subject of mans inhumanity to man in all the wars and conflicts which are still happening in the world. The group considered the effects of the conflicts, discussing in a particularly mature and insightful way. This is clearly a difficult topic but the thought and work it evoked suggests we have a very reflective group of students. Mrs R Cairns



Learning Resource Centre News

WELCOME

For those of you that are new to the school community, myself included, a welcome and reminder of the facilities that are available here. The LRC is more than just a library. As well as offering a large collection of fiction, non-fiction and reference books, the LRC also has a small selection of magazines, a daily delivery of newspapers, 3 computer terminals within the LRC area, a suite of 16 Apple Mac computers and printing facilities. There are also separate areas of fiction and non-fiction books geared specifically to Sixth Form students.

Students can borrow two books for a period of two weeks. However if a longer borrowing period is required, I am more than happy to grant extensions.

Notices, updates, and event information will be posted on the FROG Notice Boards – so keep checking!!

Mrs Sarah Day, Learning Resource Centre

OPENING HOURS

MONDAY	8.45 – 3.15
TUESDAY	8.15 – 3.15
WEDNESDAY	8.15 – 3.15
THURSDAY	8.15 – 3.15
FRIDAY	8.15 – 2.15

OVERDUE BOOKS

There are currently over 100 overdue books on loan from the LRC. If you have any overdue books at home – have a clear out and please bring them back!!

LEARNING RESOURCE CENTRE

CHRISTMAS COMPETITION

A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens

“If I could work my will,” said Scrooge indignantly, “every idiot who goes about with “Merry Christmas” on his lips, should be boiled with his own pudding, and buried with a stake of holly through his heart.”

BAH HUMBUG!! CAN YOU CHANGE SCROOGE’S MIND?

For a fantastic chance to win an iTunes voucher, all you have to do is -



TWEET SCROOGE AND CONVINCING HIM THAT CHRISTMAS IS FAB!!



Rules of entry: Tweet must 140 characters or less, entries must be submitted by FROG email to Mrs Day or handed to Mrs Day in the LRC, closing date for entries is Wednesday 7th December.



Swindon's 4th Festival of Literature

7th – 11th NOVEMBER 2011



The Swindon Youth Festival of Literature is an annual event, organised by the librarians and english faculties of the eleven secondary schools across Swindon, celebrating creativity, writing and reading. This year the festival welcomed 22 authors, poets, and illustrators who visited schools, the Central Library and The Wyvern Theatre for readings, performances and workshops. The festival also included a range of cross school activities that included a Creative Writing and Illustration Competition and a book quiz.

The Creative Writing competition involved students using a maximum of 500 words to describe an image. Congratulations go to Year 8 student Amy Connaghan for her story titled "The Pink Revolver" and Year 9 student Harry Martin for "The Virus". Each student is the worthy winner of a WHSmith voucher. The festival launched on

17th October at The Central Library with a ceremony attended by the Mayor, Mrs Ray Ballman. The school was represented by Year 9 students, Beth Pearson and Emma Broughton who later went on to attend a further eight events during the festival week between them.

Festival week kicked off at the school with our keynote speaker, Bali Rai. Bali, (an author of young adult fiction whose novel "Killing Honour" has recently been nominated on the long list for the Carnegie Medal 2012) spoke to students both in workshops and in year groups about his background and life experiences, both of which he explained served as inspiration for his books. He made his audience laugh, cringe and gasp in equal measure whilst tackling such sensitive issues as racism, love and peer pressure. Certainly, few of us will forget his description of the swimming pool incident or concrete chips in a hurry!! Year 7 student Eleana Martyn attended one of Bali's workshops and commented, "I enjoyed it when Bali Rai came in because what he said really helps when writing stories. He talked about different genres and how they were structured differently. A really helpful thing he told us was the difference between horror and ghost stories – horror has monsters whereas ghost stories have only ghosts. While students were being both entertained and inspired by Bali Rai, six students from Years 7 to 9, accompanied by Mrs Beadsworth travelled to Dorcan Technology College to compete in the Inter School Book Quiz. Year 8 students Leasha John and Helena Tuck, both commented that they loved attending an event at another school and being part of a mixed team which brought different areas of expertise to the team – the boys being credited as Horowitz and Higson experts and the girls, Stephanie Meyer. To conclude an action packed first day of the festival, 15 Year 9 students accompanied by Miss Jupp attended a workshop by acclaimed American author Maggie Stiefvater. Ms Stiefvater, author of the popular "Wolves of Mercy Falls" series, and late addition to the festival, impressed the students with her humour and charisma. All commented on the time she took to speak to the students personally and answer questions. Those students that were not fans before came away hooked!! Year 9 student Emily Herring, an existing fan enthused about meeting her favourite author - "I found her speech very inspirational about how she got the ideas for her books. When I got my book signed she asked me what my favourite book was. I was so pleased to have met her as it was a once in a lifetime experience". The headline event for the week took place on Wednesday 9th November at The Wyvern Theatre courtesy of The Chainsaw Gang. Described as a group of UK based writers of young adult fiction with plots covering such spine shivering subjects as killer dragons, underground prisons and templar warrior heroines, five members of the gang, Alex Bell, Sarwat Chadda, Stephen Deas, William Hussey, and Alexander Gordon Smith thrilled an auditorium full of Swindon students with terrifying tales and gruesome, gory, anecdotes.

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Continued from page 10....

The fifty students that travelled to The Wyvern were on the edge of their seats, and the pantomime like audience participation made for a lively morning. The gang members spoke about how they came to become authors and several students expressed their shock that two of them started their professional careers as Lawyers!!

The week concluded with students travelling to Isambard School to participate in an Illustration workshop with local artist Fred Blunt and a poetry workshop with Ash Dickinson. Practical art advice was given to the students who learnt according to Hannah Parsons that "simple art is ok and is more effective, easier to draw and anyone can do it". Ellie Jerome meanwhile commented that, "Fred Blunt was happy to help alter our illustrations and show us how small changes can make a big difference".

The overwhelming inspiration from the authors, artists and poets for their work was real life. Everyday experiences that can be turned into works of fantastical fiction with complex characters and wonderful illustration. At the end of what was a very busy week, over 500 students from this school participated in Literature Festival activities.

A massive thank you goes to Mrs Fiona Williams, English Teacher and Literacy Co-ordinator, who this year organised The Ridgeway School and Sixth Form College's participation in the Festival.

Mrs Sarah Day,
Learning Resource Centre

Maths News

The Senior Maths Challenge, a national competition organised by the UK Maths Trust, was held in school in November for students from Years 12 and 13. Best in school was awarded to **Leanne Anderson (Year 12)**.

If you want to see the type of problem they had to solve, see the maths competition notice board at the top of the stairs in blue block.

Also in November, the school took part in the regional final for the Senior Team Maths Challenge. The team consisted of Alistair Rogers, Katie Williams, Katie Pullan and Callum Blunt (accompanied by Mr Morris). The event was enjoyed by all and the team ended in 15th place.

Dates of challenges & competitions coming up this year:

- Year 10 gifted and talented maths challenge day – Monday 9th January
- Intermediate Team challenge – Tuesday 31st January
- Intermediate challenge – Thursday 2nd February
- Junior Team challenge – Friday 16th March
- Junior challenge – Thursday 26th April

For more information on the maths competitions held throughout the year, see the notice board upstairs in blue block or speak to Mrs Hogan. Mars Bar challenges are set every week.

Mrs K Hogan

SANTA STOCKING CHALLENGE

On the last day of Term 2, following an early delivery from Santa, classes visiting the LRC participated in the Santa Stocking Challenge. After the class was split into four, each team was presented with a stocking containing three books; all new fiction texts in the library. Each team had to then decide by using the illustration on the cover, the blurb on the back sleeve and the Introduction which appealed to them the most. Using role play, reading extracts from the text, or general descriptions the team had to sell (watch out Sir Alan!) the best book to the rest of the class. After a lively discussion the best new books were.....Gangsta Granny by David Walliams and Heroes of Olympus The Son of Neptune by Rick Riordan.

Year 11 Achievement Winners 2011



On Wednesday 16th November we held our annual GCSE Certificate and Awards Evening. Rob Buckland, Conservative MP and former school Governor was our guest speaker. It was an opportunity for all students from the 2011 cohort to collect their GCSE Certificates and for staff to present subject awards for:

- Outstanding Achievement
- Significant Improvement
- Fantastic Effort and Endeavour

Over 150 students and 200 parents attended the evening which was very pleasing. It was great to see students now at our Sixth Form and those at other colleges renewing friendships and catching up with each other.

Staff nominated 80 subject awards on the evening. Personally, having been fortunate to have been this particular year groups' Year Leader for 5 years, it was fantastic to see their journey come full circle. It was great to see those students who worked so incredibly hard being rewarded for all their hard work and effort.

I would like to thank all of the staff who attended for their superb support on the evening.

Mr M McMeeking



Subject	Nominations
English	Jack Weston, Kate Reynolds, Jason Grilo
English Literature	Sarah Zengeya, Frankie Lopez, Zakar Ali
Maths	Katie Pullan, Callum Blunt, Samir Gohill, Amber Francis, Ailsa MacNaught, Daniel Blackman
Additional Science	Shekainah Mungai, Samir Gohill
Applied Science	Emma Horton
Biology	Daniel Smith
Physics	Benjamin Cook
Chemistry	Daniel Thomas
BTEC Science	Louise England, Jadene Cowan
ICT	Joel Garcia, Katie Pullan, Shekainah Mungai, Zakar Ali, Ailsa MacNaught, Sam Zengeya
French	Ailsa MacNaught, Matthew Raymond, Charlie Green
German	Sophia Simlat, Samir Gohill, Daniel Thomas
Geography	Alex Bampton, Samir Gohill
History	Daniel Thomas, Chloe Pearce, Katie Evans, Alex Bampton, Charlotte Yeates, Charlie Green
Religious Studies	Alice Roberts, Madeleine Pratt
Sociology	Louis Priday, Joel Garcia
Technology Catering	Sarah Wheeler
Technology Construction	Alex Weston
Technology Graphics	Christopher Kelly, Brooke Rodgers
Technology Health & Social	Shekainah Mungai
Technology Product Design	Carla Garraway
Technology Textiles	Julia Gurung
Physical Education (GCSE)	Matthew Raymond, Jadene Cook, Craig Hatherall, Jessica Cook
Dance GCSE	Claire Peers
GCSE Art	Jessica Midwinter, Shannon Pink, Sabah Afzal, Andrew Hunt
Art (BTEC)	Amy Keen
Drama	Eddie Koppoe, Sophie Dodson
Performing Arts (BTEC)	Alice Roberts
Music	Oliver Herring, William Brittain
Business Studies	Elliott Maidment, Amber Francis, Sarah Wheeler, Jonathan Hill
Economics	Joel Garcia, Katie Pullan
Media	Amber Stevenson, Bethany Williams
Overall Outstanding Achievement	Tulsi Patel, Callum Blunt, Sabah Afzal
Overall Effort and Endeavour -	Jack Weston, Mitchell Coombes, Lucy Saunders

RIDGEWAY

REPORTERS



The re-launch of the Ridgeway Reporters enrichment class in September has been one of the success stories of the school year so far. The students who attend are always keen to write up the latest news and events from around the school, creating questionnaires for students, as well as taking photos like professional paparazzi! The group meet every Tuesday and have been privileged to make use of the fantastic Apple Mac suite in R16.

Over the past two terms we have covered a wide range of topics that effect students, from the school revamp in the summer, through to reviews on the fantastic P.E clubs that are offered at The Ridgeway School & Sixth Form College. We also share the latest views from the student council – something that is really important to the students of the school. The reporters have even given their thoughts on the latest blockbuster releases to hit both the small and big screens.

Our work has been published on the Swindon Advertiser website, under the ‘Student Adver’ pages. The reporters have got a real sense of achievement seeing their work published, and being read by the wider community. This is a great starting point for anyone considering a future in the Media industry.

The club will continue to run into the New Year, and we are always looking for budding journalists to join us. It’s your school and your voice – so make sure you use it!

Mr M Snook

A major schools project to capture the history of the River Thames



The Thames Heritage Tapestry is an exciting and innovative project enabling schools to create tapestries showing how the River Thames has shaped and influenced its riverside landscapes and communities. The finished tapestry will create a unique record of Thames history, architecture, industry, nature, sport and recreation. The tapestry will be completed by 2012, as one of the cultural components of the London Olympics.

Schools along the River Thames were invited to be part of the project. Each participating school was asked to complete a one square metre panel depicting aspects of the Thames in their area. Students were encouraged to research and understand the impact of the river on life, work and the environment as well as getting involved in all stages of the artwork needed to complete the panel.



Ridgeway House News

The house system officially got underway on Tuesday 8th November with our first house assemblies of the year. This year we have enlisted some of the PE staff as heads of house to help their houses with the themes of participation and teamwork. As these themes are also really important in PE they are the ideal candidates to lead our houses. The new heads of houses are:

Avebury – Mr Hill

Barbury – Mr Driver

Kennet – Miss Corkett

Silbury – Miss Cejer

One of the first jobs as Head of House is to organise a House representative for every mentor group. These nominations are in progress at time of writing and they will join our House sport captains who have already been finalised as below (Year 7 to follow shortly!):

Year 8

Houses	Boys	Girls
Avebury	Cameron Lampard	Ellie Godfrey
Barbury	Oliver While	Amelia Ridler
Kennet	Ben Powell	Leasha John
Silbury	James Clancy	Jessica Hutchings

Year 9

Houses	Boys	Girls
Avebury	Luke Gay	Emily Hacker-Allen
Barbury	Harry Longmore	Evie Cooper
Kennet	Jordan Rye	Holly Thompson
Silbury	Daniel Thompson	Angelica Koppe

Year 10

Houses	Boys	Girls
Avebury	Daniel Reynolds	Vanessa Coubrough
Barbury	Ross McKechnie	Rosie Hawkins
Kennet	Harry McBurnie	Ashleigh James
Silbury	Tom Fieldsend	Emma Woodcock

Year 11

Houses	Boys	Girls
Avebury	Josh Rowland	Sian Murphy
Barbury	Zak Hobbs	Katie Warren
Kennet	Bradley Mitchell	Amy Lambert
Silbury	Oliver Cooke	Rebecca Callaghan



Terms 1 and 2 were very busy within the Science Specialism department!

On the STEM (Science Technology Engineering & Maths) agenda were a multitude of visits as well as the launch of the Engineering BTEC led by Mr S Willis, Mrs N Wicks & Miss E Elstone!

The South West STEM CHEM Event
NEW DATE!
Friday 23rd September 2011
1pm – 4pm

Celebrate the International Year of Chemistry with your STEM Club at Dorcan Technology College!

Programme
 Glow Mats
 Going the Distance
 A Team Build

STEM CHEM Event at Dorcan Technology College 23rd September

STEM clubs attended from Dorcan, The Ridgeway School & Sixth form College and South Wiltshire Grammar School. Each school excelled in different areas. Our STEM Club members took the Element Fancy Dress competition to a whole new level and won that part of the event hands down!

The Triple Science Network Chemlabs Visit Wednesday 28th September

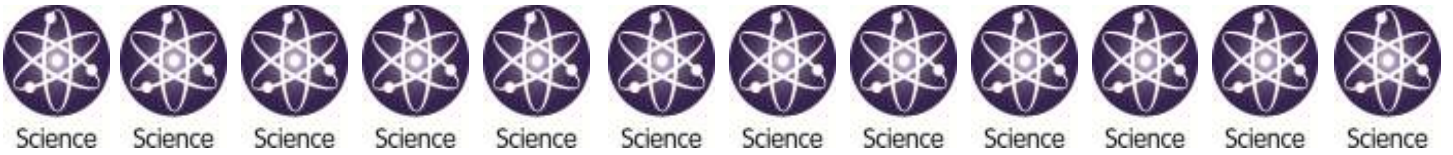
As members of the Swindon Schools Triple Science Learning and Skills Network (SSTLSN) we had the opportunity to take 17 students who were considered to have potential to excel in Science, to attend a practical session hosted at Bristol University, an international leading Chemistry department! We were joined by Greendown Community School, Kingsdown School & Dorcan Technology College for the visit. Everyone really enjoyed using the state of art facilities!

Nippy Nights Result in Bumper Parsnip Crop



Green-fingered Year 8 students patiently awaited the frost and were not disappointed. Members of the Grow Your Own Veg Enrichment Club enjoyed a bumper harvest of parsnips just in time for Christmas. The club have enjoyed a variety of produce over the year which includes carrots, broad beans, potatoes, lettuce and much more.





Swindon Schools Eco Conference

This first conference was hosted by the National Self Build & Renovation Centre on Tuesday 8th November. The day focussed on sharing ideas and experiences as Green Team/Eco Club members from several schools came together. The students created eco homes from scrap, toured the centre, enjoyed talks from 'the reptile man' and shared ideas with everyone else there. We hope to run the

event annually and that more schools can attend each year. The event was attended by Kingsdown School, Nythe Primary School, Peatmoor Primary School, South Marston Primary School, Covingham Park Primary School and The Ridgeway School & Sixth Form College.

Go4SET with TE Connectivity and Praxair Surface Technologies



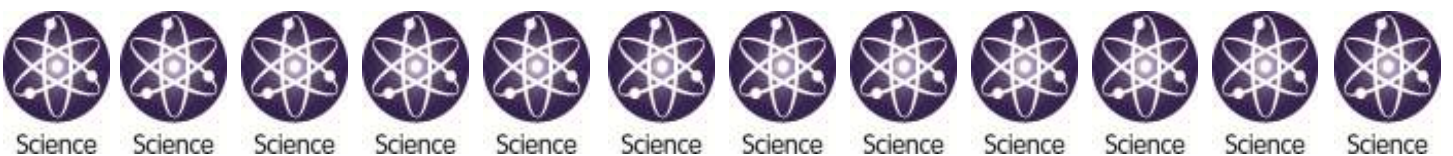
On Wednesday 2nd November the STEM Club members attended the launch of the Go4SET Scheme at TE Connectivity and Praxair Surface Technologies. Go4SET is a project based 10 week scheme. The STEM Club members are working in teams with scientists and engineers from TE Connectivity and Praxair Surface Technologies. Over the 10 weeks the students will write a technical report which they will present at the Celebration and Assessment Day on 8th February! You can find out more on the website: http://www.etrust.org.uk/go4set/information_for_schools.com

School Travel Ambassador Scheme

On the 7th October Arval hosted the launch of the School Travel Ambassador Scheme. This involves our students leading on road safety and sustainable travel initiatives within their school communities, and being a point of contact for local and national road safety events and competitions. The scheme is being led by the borough travel advisor and supported by Arval. The School Travel Ambassadors have begun work on their school travel consultancy workshop and will be meeting with mentor groups in the new term.

Keeping the School Green & Sustainable!

In September we took new nominations for the **KS3 Greenfacts**. Their first project has been Switch Off Fortnight. They will be working to reduce power use in school and will be reviewing power use at home with weekly meter readings, even over the festive period!



PE - News desk

Netball

This year all teams have been working hard on a Wednesday afternoon at training to develop the skills and techniques required to play regular fixtures against other schools. Some of the girls already play for clubs around Swindon, and their higher playing ability is demonstrated in games and training. If you would like to join a club, Pinehurst is recruiting players and has an already established junior section, having experienced coaches and regular training at a high level. Training is at Swindon Academy in state of the art facilities, with access to a new gym and dance studio for fitness sessions. Years 7, 8 and 9 training is from 6.30-8.00 and Years 10 onwards is 8.00-10.00. If you would like any further information please contact Miss Cejer at school on CejerR@ridgewayschool.com, or contact Leanne Richmond, the coach for these groups on richmondz_1409@hotmail.com or 07704376823.

Year 7 - New to the school the Year 7 team has taken the term to develop into a solid team, now with more than 7 players turning up to training each week. The year started with a Year 7 introduction tournament at Swindon Academy at the end of September. As this was the girls first time playing together, they did extremely well, merging together and beating Swindon Academy in their last game. Since then the team have hosted Commonweal, and travelled to Isambard. Unfortunately both games were a loss; however the potential in The Ridgeway team is paramount and will grow into an excellent team. A special well done to Catriona Rogers, who has made a great commitment to training and is already showing exceptional potential at Goal Keeper.

Year 8 - This year the Year 8s were entered into the Competitive League for netball, which meant the competition was tough and the opposition were strong teams, made with players who already play at club level. The Year 8 team travelled to Isambard, Greendown, Braden Forest and Kingsdown, all ending in a loss, however when playing at home against Commonweal the team won by 1 point in the final seconds of the game. Like the Year 7s, the 8s have lots of potential that will be harnessed for next year's season. Miss Cejer would like to send special thanks to Jess Hutchings and Amy Davies, who as Captain and Vice-Captain, have organised teams, been outstanding role models and have continually worked hard since the start of term.

Year 9 - An already established Year 9 team were entered into the Friendly league, with much debate, and convincingly won games against Churchfields and Nova Hreod. With only a few teams in the friendly league, a friendly was organised against Kingsdown who had been entered into the higher league. The Year 9s had a shock when coming across a strong team, made of an excellent attacking force. Although the Year 9 team have had the least number of games, they are the team who have, across the board, showed excellent commitment to training. Keep it up girls!

Year 10 - Unfortunately many teams have cancelled last minute on the Year 10s, so therefore they have only had 2 games this year! Beating Commonweal 7-4 away was an excellent game, with all girls demonstrating their netball skills learnt in the prior years. Hopefully a couple of friendlies can be organised for the Year 10s to allow them to practice all they have learnt in training.

Year 11 - As with the Year 10s, the Year 11s have only had 2 games this year, and although the Year 11 team is a well-developed, strong team in the opposing team there has, on both occasions, been an outstanding shooter that converted all their goals. At both games the opposing teacher has commented on the excellent play and level of netball of The Ridgeway girls, which is something to be proud of. Miss Cejer would like to personally thank Christine Burrows-Smith, who has shown excellent commitment to training, and has also helped the training in leading warm ups and coaching the younger girls.

Miss R Cejer



CROSS COUNTRY

National Cup

On Monday 3rd of October, Mr Hill and Miss Cejer took 3 teams of athletes to the National Cup Cross Country Event in Newbury. The event was a South-West schools competition, with many private schools in attendance. Overall the Junior Boys and Inter Girls did superbly, qualifying for the next round at Millfield in November. During this round competition was tough, with experienced runners taking part. Unfortunately on this occasion neither team qualified for the next round, however hopefully next year the teams will.

Swindon Schools

On Saturday the 19th November, Ridgeway PE department took 67 students to the Swindon Schools Cross Country event at Nova Hreod. The weather was cold but sunny on the day and made the running conditions excellent. All students did extremely well and represented the school with outstanding behaviour and respect for other runners. A huge WELL DONE to the following students who all came within the top 10 of their category and will now be competing in the next Wiltshire round at Grittleton in January. MINOR BOYS; Nathan Huynh (5th), Jack Hargreaves (6th), MINOR GIRLS; Annabel Hill

(8th), JUNIOR BOYS; Callum Bampton (2nd), Kieran Garraway (3rd), Jordan Rye (5th), Oliver While (6th), Max Cameron (7th), JUNIOR GIRLS; Sam Reeves (3rd), INTER GIRLS; Carla Huynh (2nd) and finally the Senior Boys: Alex Bampton (1st) and Matthew Raymond (2nd).

Congratulations to the following students who all competed in the races; MINOR BOYS: Marcus Raymond, Josh Hutchings, Brandon Duddy, Riegan Cook, Alex Bates, Simon Kelly, Sam Pring, Fraiser Colwell, Luke Todd, Morgan Locke, MINOR GIRLS: Rebecca Francis, Eleanor Day, Ella Knox, Danielle Bevan, Kenna Hickton, Izzy Clarke, Hannah White, Ellie Jaques-Matthias, Kayleigh Bridgman, JUNIOR BOYS: James Clancy, Lewis Coppock, Liam Swan, George Hawkins, Thomas Binsted, Benjamin Leonard, Jack Plumb, Samuel James, George Baskerville JUNIOR GIRLS: Megan Anderson, Kamahri May, Isabella Peterson, Megan Phillips, Serena Kembery, Lydia Gagan, Lottie Saldanha, Amy Connahan, Lucy Davidson, Amie Turner, Amy Connaghan, INTER BOYS; Oliver Cooke, Will Randall, Alex Hutchings, Jordan Conroy, Michael Woolford, Tom Baskerville, Tom Fieldsend and Harry Bryant and INTER GIRLS: Jasmine Barratt, Emma Bishop, Grace White, Rosie Hawkins, Jade Benham, Lydia Brookman.



Football

Fortunately or possibly not we were dealt a blow in the first round of the national cup for all of our year groups. This meant that our teams were going into the cup matches having played one less game than the opposition. We were given some difficult draws in the second round of this competition. All of our teams except Year 10 lost narrowly in this cup.

The exception of the Year 10 team came as a result of a Dan Reynolds goal from distance leading to a 1-0 win. They then had to play Isambards and having taken the lead through Harry McBurnie they were very unfortunate to end up losing 2-1.

However in the Wilshire Cup we have had more success. Sixth Form team were able to overcome St Johns with an excellent quick fire hat-trick from Robbie Ali to set the team on their way to a 5-0 win. The Year 11 team who were knocked out in the Semi Final last year are still going strong in this competition and are looking to go one step further this year. Unfortunately our Year 9s were unlucky to lose 2-1 to Kingsdown after a long journey out to Warminster. Our Year 7 team has showed much promise with a convincing win over commonweal. The PE team would like to ensure that Year 7s are not put off if they weren't selected for this game as the season proper begins after Christmas and we will have more of a chance to see players in training and friendlies at this time and involve a lot more players.

Extra-Curricular

Extra-curricular activities this term have been superbly attended, with outstanding commitment being shown week in and week out. Every Wednesday there have been, on occasion, over 200 students participating in extracurricular activities, including Netball, Vaulting, Basketball and Rugby. This dedication is excellent, and all PE staff hope this high participation level continues into the new year. Remember the Volleyball and Badminton club that run on a Monday and Friday have high level external coaches. Next term extra-curricular activities will continue with Gymnastics and Trampolining. The timetable will appear in the PE corridor during the first week of term.

Badminton

On Tuesday 15th November Ridgeway hosted the KS3 Girls Badminton competition. With schools from across the town arriving to play both singles and doubles against Carla Huynh, Rosie Hawkins, Katie Warren, Shania Carvey. The girls did well, working hard as a team and coming 3rd overall. Unfortunately the girls missed out by a couple of wins to make it through to the next round.

The following week, on Tuesday 22nd November, Ridgeway again hosted the KS4 boys badminton competition. With Avinesh John, Tom Fieldsend, Lay Durafe and Conor Guthrie representing the school on the night. The boys outshone their opponents and easily won the tournament, qualifying for the next round in Exeter.

Gym and Dance

On the 20th of October, 27 groups, solos and duet Dance pieces were auditioned for the 2012 Gym and Dance show. The evening was a great success, with many strong dances being entered and both boys and girls showing the hard work they had put in to create the dances. The competition was tough with many entries not making the final cut. However the list for the Dance entries is now displayed in PE, so congratulations to all who have made it through the show. Some of the dances are already highly anticipated. Those of you who were unlucky enough not to make it, don't be disheartened, the level of dance was extremely high and not all dances could be entered. Work hard and hopefully next year you can be a part of the show.

Gymnastics auditions will be taking place soon, so keep an eye and ear out for any further information.



Rugby

This years Rugby has been an excellent success with the teams really seeing the benefit of regular training on Wednesdays and playing fixtures on Tuesdays/Thursdays.

The Year 11 team carried on where they left off last year and remained unbeaten when they were forced to face a strong Isambard with a weakened team. There were some excellent performances throughout the season with the likes of Jack Watling, Alix Clifford, Josh Lewanituwa and Brandon Dawes performing well all season. I only hope that the majority of that team continues to play and enjoy Rugby outside of school.

Year 10 had some very convincing performances all season. Tom Fieldsend and Keiran Jones providing some excellent creativity, pace and power in the backs while Jack Swan and the pack excelled during periods of forward play. Having only lost once this season we are looking forward to the next campaign very much.

The Year 9 squad this year wins the PE department most improved Rugby team this year. Additions of Bradley and Connor Cook to the forwards added some extra power to this team. With Jordan Rye as captain leading from the front as hooker (and kicker!) ensuring all forwards were pushing in the right direction. George Baskerville gave his all to organise the backs and the development has been outstanding. We have a very promising team and one that will keep getting better every year if the commitment is the same as this year.

With Year 8 performing in their first full season of Rugby at school we are very impressed with the effort and commitment shown. Even better was the teams ability to apply what they have learnt in training and using it in competitive game situations. We have seen some great team and individual performances this year with Jonny Dowell, Johan Warensjo and James Clancy scoring some excellent tries. Also brilliant to see forward players like Bradleigh Vardy, Billy Harris and Jonny Hook emerging in the forwards as real competitors.

Although our Year 7s aren't involved in regular competitive fixtures we have been encouraging them all to attend training. The commitment and desire to play Rugby by the majority of these boys has been fantastic. They took part in a tournament against several other local schools and reached the final only to miss out narrowly to a strong opposition. If they continue the commitment to training and show that in fixtures next year we will have an excellent season for sure.

Primary Festivals

So far this year we have had primary festivals for cross country, a swimming gala, primary active day and dance. This enabled primary students from our feeder schools to come and enjoy our facilities and equipment at The Ridgeway School.

Through the festivals there has been some excellent sports leaders from Year 9 emerge. So far Nicole Hill, Harry Longmore, Jordan Rye, Laura Okkells, Megan Phillips, Angie Koppoe, Kieran Garraway, George Baskerville and Dan Thompson have all been brilliant examples of model students at The Ridgeway School during these events. There are plenty more throughout the year for those that have not had the opportunity so far.

Also the Community Sports Leaders in Year 12 have helped with the leading of festivals and they have been a fantastic help. The primary students have really enjoyed their presence. Again there are many more coming up after Christmas for

Basketball

It is early days in the basketball season with Years 8, 9 and 10 showing good commitment to both training and their fixtures.

Year 10s will be looking to improve on last year's cup run after missing out on a final when they were beaten in a close game with Churchfields. The Year 9 team is looking like a strong team this year with some of the players joining a local club to help develop their skills and experience of performing. The Year 8 team has been very committed and are beginning their fixtures now.

SSCO Update



The first two terms have been busy regarding our links to the Primary Schools. The Year 5s and 6s really enjoy the role and responsibility of playground leader which includes the running of games for lower age groups during lunch time. Within the first term I have trained Year 5 playground leaders at Chiseldon, Wanborough, Wroughton and East Witchel. In most cases these students are joining current Year 6 who are already doing an excellent job.

I have organised festivals to provide the students with a chance to visit The Ridgeway School and experience the facilities and perform competitively in some cases. The cross country festival was a really good start to the year with over forty students competing. The able swimmers gala followed which always provides a fantastic atmosphere within The Ridgeway School's swimming pool.

Then more recently we provided a primary active day where students who may not enjoy PE as much as others have an opportunity to attend The Ridgeway School and participate in alternative activities such as trampolining. This was a great success with all students leaving with smiles on their faces, even if they weren't particularly looking forward to two hours of PE!!

Also two of our Sixth Form leaders, Shannen Skittrall and Beth Hook produced a dance to teach our prospective primary students. It was a real hit at the creative festival. We are continuing to deliver this dance at other primary schools in the area so that we can include a primary dance in this year's Gym and Dance display.

The range and variety of festivals provided has allowed many different students to experience The Ridgeway School and what we have to offer which should help to give many of them a good start at the school in years to come.

Also within my role as School Sports Coordinator (SSCO), I have been able to develop strong links with local coaches in the area to come and deliver sessions to continue to develop our students ability to perform in a variety of sports. Every Friday afterschool we have our badminton coach working with students of all years and on Mondays we have an outside coach working with our very promising Key Stage 3 volleyball team who recently won the South-West Tournament. This has snowballed and the volleyball players now attend a club run by the same coach on a Tuesday night at school which invites players from all over Swindon of primary and secondary age.

Looking to the next couple of terms there are festivals in the diary for netball, hockey, tri-golf, The Gym and Dance Display which primary students will be involved in and I will also look to be going into primary schools in the local area to deliver some really enjoyable PE lessons for a variety of year groups.

Mr R Driver, Teacher of PE & SSCO

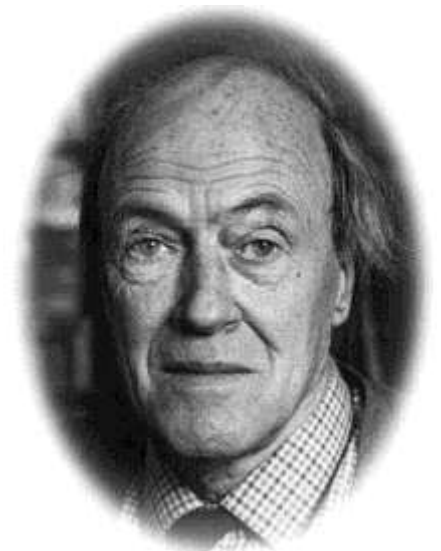
Top 10 Authors

Who's your favourite Author?

As part of their Enrichment Class, Year 8 students Lottie Saldanha and Jasmine Holland have conducted a survey amongst other Mentor Groups to find out. Who to pick? Where to start? Are your favourites amongst them?

The results are in:

1. Roald Dahl
2. J K Rowling
3. Jacqueline Wilson
4. Anthony Horowitz
5. Michael Morpurgo
6. Stephanie Meyer
7. C S Lewis
8. Cathy Cassidy
9. Robert Muchamore
10. Charles Dickens



Stop and Think - Words Can Hurt!!

The Ridgeway School hosted the seventh annual Anti-Bullying Celebration Event on the 18th November 2011. This comprised of songs, plays and poetry all aiming to provide a strong anti bullying message. The theme for 2011 was Stop and think – words can hurt . This issue was explored across the school during mentoring sessions and through some English lessons.

The celebration event was compared by Year 12 BTEC students and the CPA stars. The Swindon Mayor Ray Ballman was there to present certificates to the winners. Our congratulations go to Rashed Ali in Year 7 who was the overall winner of the Swindon wide event and to Marcus Raymond, also Year 7, who was runner up in the competition.

The school also received the good practice award for anti-bullying. This involves the school using a framework to evaluate their anti-bullying work against. The scheme is recognised by the Anti-Bullying Alliance.

Swindon Council's Chief Executive, Gavin Jones who chaired the judging panel for the anti-bullying competition said "our schools take anti-bullying extremely seriously and this is shown by the increasing number that are meeting the criteria in the anti-bullying scheme. It was a pleasure to see some of the work that is going on to tackle bullying and this year's anti-bullying competition was of a high standard".

Following the performances, a group of students were interviewed by BBC Wiltshire to explore their views on bullying. A big thank you to all those students who supported this event and to Mrs Hodge and Mrs Jankinson for their input into the anti-bullying performances.

I'll give you some advice,

Be nice, smile,

Make it last a while,

Don't be a bully,

You don't want to be bullied,

You don't want people calling you names

You don't want people hurting you in games.

So why be a bully?

You don't want to be forced to give lunch money,

You don't want to be tormented while they think it is funny, so why be a bully?



This poem was written by Rhiannon Spence in Year 8 and was one of the many thought provoking pieces produced by students during anti-bullying week. Mrs H Siebenaller



Creative & Performing Arts News

Steam Museum Exhibition - 'World of Art'



Key Stage 4 & 5 Art students were given the exciting opportunity to exhibit their work in the Steam Museum in Swindon as part of the World of Work Art Exhibition.

The exhibition was a collaboration of local schools, businesses and artists giving an opportunity to showcase a wide variety of art, poetry, songs and more from workers across Swindon and Wiltshire. The work looked stunning and it showcased the huge variety of talent we have at the school and the excellent work the students produce. The feedback from visitors and parents was brilliant stating how professional the work was and at a high level.

We are very proud of all the students involved in the exhibition!



Pitt Rivers Museum

Our Year 11 GCSE Art students went on a trip to the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford. The Museum displays archaeological and ethnographic objects from all parts of the world.

Their current coursework unit is on masks from around the world. They spent time taking various photographs and producing studies of the amazing mask collection housed at Pitt Rivers.

The student's behaviour was exemplary. A great day out for all involved.

Miss E Pickles



Kew Gardens

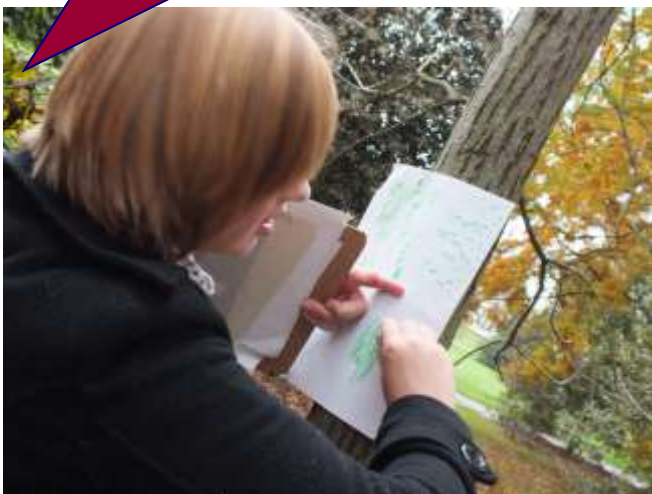


On Wednesday 9th November the Year 10 Art students went on a trip to Kew Gardens in London as part of their Natural Forms unit of coursework. Students spent the day walking around the beautiful gardens and greenhouses taking photos of the amazing variety of natural forms available to them. They also produced a range of observational drawings.

The student's behaviour was exemplary and it was a very successful visit.

Miss E Pickles

"It was fun. I got good photos and really enjoyed the tree top walk. I liked looking at the different vegetation."



"It was beautiful. I enjoyed the day and felt it was a great way to include photography and drawings within my Natural Forms project"



More Creative and Performing Arts



On Friday 11th November, The Creative and Performing Arts department took part in the concert of Remembrance with the Wroughton Silver Band. The concert was a really fun experience for all those who took part. It was great to see the Year 7 enrichment choir take part in their first performance with The Ridgeway School. The community audience enjoyed a selection of songs with the theme of remembrance including Let There Be Peace, Heal the World and songs from Miss Saigon performed by Emily Baker, Emily Comley and Dan Waldron from Year 12.

The concert raised £958.76 for Help the Heroes and The Poppy Appeal, £628.00 of which came from the school with ticket and programme sales and contributions for the coffee. Overall it was a great success and I hope to be part of next year. Alice Roberts



Auditions underway....



For me, auditioning for Oliver was so exciting because it gave me the opportunity to experience a real audition—something I hadn't done previously, but I really enjoyed!! In Key Stage 4 our audition consisted of learning a dance routine to the song '*Consider Yourself*' and performing a scene from the show in small groups to demonstrate our acting skills. Then the girls had to perform leading lady, Nancy's big song, '*As Long As He Needs Me*'. We each sang a few lines solo, which sounds scary but I felt the full

support of the other girls as we were all taking it in turns to sing. I would encourage anyone who felt a bit self-conscious about auditioning this year to push their nerves aside and audition next year because it is just such a great experience and it gave me a huge confidence boost - now I can't wait to be a part of the production! Olivia Tuck, Year 10.



Year 10 GCSE Art students have been working extremely hard on the Moat Art Mosaic project which has involved them working to a brief given by the local council with the theme of 'Wroughton today'. The project is part of a scheme to redevelop the Moat area in Wroughton.



As part of their GCSE coursework they have researched the theme of Wroughton today and in pairs have then designed an image that represents an element of the theme. With the help of Mosaic Designer David Bowers of Mosaic Madness they have then turned this design into a reality. The results are outstanding!!



The students have been extremely motivated throughout the project and have worked exceptionally well both on their own and in their paired groups.

Our senior leadership team and local council members attended the unveiling of the complete mosaic at the school. They were highly delighted with the creativity of the students and the final mosaic. Miss E Pickles



The Moat Art Mosaic Project

MFL News....



French Exchange to Bordeaux

25 Key Stage 4 and 5 students participated in yet another successful trip to Bordeaux in October. This year saw a new partnership with 2 different schools in Bordeaux: Collège Privé Lestonnac and Lycée Privé Sainte Marie Bastide. Our students stayed in French host families and enjoyed the opportunity to experience French life, culture and language at first hand. Day trips included a visit to St Emilion where students explored the old town and took part in wine tasting, a treasure hunt round Bordeaux, the ever popular afternoon at the fire station as well as a combined visit to Futuroscope. Our students also spent some time in the French schools.

On their return to Swindon, the French students were hosted by our own students and visited Oxford, Bath and Salisbury as well as enjoying a combined visit to London where they were privileged to have a guided tour of the Houses of Parliament. In addition the French learnt the rudiments of Cricket courtesy of Mr Hill and experienced a fabulous drama workshop run by Mrs Hodge. These were a real hit and have been requested next year!

The French Exchange is always a popular trip and students often return year after year. Look out for the dates for next year. It will be in October and some new activities are planned! If you would like to know any more about the exchange programme then please see Mrs Dixon or better still ask any of the students who went this year!

Year 7 Shipwrecked in France!!

On Wednesday 9th November a French play came to The Ridgeway School. Ridgeway Year 7s and students from our feeder schools, Wanborough and Bishopstone got involved in the hilarious play, 'Ship wrecked'. There was plenty of audience participation on and off stage and feedback was really positive from all those that watched it! Thanks for all your enthusiasm!

Mrs Deery, MFL Department



European Day of Languages



The European Day of Languages is celebrated on 26th September each year. On this day, people all over Europe celebrate and promote the linguistic and cultural diversity of Europe.

Did you know?

- There are between 6000 and 7000 languages in the world.
- There are about 225 languages in Europe.
- The range of languages spoken in the British Isles is among the most diverse in the world.
- 307 different languages are spoken by London school children alone!
- At least half of the world's population speak two or more languages.

How did we celebrate at The Ridgeway School this year?

- We sold tickets for a European Breakfast and we had a cake sale in the MFL foyer. Thanks to all parents and students who baked for us.
- The Language Team would like to thank the kitchen staff for providing the continental breakfast menu.
- **We raised a grand total of £71.30 for Macmillan Cancer Care.**
- The language teachers looked very trendy in their red and white T-shirts and red jackets with our "Languages Make the World Go Round" logo on the back!

Remember!

Learning languages helps to increase intercultural understanding and tolerance.

We must continue to celebrate the diversity of languages within our school, the local community and the wider world beyond.



Year 11 Geography Field Trip

On Thursday 17th November our Year 11 Geographers visited the Swindon Designer Outlet Village and surrounding area to investigate the redevelopment and regeneration of the area for their controlled assessment.



As part of this visit we were taken on a tour of the outlet village by members of the Rodbourne Community History Group. One of our tour guides had himself worked in the railway works for 39 years and was able to share many tales of life working there and to paint a vivid picture for students of how the area used to look.



The Geographers also carried out their own surveys of the area today, asking members of the public for their opinions on the redevelopment, completing environmental quality assessments and even finding time to pop into a few of the shops! We would like to thank our tour guides for making the visit so fascinating and enlightening! Mrs E Cave



First World War Trench Man Visit



On a cold early December day, Year 9 were given the opportunity to gain an insight into life in the trenches. They were taken through the reasons for signing up to fight, to the realities of daily trench life including rats, toilet buckets and setting the barbed wire for a trench in the pitch black of night.

The Trench Man showed the students a range of First World War weaponry, involving several students in trying on the helmets and braving an attack from a bayonet, gladiator style sword, and knuckle duster.

The visit was topped off by the students being able to watch an original First World War rifle being fired on the field. The noise was deafening demonstrated by a number of students jumping in surprise at the volume of the sound.

All students seemed to really enjoy themselves as did those staff members involved. We hope to welcome Steve Williams aka The Trench Man again next year. Miss V Stevens



Chocolate and your Dog at Christmas

Christmas time is upon us and we are all looking forward to the festivities including our pets. Many families will buy gifts for their pets and often treat them to a Christmas dinner however, it is vital that owners are aware of the darker side to this happy time of year.

Most dog owners are now aware that chocolate has the capacity to seriously harm or even kill our greedy, canine pals. Many vets experience calls from dog owners who are panic stricken because their pet has eaten a bar of chocolate by mistake or somebody has given their dog some chocolate without realising the potential consequences it could cause.

We are all guilty of indulging a little at Christmas but we must remember that chocolate is poisonous to our pets. Human chocolate contains theobromide which in high quantities is extremely poisonous to dogs. Initially, your dog will develop sudden abdominal pain and vomiting which in some cases can contain blood. The vomit in most cases will contain substantial amounts of chocolate, giving it a very characteristic smell. The dog may be restless, drooling and could have difficulty standing or walking. Increased thirst can also be quite common.

As the syndrome progresses, in more severely affected dogs, there is an increased rate of breathing, muscle tremors, or rigidity. Urine can contain blood and the colour of the gums may take on a bluish tone, this is known in the veterinary profession as "cyanosis". Eventually, the dog may develop convulsions and die. In the majority of cases, your dogs symptoms will occur within a few hours, but in some cases a delayed reaction can occur for as long as 24 hours post ingestion. When theobromide poisoning has occurred it can take as long as three days for the dog to recover completely or in high toxicity cases death is more likely.

It is a sad statistic but up to 50% of dogs will die if treatment is delayed until severe, persistent vomiting has developed. If seizures have developed, then an even higher proportion of dogs will die. Treated early enough, except for dogs that have consumed very large quantities of chocolate or cocoa powder, the outlook is generally quite good.

To avoid any unnecessary visit to the vets due to your pet devouring any chocolate ensure that any decorations are on the high branch of the Christmas tree or avoid them all together. Any chocolate presents need to be kept in cupboards and not left under the tree where they are a constant temptation for your dog.

Just remember if you discover your dog has eaten a quantity of chocolate, contact your veterinary surgery immediately. Quick veterinary treatment can save your dog's life.

If you have any questions relating to this article please do not hesitate to contact your local vet for help.

Lindsay Floyd, Head Nurse Client Care at Drove Veterinary Hospital



We wish all of our Clients and their pets a Happy & Healthy Christmas and New Year



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The New Year - 2012

The New Year

Wrapped in promise - gleaming bright
 The new unspoken year
 Tied tight with 'open later' knots
 Held fast - in hope and fear
 Good fortune or adversity
 Surprise - or mortal shock
 With sad and happy memories
 That 'rime' - life's 'tick and tock'

With "auld land syne" as midnight chimes
 "first footings" - friends embraced
 Through 'time warps' and in 'deja - vu'
 A pause - to say our grace
 Let there be strength - within ourselves
 To cope if time proves ill
 But seized with joy - those New Year gifts
 Which old desires - fulfill!

Term Dates 2012

Term 3	Tues 3rd Jan Weds 4th Jan - Fri 10th Feb Mon 13th Feb - Fri 17th Feb	Inset Day Term Time Half Term
Term 4	Mon 20th Feb - Fri 30th Mar Mon 2nd Apr - Fri 13th Apr	Term Time Easter Hol
Term 5	Mon 16th Apr Mon 7th May Tues 17th Apr - Fri 1st Jun Mon 4th Jun - Fri 8th Jun	Inset Day Bank Hol Term Time Half Term
Term 6	Mon 11th Jun - Weds 18th Jul Thurs 19th Jul - Fri 31st Aug	Term Time Summer Hol

*Merry Christmas
 and a Very Happy New Year From
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 & Sixth Form College*



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The weight of your head?

So have you ever thought that your head feels heavy today? Or your neck is stiff and following that golf ball is a problem? Let alone reversing the car?

Your head is the heaviest part of your body propped on top of your thin neck. In an ideal world we would have a military style posture all of the time, with the shoulders pulled back, chest out etc. However as Human beings we have developed activities for necessity or enjoyment....often with little consideration for our spines and particularly our heads. E.g. Driving, typing, you guessed it.. Golf! These activities bring the arms round the front of the body, rolling the shoulders in and the head drops forward...the whole weight of it carried by the neck musculature...that can easily become fatigued.

As a chiropractor it is about giving you the knowledge and understanding as to why these activities can become a problem, correcting the dysfunction in the spine and teaching you stretches and strategies that will minimise the impact of poor posture...may even improve your game...or your driving! So the weight of the head....In an adult its 11lbs or 5kg...if you want to get a feel for the weight of your head, go ten pin bowling and hold an 11lb ball out in front of you.

If Golf is a passion then it might be advisable to have your spine checked out and any potential problems highlighted.

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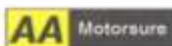
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