

# Newsletter

## December 2012

# Whitecross Hereford

### Message From The Headteacher

As we approach the end of term it's good to reflect on our achievements. The quality of learning in the classroom is going from strength to strength and students are really benefitting from the increased focus on providing feedback in order to enable them to succeed. The opportunities for extra curricular activities are fantastic with students involved in clubs and experiences across the school.

There have been exciting trips to The Clothes Show, canoeing, paintballing and students have taken part in the Faraday challenge at Haberdashers' Monmouth School for Girls and the Last Choir Standing at the Courtyard. We've welcomed visitors to Whitecross including our Year 7 Grandparents and Parents, our friends from the Heritage School in Kolkata, Paralympian Mel Clarke and Mr Clive Richards OBE DL, a truly great supporter of the school who opened our new Inclusion Centre this month.

We've celebrated success too with our Certificate evening for students who left us in the summer with excellent GCSE results and a praise lunch for students who are busy collecting praise points in everything they do at school. To help our students succeed, we've launched lunchtime and after school homework clubs which are already proving very popular. Success is something that our students achieve daily, and when they choose to support a charity, they do so in style.

This term saw an amazing 65 beautifully wrapped gift boxes delivered for Operation Christmas Child and a superb, action packed performance of Gangnam Style when students (and Pudsey) brought the house down and raised over £250 for Children In Need!

Our values for the autumn term have been respect, love, freedom and empathy and we've reflected on what these mean in our everyday lives.

Thank you so much for your support, we appreciate your help in getting the little things right: the right uniform, the right kit, good attendance and the right attitude make it so much easier for us to focus on their learning.

Wishing you all a very happy and peaceful Christmas.

With best wishes,

**D S**, Headteacher

### Visiting India

After a brilliant visit from the Heritage School to Whitecross in November, twelve students and three staff are getting ready to go to India in January as the next part of our exchange programme. We'll keep you posted about what we get up to with our blog and through twitter.

Value Of The Month For December

# Empathy

**Merry Christmas to all our students and their families. Have a great time and we look forward to seeing you again in the New Year on Monday 7 January.**

## Japanese Visitors



On Thursday 21 March we will be welcoming thirty nine students from the Chienkhan Junior and Senior High School in Japan. They will spend time in school as well as undertaking various off site visits. This will be the fourth occasion we have hosted students from Japan and it is a fantastic experience for them and for our students. They will leave on Tuesday 2 April which is during our Easter Holiday. The visit is organised by a Not for Profit Organisation called 'Cultural Homestay in Europe' and they are looking for host families to accommodate one or more of the students during their stay. If you are interested in hosting please contact Tricia Sanford on 01568 797235, she is the local organiser for the placements and can also explain the payments that are made to host families. **D S**

## Attendance Updates

### What to do if your child is ill

In the unfortunate event that your child is too unwell to come to school please contact the school on 01432 376080 and select option 1 to leave a message giving their name and details of the illness. It is necessary to do this each day your child is off unless you are able to give a definite date by which your child will return.

### Holidays

As from December 2012 there is a change in our attendance policy.

To keep in line with government policy and our neighbouring schools, we will no longer be authorising holidays in term time. If a student is taken out of school during term time they will automatically be referred to the Education Department. This will result in the parent or guardian receiving a fixed penalty fine of not less than £60 per child per parent and no more than £120 per child and parent.

Exceptional circumstances will be considered.

## Year 11 Mock Interviews



As part of our careers programme, Year 11 have just taken part in mock interviews with employers and trainers from across the county.

It was amazing to see Year 11 coming to school in their smartest outfits, dressed ready for business. They looked the part and our guest interviewers said they were the best group of students they had ever had the pleasure of speaking to. They were confident, polite, articulate and knowledgeable about what they wanted to do in the future.

Well done Year 11 and good luck with the real thing next year!

**Mr K**

## Medal Winner Visits Whitecross



Paralympian Mel Clarke has been in school to share her experiences with students. Mel was World Champion archer in 2005, won a bronze medal in Beijing in 2008 and went one better to win a silver medal in London earlier in the year. She came to the school as part of the Sky Sports 'Living For Sport' scheme and spent a day and a half with students. The scheme aims to use sport and PE as a vehicle for instilling behaviour values by boosting confidence, increasing attainment and improving life skills.

All the students involved gained a great deal from spending their time with Mel and have developed skills that they can take with them during their academic and future careers.

## Telephoning Whitecross

We have been experiencing some problems with the school telephone systems. We apologise if you have been trying to contact us and have been sent text messages or emails following a message being left on the system which we seem to be unable to retrieve intermittently.

We have been assured that this problem has now been rectified and thank you for your patience while it was being fixed.



## Pudsey Does It Gangnam Style

Pudsey Bear made a special appearance at Whitecross today and gave an outstanding performance dancing Gangnam Style. He was ably assisted by two students who opened the show until the dancing bear made his surprise entrance. Students paid to see the show during lunch break and a total of £251.56 was raised for Children In Need. A massive thank you to Luke Quinlan, Lucas Kirby and Joshua Jones for a fantastic show.



## Norovirus Information

Help stop the spread of the winter vomiting bug.

- Wash your hands frequently using warm water and a liquid soap.
- When you have washed your hands dry them thoroughly with a paper towel.
- Wash your hands before and after touching your mouth, and coughing or sneezing into your hands.
- Discard or flush away vomit and/or stool and wash hands.
- Make sure the toilet, taps, door and flush handles are kept clean.
- Cover vomit immediately to prevent the spread of the virus.
- If you show signs of the virus please stay off school until you have been free from all symptoms for 48 hours.

## Inclusion Centre Opening

Clive Richards OBE DL officially opened the new Inclusion Centre at Whitecross on the 10 December. The opening was part of a county event celebrating the completion of the School Based Intervention Project in Herefordshire. The day was attended by representatives from schools and other agencies from all over the county and was a great opportunity to celebrate and share best practice in schools.

## Cycling Safely

We have had a number of worrying incidents recently involving Whitecross students cycling to school which is more dangerous when the light is poor and conditions are icy. I am extremely worried that the only way we're going to convince them to ride safely wearing a helmet is if we have a tragedy and I would dearly love to avoid that, as I'm sure you would too. Please can I urge you to ensure your child has and wears an appropriate helmet and knows the safest route to school and how to ride it safely. We will be working closely with the police and Local Authority to persuade our students to keep themselves safe on the roads.

DS



## Cashless Catering

The cashless catering system has been working really well as students can add money on to their account at any time and see their balance instantly using the machines in the bays. Can we please remind parents and guardians that Alliance in Partnership are not able to provide any food or refreshments if a student does not have sufficient funds on their account to cover their purchase. You can send money in with your child daily, or alternatively you can pay by cheque avoiding having to find spare change each morning. Please note cheques should be made payable to "Alliance in Partnership" and should be of a minimum value of £10.00. Your child can spend a maximum of £5.00 per day, however you can ask for this to be set at a different amount if you wish.

**Mrs D W**, Catering Manager

If you are eligible to claim free school meals, your child will use the cashless vending in exactly the same way as everyone else. The only difference is that the money is automatically credited to your child's account.

## Diary Dates

**Wednesday 19 December 2012 6.30pm**

Carol Concert at Holy Trinity Church

**Friday 21 December 2012 12.30pm**

School finishes for the Christmas Holiday

**Monday 7 January 2013 8.45am**

Spring Term commences at Whitecross

**Thursday 10 January 2013 4.00pm**

Year 11 Parents Evening

**Monday 28 January 2013**

Year 11 Photographs