



Academy Status

During the last two terms the Governors and Senior Team have been discussing the implications for Whitecross of having Academy Status under the new Academies Bill published last year. This would give the school independence from the local authority and the freedom to provide a school experience which best meets the needs of our students. It would also give us the freedom to use our resources in the best way possible. We are not alone in pursuing this status: John Kyrle High School in Ross and Wigmore School have both been Academies since January. Many other High Schools in Hereford and many Primary Schools will also be Academies by September.

Practically, students and parents would see very little difference. There is no intention to change our name, the uniform or significantly alter school times or terms. Our aim "excellence for all, excellence from all" will still drive everything that we do. During this term we will be working on the changes in governance necessary to enable us to become an Academy on 1 September.

If you have any questions regarding Academy Status for Whitecross, please email academy@whitecross.hereford.sch.uk.

Extra Five Minutes

From September we are increasing Lesson One by five minutes to enable teachers to check that students are appropriately attired and equipped; ready to learn. We will still start at 8.45am, but the day will finish at 3.05pm Tuesday to Friday and at 2.35pm on Monday. We will also be increasing the length of break to twenty minutes and reducing lunchtime to thirty-five minutes.

Catering Manager, Alliance in Partnership

I arrive at the kitchen at about 8.15 am and the first thing I do is check the telephone for messages and turn on the computer. After this, no two days are the same. The mornings are busy. I check that deliveries have arrived, they are correct and of good quality. I meet with the kitchen team and ensure they all know what jobs need to be completed for the day. Some days I organise buffets for the school or a special menu promotion. The Alliance in Partnership Area Manager might be on site or I will visit one of the three feeder schools that the kitchen prepares food for on a daily basis.

Then of course we have a break service and a high school lunch to get ready and serve. Mondays can be very hectic with a lot of deliveries to see to and break and lunch to be served early. This makes every minute count to ensure that fresh hot food is available on the counter. After lunch there is always a mountain of washing up to get through and the kitchen to clean. Everyone takes turns to do extra cleaning jobs around the kitchen and the high standard we maintain has led to us receiving five stars in the last inspection from the local environmental health department.

During the afternoon I tackle paperwork and place orders for the next day. I may have meetings with the school who continually monitor the catering service. We also like to work with students to gain feedback on what they want from their canteen. You will also see me attend evening functions providing refreshments for staff and visitors with information on hand about the catering service that AIP provides. I enjoy working with the school and students and try to maintain a flexible approach as you never know what the day may bring.

Value Of The Month For June

Courage

Easter Camp 2011

On 14 and 15 April, 128 students and thirty members of staff gave up their time to come in to school for two days of extra fun and learning. All four academies were represented and those that attended showed real commitment to achieving their personal best.

The two days were not just about academic learning; the fun and games helped to build a sense of community among staff and pupils.

Mr E, Camp organiser, admitted to being nervous at the start of the event. "I needn't have worried" he later said, "the students and staff were all brilliant and made it easy for me. I couldn't have enjoyed it more and I'm already really looking forward to next year."

All students who attended are eligible to a £5.00 discount on Leavers Ball tickets and also received a complimentary T-shirt.

Acids and Alkalis

by L H, Year 7

Acids are sharp and sour in taste,
And some are a hazardous waste.
Alkalis turn the litmus blue,
Acids have a pH of about 2.
Both Acids and Alkalis can sometimes burn,
So this is of great concern.
Acids and Alkalis cancel each other out,
This is a fact there is no doubt.
They can both eat away metals
Once they are allowed to settle.
Alkalis have a soapy feel
This is true and also real.
The pH of Alkalis is eight to fourteen
This is the way it's always been.
Acids turn litmus paper red
So keep this fact inside your head.
This rhyme will help if you have a test
So you can do your very best!



A plea from the library

Are you planning a good sort out of books? Parents of Years 7 and 8 will have noticed that there is a lot of reading going on at Whitecross.



The Accelerated Reader programme means that every student should have a reading book at all times, and it's part of my job to make sure that we have a good variety of books available for all levels.

If you are planning to have a sort out of books at home, please consider passing them on to Whitecross. I promise that they will be put to good use and that any which we are not able to use will be passed on to a local Charity shop. Any books which your family have enjoyed and which are in good condition will be gratefully received, given a new lease of life, enjoyed by others, and swapped for full praise cards for students.

Mrs T, Librarian

New Appointments

We are pleased to announce the appointment of our new Head Boy and Head Girl. Congratulations go to them and their deputies.

The candidates were interviewed by Mrs S, Mr K, and the outgoing Head Girl and Deputy Head Boy. Following the selection Mrs S said "We had the toughest decision ever to select candidates because they were all so good. I am confident they are going to be an outstanding team."

Sports Captains have been also named along with their deputies.

Prefects have been appointed in all academies.

Our congratulations go to all those selected.

Leavers Ball - Friday 8 July 2011

Tickets now available from Student Services
£25.00 per person (includes Champagne Reception, buffet and transport to secret venue.)

Year 7 Stay Awake for Heroes

On Friday, 20 May, one hundred students in Years Seven and Ten held a charity Stay Awake in aid of Help for Heroes. The evening was jam-packed with music and games and some very tired young people. Activities included trampolining, bouncy castles, orienteering, dodge ball, karaoke, a disco and late-night films and games.

The evening opened with a welcome from A T, local Help for Heroes representative, who passed on thanks from the charity, 'We welcome all contributions to help our servicemen and women, and are very happy to see young people showing their support.'

The event was organised primarily for Year Seven students. However, the Year Tens, who remember their own Stay Awake fondly, queued up to help, and the evening could not have run without them. Not only did they lead groups of students through activities, prepare meals and snacks, and clean up the work areas, they ensured that their younger school mates were safe and entertained throughout the evening. For some Year Tens, this involved spending several hours out on the dark school field for the orienteering course. For others, it involved being taste-testers for some alarmingly creative omelettes in the 'Ready, Steady, Cook' activity, or getting covered in whipped cream after the final games. Even though it was all business for them, they clearly enjoyed themselves and led the way in the dancing at two o'clock in the morning. There were many sleepy faces on Saturday morning, but all were happy and (generally) fit after the night's endeavours!

We owe great thanks to many people for helping us out by providing supplies or lending us time. In school, we are grateful to Integral staff for allowing us to use the site and ensuring that we had caretaking support from E G and K R. The team in the kitchen, led by D W, were

marvellous in securing the gift of supplies from Alliance in Partnership and in letting us commandeer the kitchen. We hope we did not leave it in too great a state! The good people at Redbridge were very generous with their donation of fruit, and crisps and snacks from the Coop were more than just welcome; they were lifesavers. Donations from parents and staff were too numerous to mention here - thank you!!

R C and his team from Richard React Trampoline Club were on hand to help out, and the bouncy castles were donated by 'Bouncy Business'. Their generosity was gratefully received.

Several parents gave generously of their time. We would like to thank Mrs H and Mrs H for helping Mrs T and the Year Ten team with the techni-colour pancakes we enjoyed at breakfast, and especially Mrs D for staying with us for the whole night as well as organising food donations. Mrs D, we cannot thank you enough.

The all-night staff team consisted of Miss L, Mr K, Miss G and Mrs B. Miss V, Mrs W, Miss H, Miss B, Mr L, Miss F, Mr D and Mrs T also loaned their time and help and were very welcome, especially those who arrived in the wee hours of the morning. Mr M and Mr B loaned technical support and without them the disco, films and karaoke would have been disastrous. (We pass no comments on Mr B's playlist!!) The staff in reception were their usual patient selves in dealing with pleas of help with photocopying and printing letters and leaflets, and now in collecting sponsorship.

The biggest cheer goes to the students, of course, who made the evening a rousing success and a real pleasure for all those involved. They were lively and lovely, and made us very proud.

The sponsorship money for Help for Heroes is pouring in, and currently stands at over £600. We ask that money be passed into Main Reception straight away so that we can send our gift as soon as possible. We are grateful to our armed forces for their service, and wish to offer them our thanks as best we can.



Alliance In Partnership

Forthcoming events include fifth Year Celebration of the new school on 7 June, Midsummer Mayhem on 21 June including BBQ Ribs and Fresh Fruit Flan and American Independence Day on 4 July including Chicken Maryland and Chocolate Brownies.

India in Whitecross!

Friday 13 May was a day of celebrating our partnership with India and The Heritage School. Teachers planned lessons with an Indian theme, the caterers provided an Indian feel to the lunch menu and a number of female staff took advantage of the day to dress in saris.

In the Compliant Materials department Year 10 students were treated to a demonstration of Indian cookery by Mrs J, while Year 7 students had the opportunity to try their hands at traditional block printing and weaving. Meanwhile in the Resistant Materials department Key Stage 3 students talked about Divali (the festival of light) and made Indian themed lights.

Students were asked to use their empathy skills to explore the experience of Indian troops in the First World War in the History department, while Geography students spent their lessons comparing life in the UK to experiences of people living in the Dharavi Slums of Mumbai. The slums of Mumbai also featured in lessons in the English department with students looking at poems and analysing an article about 'Slumdog Millionaire'.

Other lessons included sprinklings of Hindi with some students doing arithmetic in Hindi. Language lessons incorporated Hindi greetings and an account of one student's experience in India this year in Spanish for GCSE students to translate. Science students learnt about Indian scientists and some of their contributions to our understanding of life and the world around us.

Bollywood dancing, Indian myths, rangoli patterns and bhangra music all featured in the Creative arts department, while yoga warm-ups, cricket and Kabadi, a team combat game kept India in students' mind in their PE lessons. Rongoli patterns were also used in the Maths department with students looking at symmetry.

Indian music, varying from traditional to current Indian chart favourites, could be heard throughout the day in various classrooms. A general quiz about India found students scratching their heads at form time, with all forms being 'stumped' by the fact that hockey, not cricket, is the official sport of India! Photographs of the day have been shared with Heritage school and students here have been wondering what Heritage school would do if they were to have a Britain day!

Stonemason's Tale Catapult built on Tuesday 3 May 2011

Thirty Year 8's spent the day in the sun building and then firing two types of catapult. The catapults built were an Onager (a Roman siege weapon) and a medieval Trebuchet.

The students built the catapults from scratch, with limited instruction, and then devised a scientific investigation to see which was the more efficient machine. A great day was had by all and we're now all looking forward to the Stonemason's procession on 30 June.

Dates for your Diary

June

Monday 6	Start Of Term
Thursday 9	Year 10 Parents Evening
Thursday 30	Year 6 Induction Day

July

Thursday 7	Year 7 Parents Evening
Friday 8	Year 11 Leavers Ball
Thursday 21	Achievement Evening
Friday 22	End Of Term