

Newsletter

July 2012



Whitecross
Hereford



What An Amazing Time!

It's been a busy time since our last news letter.

Jubilee celebrations, the Olympic torch relay, the Hay Festival, trips, visits, and sporting success. It's made for a memorable time and was topped off by having an Olympic Torch bearer and his torch with us for sports day.

Further details and photographs of these events can be seen in the news section of our website.

We hope that you all have a wonderful summer and look forward to seeing you again refreshed and ready to learn on Wednesday 5 September.



Value Of The Month For July

Forgiveness

Praise For The Prefects

The 2012-13 team of Whitecross prefects, elected last month, has started its year impressively. Following a memorable inaugural cream tea, complete with the ceremonial presentation of badge, polo-shirt and tie, they have been formally introduced to their respective academies in assemblies and will be initiated into their duties before the end of term. Each prefect had to meet strict criteria regarding effort, attendance and reliability and had to demonstrate a commitment to contributing to the school community. We were looking for students who embody the school values and can be role models for the younger students as well as being our representatives in the local community. We are proud to say that our new team is all of these things, and we are looking forward to seeing them flourish and shape their environment.

Every prefect had to undergo a formal application process, submitting an application form and attending an interview with their Learning Manager. We also had a healthy proportion of applications for the senior prefect team, resulting in a gruelling series of interviews, during which candidates had to do a presentation and answer questions to a panel of interviewers. The panel, which included last year's senior team as well as Mrs L and, of course, Mrs S, had a hard job deciding, and were extremely impressed with both the standard of the presentations and the ideas and maturity of the candidates. The quality of this handful of applicants is an indicator of the quality of the prefect body as a whole this year.

As well as performing their academy duties during form time and at break and lunch, every prefect is, for the first time this year, expected to join at least one Development Project Team. These are designed to give the prefects a real experience of leadership, creativity and

communication skills and range from the School Tours team and the India Exchange team to the Primary School Fete team and the Learning Research team. The first prefects have already charmed visitors on school tours and by helping with catering during school events. Some of the Learning Research team are attending a teachers' professional development workshop in Bristol in order to develop their skills for analysis of learning.

It seems like no time since we were introducing our 2011-12 prefect team and we know this year will pass just as quickly. The current Year 9s should be thinking about what they need to do to achieve a place on next year's team, in order to avoid disappointment. It is not too early for Year 8s and even Year 7s to be asking themselves how they want their future at Whitecross to look.



Leavers' Ball

Even a day of torrential rain couldn't dampen the spirits of our Year 11 students as they arrived at Whitecross for their Leavers' Ball. Dressed in their finest they enjoyed a drinks reception at the school before being transported to the Chase Hotel in Ross-On-Wye for a memorable evening of dining and dancing.



India Exchange

Whitecross has a proud history of a partnership with The Heritage School in Kolkata, India. We are the only school in the UK which has a link like this and we've visited each other's schools and cities three times. We have built many lasting friendships and several Whitecross students are still in regular contact with their Indian families.

The next exchange visits will be happening soon: students and staff from The Heritage School will be visiting us in October 2012 and we will be visiting them in Kolkata in January 2013. The exchanges will be a fantastic opportunity to learn from people from another country and culture. They truly are life-changing experiences and students learn huge amount, both academically and about themselves. We are looking for host families and for students who would like to visit India. So if you want to challenge yourself, learn about another culture, experience life in another country and if you are ready for the most exciting time of your life, see Mrs L. Namaste!

Carnegie Day

On 13 June, C D, K T, T H, J M, T O, E B, J R and E G accompanied by Miss W and Mrs T, attended the annual Herefordshire Carnegie Debate at the Town Hall. The day is organised by the Schools Library Service and teams from Herefordshire's High Schools meet to talk about the books on the Carnegie short list, coming up with Herefordshire's nomination for the winning writer.

The day consisted of team quizzes and discussions, where our team got to know the students from the other schools and met up with some old friends. Each school presented one

book which they had been asked to concentrate on, using drama, poetry, raps, news report scenarios and some very detailed reviews to interpret the themes. After lunch we were woken up and entertained by the poet Craig Bradley who got everyone involved with his enthusiasm for poems and word games.

This year Whitecross presented 'Between Shades of Gray' by Ruta Sepetys, about a family split up and deported to Siberia in 1941. The team, who have been reading all the books on the short list, dressed as characters from the book and acted out extracts to illustrate our review.

J's team won the quiz prize, and Ruta Sepetys was eventually chosen as the Herefordshire winning author, although the national winner was Patrick Ness with his book 'A Monster Calls'. We all enjoyed taking part in a project which involves so many other schools, and we look forward to finding out which books form the short list next year.

If you are interested in reading the short listed books (they aren't just for teenagers), look for the titles at www.carnegiegreenaway.org.uk, alternatively we have all the books in the school library.

Mrs T



Saved For A Rainy Day

The 6 July saw our second exciting cross-curricular day this term. Cross-Curricular Dimensions Days allow us the opportunity to organise large enrichment events for our students without impacting upon curriculum time. Despite the incessant rain, an enjoyable and educational day was had by all. Crossing the school, you would have seen our Year 7s absorbed in a series of team challenges (located under various sheltered parts of the yard!), which required them to listen carefully to instructions and communicate effectively with each other. There were plenty of ropes, planks and barrels and the kind of noise that only Year 7s trying to cooperate with and encourage each other can make!

Most of the Year 8s were in the English department creating adverts using Movie Maker and applying their persuasive language skills. You would have been impressed with the standard of the outcomes achieved in such a short space of time. The remaining Year 8s were in the Drama Studio and surrounding corridors happily applying their language skills to create sketches for performance. You would have laughed heartily at some of the humour that they managed to inject with limited vocabulary – a sure sign of linguistic flair.

Throughout the school you would have encountered industrious Year 9s, busy finalising their ASDAN CoPE portfolios for submission. They have been involved in achieving this nationally recognised qualification since the start of their time at Whitecross and they would tell you tales of the housework and gardening they had to do, and the drugs presentations they did in Year 8. If you had ventured out onto the field or taken shelter in the Sports Hall, you would have come across some more Year 9s, who have opted for PE next year. They were busy being inducted into the GCSE course, including



the essential theory part. Some adventurous Year 9s spent the day exploring the local geography or canoeing on Bodenham Lake. Needless to say, both these groups got very wet!

Finally, a group of oily-handed Year 10s were messing around with an engine, spanners and nuts and bolts while another group heard about how to manage the financial side of student life including other aspects of college life. All our Year 10s had a series of taster or information sessions aimed at enriching their understanding of the world of careers and study.

Hidden away in the Resistant Materials corridor a team of students from across Key Stage 3 were hard at work on a project initiated with the Heatherwick Studio and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. This unique project involves working in the world of design. You would have been amazed at the students' prototypes for new bridges to span the Wye, chairs that only worked when two people sat in them, bags with more than one use and other weird and wonderful design challenges.

Mrs L



Serious About Skirts

We are proud of the way our students look, even at this late stage in the academic year and are grateful to parents for supporting our attention to detail. We know that this comes at a cost to you, both financially and in terms of the energy needed to check students are keeping to high standards. As the end of the year approaches, we are identifying a list of students, who know they have to improve an aspect of their appearance in time for September. We anticipate that many parents will be refreshing school uniform items over the holiday and would ask that you to do this in good time, rather than leave it until the end of August. In particular, there are a number of girls wearing skirts, which are too short (ie they don't hang below the finger-tips) or too clingy (ie they show the shape of the leg rather than the shape of the skirt). The official school skirt is the "Black Beau Brummel Skirt". Unfortunately not all school skirts sold as such in the shops meet our Whitecross expectations. Tutors will be having a conversation with each of these students and will be expecting to see the improvement upon their return in September. Thank you once again for your support in this.

Mrs L

Ready, Steady Cook

Students from each year group recently took part in the annual Ready Steady Cook competition to see which academy contains the top chefs at Whitecross. This year's competition had an extra challenge of an Olympic theme and all students rose to this challenge.

Year 7 students were asked to make an Olympic cream tea. Most of the samples were excellent and many really thought about the theme as they decorated the scones with Olympic logos, Union Jacks and even red and

blue(ish) jam and cream. Many students also brought in china and other food items to help with the display, in fact K N even painted her own cups with Olympic logos. E H won the top prize for a batch of excellent scones, presented beautifully and filled with homemade strawberry jam.

Year 8 students made 2 dishes suitable to be included in a picnic which could be taken to watch a named event at the Olympics. M H received the most points for her excellent cooking but C M was noted for really getting into the spirit and bringing a picnic basket to help his display.

In Year 9 the students had to make a novelty cake for a named Olympian and this was a closely fought contest with only 1 point between the top two cakes. The entries included racing track cakes, cakes in the shape of medals and even a cake with a horse made from icing on the top. M F was a worthy champion with her water slalom cake.

The Year 10 students were required to make a meal for an Olympian. The judges had lots of quality dishes to taste. L K received a special mention for discovering that Jessica Ennis eats lettuce, cucumber, brown bread and chocolate fingers and used these foods to make a model of the Olympic running track. The winner was L H for a very stylish fruit based pudding based on the Olympic rings. The overall winners from each year won a personalised apron.

The final scores were:-

1st Moyle	11,250 points
2nd Hagloe	9,710 points
3rd Bromley	7,560 points
4th Styre	7,120 points

So after a run of several years of Hagloe retaining the Ready Steady Cook plate it will now pass downstairs to Moyle. Congratulations to all who took part.

Miss W, Mrs S, Mrs M

Junior Boys Athletics

The Year 8 athletics team travelled to Worcester without their captain W G (injured), to compete in the English Schools Athletics Junior Boys competition. It's the first time Whitecross entered this competition and we faced the prestigious schools of RGS Worcester and Malvern College, as well as the traditionally strong athletics schools of the Chase and Nunnery Wood. Our boys were an absolute credit in the baking heat of Worcester.

Outstanding performances from J B (winning the 100m in 12.5secs), D M (Year 7 competing a year early and winning the 200 meters), J G (winning the Javelin) and the relay team of L B, R C, K P and D M smashing the 4 x 100m relay, leaving the other schools trailing behind and impressing Mr W along the way with fantastic change overs! E D, stand-in captain said "I am extremely proud of the team. We showed a great team spirit and really enjoyed the experience". Unfortunately Whitecross didn't progress to the next round even though the individual performances were impressive, we didn't score enough points as a team.



In the Hereford and Worcester Schools athletics competition, W G (400m) and J B (100m) came second in their events, also being part of the winning relay team. Well done to both of you.

Girls Athletics

Well done to the 6 students who were selected to represent Hereford in the Hereford and Worcester Athletic Championships. All students were a real credit to the school with E H winning the discus and J A and P W coming 2nd and 3rd respectively in the 1500m. C C set a new competitive PB in the Hurdles along with L F in the 200m. E B had a strong heat in the 100m with a very competitive final. As a result of her good work in the final, E then went on to represent the school in the winning relay team. Well done to all girls who took part in the final and the rounds before.

Year 8 Cricket

The year 8 cricket team are due to face Bishops in the final of the U13 cricket cup. This season has been great so far for the team under the leadership and guidance of captain T W. They have beaten Cathedral, Tenbury and John Kyrle on the way to the final.

Multi Skills Festival

On Monday 25 and Tuesday 26 June, over 250 Year 1 and 2 pupils from Trinity, Burghill, Stretton Sugwas and Holmer arrived at Whitecross to take part in a variety of fun games to improve their agility, balance and co-ordination. Each event was led by our Year 7 students who were excellent in teaching and encouraging the pupils to succeed. Mr B's Year 10 BTEC group also helped to lead some of the activities as part of their course.

Year 8 Football

Building on the success of last year winning the Herefordshire treble (League, Five a Side and Eleven a side tournament winners), the Whitecross Year 8 football team progressed to the final 32 in the English Schools FA cup and won the Herefordshire League for the second year running. The progression that the year group have shown this year has been really encouraging. There is still lots to work on both as a team and as individuals, but they have achieved fantastic success and we look forward to them moving to the next level.

Player of the Season - K P

K led by example as the captain, providing the team with not only some outstanding goals but important support play.

Most Improved Players – B R and K D

B has worked so hard this year to get himself into the first team and through hard work and determination is developing into a competent and comfortable defender. K has taken on board everything that has been said to him, making huge strides in improving his fitness levels without losing his physical presence.

I cannot stress how competitive the two football squads are at Whitecross. Training has even continued throughout the summer term so that we can be ready for the Year 9 ESFA Cup which starts in September.

Mr W

Thank You!

The PE department would like to say a big thank you to all students for all your hard work and commitment in PE this year. It has been a successful year all round by many year groups both boys and girls. Well done and we are looking forward to next year already!!

Primary Festivals

On a lovely sunny day, 80 Year 5/6 students from our feeder Primary Schools attended our Olympics Festival to take part in a range of athletics events. Each event was led by our Year 8 and 9 Sports Leaders, who did a superb job in explaining, demonstrating and encouraging the younger pupils. Every pupil left with a smile on their face, having given their personal best throughout the afternoon.



Herefordshire School Games

On Wednesday 4th July, 95 of our students took part in the Herefordshire School Games; a huge event to celebrate the culmination of our sporting year. The activities started with an Opening Ceremony that involved a procession with banners and torch bearers from each school, a performance by our cheerleading squad and a speech by Mrs S before students were transported to various venues to compete in their sports. Overall, students enjoyed their activities, ranging from Top Sportability and Wheelchair Basketball to tennis and rounders.

BTEC Public Services

Following on from a chilly canoe trip on the Wye earlier in the year the students on the BTEC Public Services course visited Oakerwood for some more team building exercises. Over the course of two days they got to tackle climbing and abseiling, shot rifles, pistols and crossbows. They shot each other while paint-balling and helped each other over swamps and walls on the ropes course.

Everyone had an enjoyable time and learnt a great deal about themselves and working together.



Induction Day



On 28 June we welcomed our new students to the school. They spent the day getting to know the site and the people they would be sharing their days with come the new term in September.

During their time at Whitecross the Year 6 students got to meet the members of their form, had a guided tour from the prefects, and sampled some lessons such as PE and drama.

The day was a great success and we're sure that all the students will be a little less nervous about coming to join us in September. We look forward to meeting them all again for the start of the new academic year.

India Project



Year 8 students spent 17 July creating a slum similar to those in modern cities in India. Students had to build shelters with money they had borrowed from the bank. They had limited resources and had to work together to survive. To pay off the debt, students had to go to work in a variety of low paid jobs. They drove rickshaws, washed clothes, sorted rubbish and worked in a paper bag factory.

Throughout the day a series of challenges had to be overcome. The students then reflected on the experience and wrote postcards to those living in slums explaining what they thought.

The project is part of our exchange programme with the Heritage School in Calcutta. Since 2008, Whitecross has been sending staff and students across the globe to learn what it is like to live in modern India.