

# KEY DATES FOR THE ASHCOMBE SCHOOL YEAR 2006-2007

## AUTUMN TERM 2006

Monday 4 September .....Staff Training Day  
 Tuesday 5 September .....TERM STARTS FOR PUPILS  
 Thursday 14 September .....Upper 6th Parents' Evening  
 Saturday 16 September .....Y11 to Alton Towers  
 Monday 18 September .....Y7 Reading/Spelling tests begin  
 Tuesday 19 September .....Games Day & PTA Careers Fair  
 Thursday 22 September .....PTA AGM + Educ. Evening  
 "Sensitive Issues" 7.30pm  
 Friday 22 September .....Y11 progress reviews to parents  
 Tuesday 26 September .....European Day of Languages  
 Thursday 28 September .....11X - Parents' Evening  
 Friday 29 September .....Sponsored Walk PTA AGM & Quiz  
 Monday 2 October .....Photo Day  
 Tuesday 3 October .....11Y - Parents' Evening  
 Thursday 5 October .....6th Form assessments begin until 11th  
 Friday 6 October .....Silver/Gold Duke of Edinburgh  
 Tuesday 10 October .....U6 Geography Slapton until 14th  
 Thursday 12 October .....Staff Training Day & Open Evening  
 Friday 13 October .....Staff Training Day  
 Saturday 14 October .....30th Anniversary Reunion  
 Tuesday 17 October .....Into the Sixth Form for Y11  
 Wednesday 18 October.....Y7 Parents Evening

## Saturday 21st October - Sunday 29th October: HALF TERM

Wednesday 1 November .....6pm Y7 Parents'/Tutors' Evening  
 Monday 6 November .....GCSE Food Practicals begin until 10th  
 Tuesday 7 November .....School Production 7.30pm  
 Wednesday 8 November.....School Production 7.30pm  
 Friday 10 November .....School Production 7.30pm  
 Saturday 11 November .....School Production 7.30pm  
 Monday 13 November .....Y9 Assessments begin until 17th  
 Wednesday 15 November.....Upper 6th mock interviews  
 Thursday 16 November .....10X Parents' Evening  
 Friday 17 November .....6th Form progress reviews to parents  
 Tuesday 21 November.....10Y Parents' Evening  
 Wednesday 22 November Y10 Mod Science. Y11 Mod Science.  
 Gym & Dance Evening  
 7.30 "Stop It Now"  
 Thursday 23 November .....German Exchange here until 2nd Dec  
 Tuesday 28 November .....Xmas Bazaars (W & Y)  
 L6 & targeted U6 Parents Evening  
 Wednesday 29 November Xmas Bazaars (S & T)  
 Y11 Exams until End of Term  
 (+ Study Leave  
 Monday 4 December.....Christmas Service St Paul's 7.30pm  
 Y7 Assessments begin until 8th  
 RS Week begins  
 Tuesday 5 December.....6th Form Certificate + Awards Evening  
 Wednesday 14 December.....6th Form Certificate + Awards Evening  
 Friday 15 December .....TERM ENDS 1pm

## SPRING TERM 2006

Wednesday 3 January .....SPRING TERM STARTS  
 Thursday 4 January.....Y9 progress reviews to parents  
 Friday 5 January .....Return of 6th Form preference forms  
 Monday 8 January.....Y8 Assessments begin until 12th  
 Tuesday 9 January .....German Exchange there until 17th  
 Tuesday 16 January .....Y11 Certificate Evening  
 Thursday 18 January .....Y9 Upper School Introduction 6.45pm  
 French Exchange here until 27th  
 Friday 19 January .....Y10 progress reviews to parents  
 Tuesday 23 January.....Y7 progress reviews to parents  
 Thursday 25 January .....GCSE Geog Mod. 9V Parents Evening  
 Monday 29 January.....Y11 Reports to Parents.  
 6th Form assessment begins  
 Tuesday 30 January.....9W Parents Evening  
 Friday 2 February .....Spanish Exchange there until 9th

Monday 5 February .....Y11 & 1 year L6th Work Experience  
 until 9th  
 Wednesday 7 February .....Y10 Battlefields Trip (until 10th)  
 Thursday 8 February.....Y8 progress reviews to parents

## Saturday 10th February - Sunday 18th February: HALF TERM

Monday 19 February.....Charities Week  
 Wednesday 21 February .....China Day  
 Saturday 24 February .....24th PTA Dance  
 Tuesday 27 February.....Y10 exams begin  
 Monday 5 March .....Spanish Exchange here until 13th  
 Tuesday 6 March .....AS Biology Coursework  
 Wednesday 7 March .....Some Y11 Mod Science  
 Thursday 8 March .....Y10 Maths Mod 1  
 Monday 12 March .....GCSE Music Practical. Y10 Mod Sc.  
 Thursday 15 March .....8X Parents Evening  
 Friday 16 March .....French Exchange there until 24th  
 Monday 19 March .....Y7 Assessments begin until 23rd  
 Tuesday 20 March .....8Y Parents Evening  
 Friday 23 March .....Silver/Gold DoE until 25th  
 Tuesday 27 March .....6th Form reports to parents  
 Thursday 29 March .....Targetted 6th Parents Evening  
 Spring Concert  
 Friday 30 March .....TERM ENDS 3.30pm

## SUMMER TERM 2006

Monday 16 April .....SUMMER TERM STARTS  
 Tuesday 17 April .....Group Photographs  
 Thursday 19 April .....7X Parents' Evening  
 Monday 23 April .....Y10 reports to parents  
 Tuesday 24 April .....Y7 Parents Evening  
 Thursday 26 April Junior Maths Challenge.  
 PTA Education Evening  
 Monday 30 April .....AS Drama Practical begins. Y8 Exams  
 Friday 4 May .....Silver/Gold DoE until 6th  
 Monday 7 May .....Bank Holiday  
 Tuesday 8 May .....Y8 Exams in Hall til 11th. Y9 NCTs in  
 Friday 11 May .....Last day for L6  
 Monday 14 May .....Y11 Leavers Ball. Y9 exams in class  
 Tuesday 15 May .....Y11 leavers' assembly  
 Friday 18 May .....Y10 Battlefields trip  
 Monday 21 May .....Y7 Open Mornings this week  
 GCSE exams begin  
 Wednesday 23 May .....Last day for Upper 6th  
 Friday 25 May .....Staff Training Day

## Saturday 26th May - Sunday 3th June : HALF TERM

Monday 11 June .....Y8 French Visit until 15th  
 Tuesday 12 June .....Y7 reports to parents  
 Monday 18 June .....Lower 6th return  
 Tuesday 19 June .....Staff Training Day  
 Friday 22 June .....6th Form Induction  
 Monday 25 June .....Y10 GCSE Drama Practical begins  
 Tuesday 26 June .....Y11 Mod Science  
 Wednesday 27 June.....L6 H.E. Parents Evening  
 Thursday 28 June .....Big Sing (Ashcombe)  
 Monday 2 July .....New intake evening  
 Tuesday 3 July .....New intake Day  
 Wednesday 4 July .....Y8 Reports to parents  
 Wednesday 11 July .....Athletics Day  
 Thursday 12 July .....Summer Soirée  
 Friday 13 July .....Y9 Progress Review to Parents  
 Monday 16 July .....DoE Gold exped. to the Lake District  
 .....Activities Week  
 Tuesday 24 July .....Summer Games Day  
 Wednesday 25 July .....TERM ENDS 1pm  
 China Visit departs  
 Thursday 16 August .....'A' Level results  
 Thursday 23 August .....GCSE results

# Accent



## on Ashcombe

THE ASHCOMBE SCHOOL • DORKING

Number Nineteen • September 2006

### "Proud to be associated with The Ashcombe"

So said School governor Neil McClelland who contacted the school after the results were published this summer, sending his congratulations to students and staff.

As Director of the National Literacy Trust and father of two former Ashcombe students, Neil is in a strong position to judge success. "The Ashcombe is a school with the "right values" about comprehensive education," he said.

## A Level and AS Results 2006

With an average points score for candidates of 345 points and a 98% subject pass rate, The Ashcombe School's 2006 results again represent outstanding achievement for many students. In each of the years since the new A-level system was introduced, the school has achieved extremely high results for a wide range of students.

50% of the subject grades were A or B. There were many outstanding individual results.

Mary Penman (who will be going to Oxford University to study German and Italian) gained five A grades. Lucy Buck and Charlotte Fettes each gained four.

Amy Dawson, Giverny Dobson, Kim Elcoate May, Jenny Fletcher, Sarah Gartland, Alex Haigh, Emily May and Hannah Yeomans gained 3As.

The Lower Sixth's AS results were also overall very pleasing with an average pass rate of 87%. Two students gained five A grades (Ruth Angus and Alice Regent) and ten gained four: Henry Debens, Helen Goddard, Thomas Green, Elliot Hancock, Nikki Holland, Katie Husband, Alex Wills, Charlotte Wood, Emily Woolfe and Amanda Wright.



*More photos overleaf*

## GCSE Results 2006

This year there were more outstanding individual results than ever before, with 21 pupils gaining 5 or more A\* grades. Becky Gardner, Tom Lloyd 8<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>A\* grades (1/2 grades come from GCSE short courses, which have the same difficulty as full courses, but half the number of topics); Alex Cackett, Helen Gilpin, Hannah Grimes, Anna Johnston, Nishat Rahman 8A\*; Jennifer Thompson (who also gained an AS in Maths) 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>A\*; Douglas Hill and Ruth Lloyd 7A\*; Rachel Barker 6<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>A\*; Josh Cows, Ellie Pavey, Molly Riggins, Abigail



*Continued overleaf*

# A Level and AS Results



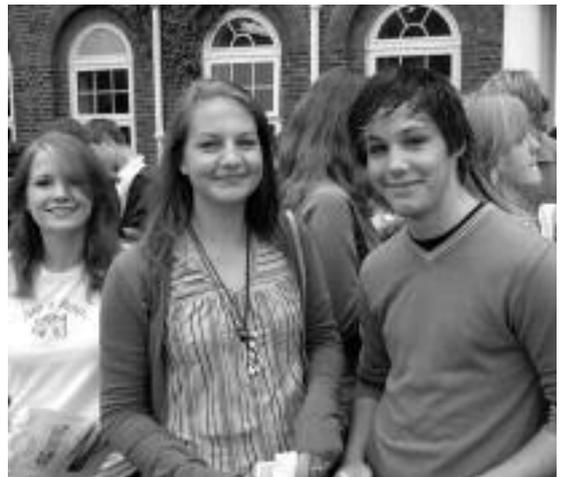
# GCSE Results

Wood 6A\*; Eve Collyer Merritt 5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>A\*; Alex Armstrong, Ed Blunt, Stanley Bruinvels, Anna Yarde 5A\*. Overall, over 10% of grades were A\*.

Congratulations also go to Holly Harley who was in the top five candidates out of 360,000 for English Literature and to Douglas Hill who was in the top ten for ICT.



# GCSE Results



## Comment



In my comments to the press on the A level results I spoke about the school's very open entry policy onto A level courses which means that a number of students who in most institutions would not have been allowed to begin such courses gained commendable grades here which now give them access to University places.

For example, we had 21 candidates whose average GCSE grade was C or below and 17 of them gained an average D grade at A-level. Every student gained at least 2 grade Es (the normal requirement for pursuing a Higher Education course). What is particularly pleasing is that achievement across the spread of ability is outstandingly good.

One of the key reasons for our success has been a consistent focus on the interests of the students rather than chasing league table success. At GCSE there has been a reluctance to increase the number of GCSEs studied or focus just on the C/D borderline. There is very close co-operation and understanding between Governors, Senior Management, staff, parents and pupils to maintain confidence in this approach.

In addition to the headline news there are a number of more technical points which may be of interest. Firstly, it is important to note (especially in the light of the annual ritual debate in the national news about standards rising / falling) that simple comparisons with previous years could be misleading. This was the fifth year when upper sixth candidates had pursued the new 'Curriculum 2000' in which A-level has been split into a lower sixth AS course and an upper sixth A2 course, with most students pursuing an additional subject course in the lower sixth compared with previous years. At the end of the lower sixth students were able to 'drop' one of their four AS subjects taking forward just three to A2-level. Previous generations of students did not have this opportunity which must, overall, have a positive effect on results and in part may explain the apparent national rise in the level of performance since the changes.

Secondly, we remain concerned that there remains a discrepancy between the standards required in different subjects (so that students of comparable ability will gain lower grades on average, in certain subjects, especially maths, sciences and languages; it is unsurprising that students may wish to choose subjects where they are more likely to gain higher grades).

Thirdly, The Ashcombe School refuses to participate in national press analysis of A-level results because of the unsophisticated manner in which data is interpreted and the simplistic conclusions which are drawn. For example, in one paper last year, selective and comprehensive schools were listed together in the same table! Although not participating in national newspaper "league tables" in August,

we analyse our results in accordance with criteria used by the national press and are pleased to share information from such analysis with the local community. We are delighted that our results are very similar to those from last year, and that they are likely to place the school amongst the highest performing comprehensive schools in the county and country.

At GCSE, all pupils gained at least 5 A\*-G. This is particularly pleasing because we are a comprehensive school taking the full range of ability with no selection or filtering.

The percentage of pupils gaining at least 5A\*-C is 76% this year, the same as in 2004. Over 95% of pupils gained at least 1 A\*-C grade showing that the curriculum is sufficiently broad and flexible so that virtually all pupils can gain an A\*-C grade in at least one subject.

Given the post-results headlines and media programmes we feel it is important to hang on to the fact that examination achievement is indeed an important aspect of the education we provide but not necessarily the most important aspect. Furthermore, we do not manipulate entry to either courses or examinations to improve the statistics.

**D. J Blow**

*The tariff for A and AS used by the Universities and Colleges Admission Service (UCAS) is*

- A-level: A = 120 pts, B = 100 pts, C = 80 pts, D = 60 pts, E = 40 pts, U = 0 pts
- AS-level: A = 60 pts, B = 50 pts, C = 40 pts, D = 30 pts, E = 20 pts, U = 0 pts
- Scores in subjects which students took at AS-level (usually in the Lower Sixth last year) are included



## Chinese Exchange

**W**e welcomed eight students and two teachers from our link school in Shanghai to The Ashcombe during July. The Chinese group was formally welcomed by Mrs Housden and Mr Blow on the first Monday morning of their stay in England.

An extensive programme of visits and activities here and in local primary schools gave our visitors a comprehensive insight into life in the UK. They also participated in International Business Week with the Year 10 teams and gave a wonderful performance on traditional Chinese instruments at the start of the summer music concert.

*Details of our students' visit to Beijing and Shanghai with Mrs. Martin will be in the next issue.*



## May Visit to China

**M**r Thompson, together with former Headteacher, Mr Webster and school governor Simon Westcott were invited by our Chinese link school in Shanghai to give a series of talks designed to coincide with an Arts Festival for Shanghai schools. This was a splendid opportunity to internationalise the profile of The Ashcombe School and strengthen the links that exist between the two schools. It also gave us an opportunity to look at ways of handling the exchange programme and how we wish to take the relationship forward.



## Language College

**W**e were delighted that our British Council Primary Curriculum bid was accepted and that Mrs Lightfoot (Head of Powell Corderoy) and myself will be visiting our partner primary school in Shanghai in October. Most of the Dorking primary schools are involved and are producing "story sacks" for us to take out and use with the young Chinese pupils. We hope to return with "culture kits" which will benefit our schools when they do their various projects.

*Mrs Clarke*

## Staffing Update

We welcome the following staff to the school this term:

### Personal and Social Education

Ms S Armstrong  
Ms S Kaid

### Mathematics

Ms L Betts  
Mr B Overton  
Ms K Sothinathann  
Mr L Carne

### English

Mr P Stock  
Ms H Gregory  
Ms C Rodopoulos

### Science

Mrs S Lohmann  
Mr M Buckingham  
Ms H Hook

### Modern Foreign Languages

Ms V Heinrich

### PE

Mr C Hooker (Head of PE)  
Ms V Hawley

### Sociology

Ms P Okello

### Cover supervisors

Mrs P Gray  
Ms S Jones

We also welcome back Phil Allen as the school's Connexions Adviser.

# School Visits

## Normandy: Year 8

This was an excellent cultural, historical, linguistic and social experience for 135 Year 8 pupils who were quite undeterred by extremes of weather throughout the week. Their attitude and behaviour were outstanding, demonstrating a mature approach to “give and take” amongst such a large group.

All pupils practised their language skills by planning and buying food at a typical French market for their picnic lunch. They conducted questionnaires and surveys with French people, ordered drinks, crêpes, drinks or ice creams in local cafés and bought their favourite cake at the pâtisserie.

The pupils discovered Normandy fare with visits to a goats’ cheese farm, a biscuiterie, une confiserie and a cider farm. Many of them even tried “moules et frites” at the Centre one evening.

Pupils showed a keen interest and respect as our historical visits spanned the centuries from 1066 and the Bayeux Tapestry to the D-Day landing beaches and cemeteries of the Second World War. I think their History teachers will also be impressed with their improved knowledge!

Sixteen adults including teachers, support staff and parents accompanied the trip. Without such dedication a residential trip of this size just wouldn’t happen. I am indebted to them for their constant support.

*Mrs Clarke*



# Geography

## Leith Hill and Box Hill: Year 10



**Y**ear 10 GCSE coursework focused on the impact of recreation and tourism on Leith Hill. In June, pupils collected data on footpath erosion and the impact of bikes and horses on Leith Hill and had two talks by the wardens of Leith Hill and Box Hill on how the area is managed.

## Guildford and Box Hill: Year 12

**I**n preparation for their AS module on fieldwork techniques and skills, our Year 12s spent two days out in the field collecting data. One day was spent delimiting the CBD in Guildford and the other day was spent investigating vegetation succession on chalk land up on Box Hill.

## Dorking: Year 8

**A**s part of their ICT Units in Year 8 pupils produced a Public Information System on Dorking. The PIS aims to inform a variety of groups of people within the community about what Dorking High Street has to offer. Pupils went into Dorking to complete land-use surveys, pedestrian and traffic counts, environmental quality analyses and questionnaires.

## Guest speakers

**W**e hosted a talk by DEFRA and a local farmer about the changing policies for farming in the UK and how new Government policies will make farming more environmentally friendly in the future. In May we had a talk by Action Aid who discussed the work they are doing in less well-off countries around the world.

*Mrs Z Wood*

# Senior Prefects



The school's Senior Prefect team is pictured above. From left to right: Connie Whiston, Martin Laban, Laura Jones, Alice Regent, Jolene Bull, Joe Mitchell, Matt Coughlin, Amanda Wright (Head Girl), Jack Mercer (Head Boy), Matt Royle and Lara Lopez.

# Leavers

## Year 11 Leavers' Ball

The end of Year 11 was very positive and successful. The Leavers' Ball which took place at Surrey Hills was attended by the vast majority of the year, with staff and pupils enjoying the celebration. The event was organised by the Leavers' Ball Committee with pupils selling tickets and decorating the venue. Pupils also completed the leavers' book. They designed the presentation, collected the information from the entire year group and communicated with the design company. The resulting book was excellent and the majority of the year group bought a copy. The last day was focused around the leavers' assembly where a number of pupils performed music to entertain the year group.

*Mr Panting*



## Upper 6th Boat trip

On 18th May 6th formers and staff thoroughly enjoyed the leavers' boat trip on The Thames.

Everyone looked splendid and superb dancing and a great atmosphere resulted in an occasion for the Upper 6th to remember for a long time to come.

*Mrs Roberts*



## Miscellaneous

### Book Fair

This Summer the Study Centre hosted a Book Fair and raised over £600, the most we have ever raised. Other activities included a competition to design a poster to advertise the Book Fair and designing a book quiz.

### Did you know?

To give you some idea of the operational aspects of the current public examination system, at The Ashcombe this summer some 254 examinations took place. 7670 papers were taken by our students and 306 parcels were dispatched to the examiners.

### Sponsored swim

Congratulations to swimmers and sponsors who managed to raise approximately £750 which will be shared between the Royal Marsden Hospital and The Ashcombe's own Romanian project; with 10% going to the Rotary charity fund.

The annual Summer Concert again attracted an incredibly diverse range of music and was this year enhanced by a half hour prelude of Chinese music from our exchange students over from Shanghai





# World Cup

Last term saw Years 7-10 involved in our own World Cup tournament. In April assemblies were held, which involved the draw, to see which tutor group was going to represent each country. To ensure all 35 tutor groups were accommodated (32 teams in the actual World Cup) Ireland, Scotland and Wales were included. In tutor time and whole school tutor period pupils were organised and set tasks to find out about their country. For example, pupils researched national anthems, where the country is in the world, climate, national dishes, language and money. Some departments set curriculum tasks on this theme: Music – team chants; Design Technology – Advertising, Humanities – History of the World Cup, and Geography - the countries involved.

After half-term the tournament began in full with 5 matches being played each lunchtime. In total there were 75 matches played by the end of the tournament. The organisation of the tournament ran alongside the actual World Cup, so this meant when England were playing in Germany they were also scheduled to play here at *The Ashcombe*. When planning the group stage matches a slight logistical problem arose when 150 Y8 pupils were out for a whole week in Normandy and there was a Training Day in the middle of the group matches. Nevertheless all group matches were successfully completed (even when some Y10 pupils were out on a Duke of Edinburgh Awards trip, as a 'spare' day had been scheduled especially for this event!) On Friday 7th

July it was Finals Afternoon, with the semi-finals (2 teams from each year group) and finals being played. The whole school watched, with national anthems played and teams introduced to the Head, Governors and other local dignitaries. We were delighted that Peter Mills (who retired from the Governing Body in July) agreed to be our special guest, together with John Cawdell, Head of Leisure at MVDC.



Unfortunately, the rain meant that at the last minute we had to switch the event indoors, and the staff were magnificent in helping to supervise pupils in tutor rooms and in the Sports Hall. The noise of 500 pupils cheering at full volume was absolutely deafening, and created an amazing atmosphere, which everyone will remember for a long time. The final of Y9 and 10 was a fitting climax, with a penalty shootout and intense excitement. This was a fantastic event, with a superb football tournament running alongside an enhanced awareness for all pupils of all the countries involved in the World Cup.

*Mr Marshall*



# World Cup



## Semi-Finals

|                    |   |                      |   |
|--------------------|---|----------------------|---|
| Saudi Arabia (7XS) | 1 | Ukraine (7XT)        | 0 |
| Japan (8YY)        | 5 | Czech Republic (8XT) | 0 |
| Argentina (9XW)    | 0 | Netherlands (9YW)    | 2 |
| Paraguay (10XT)    | 1 | Poland (10YY)        | 0 |

## Finals

|              |   |          |   |
|--------------|---|----------|---|
| Saudi Arabia | 0 | Japan    | 1 |
| Netherlands  | 0 | Paraguay | 0 |

(Netherlands won 3-1 on penalties)

# Other Sports

## Athletics

The District championships this year were held at Kingsmeadow, Kingston in May. Individual success was achieved by 7 of our students. The following qualified to run/jump/throw for Central Surrey at the County Championships: Becky Gardner (1500m), Luke Caldwell (1500m), Nathan Owen (Long Jump), Katy Holland (200m), Tom Woodcock (Long Jump), Amelia Mougouber (Discus) and Sarah Bridgman (Shot). Amelia came second in the final and earned her place in the Surrey team for the South East England Regional Finals, where she came fourth.

The after-school Athletics club has been one of the best-supported activities held here. With up to 50 pupils attending there have been opportunities to practise for Sports Day and achieve badges for different levels of ability from bronze to gold.

## Hockey

Congratulations to Chris Alwin and Alistair Isles who were both selected for the U16 County Development Squad. Practice with fellow students at the conference. *(More in next issue)*

## Rugby

Congratulations to the Y9 team who won the inaugural District 7 a-side tournament held at Howard of Effingham. Having won their pool they then beat Howard and Therfield in the semi and final respectively. The team scored 14 tries to 3. The Y8 team also played very well in a strongly contested event losing in the semi-final to the eventual winners. Special mention must go to Nick Haigh, who was awarded "Player of the Season" for his efforts in playing for the U15 Surrey Rugby team. This is a fantastic achievement considering the many strong players in the county.

## Rugby Sevens

Lack of space in the last edition prevented us from congratulating Josh Evans, Seb Lopez, Tom Hunt, Johnny Ellis, Connor Mottram, Conor Bates, Dan Ruff, Nick Taylor and Miles Musgrove who are now in Year 10 for their splendid victory in the Rugby Sevens tournament held at Howard of Effingham School in the last school year. This was the first time that The Ashcombe School had won the shield.

Against very tough competition the squad were unbeaten in the four games they played, conceding only three tries whilst scoring six times as many.

## Cricket

Once again Dorking Cricket Club organised an Under 15 tournament and our Year 10 team came second in their group and won the Plate competition beating Therfield in a thrilling final match. Y8 qualified for the County finals of an indoor 6 a-side competition before Easter. At the finals the team played really well losing in the semi-final to a very strong side.

## Netball

Congratulations to Sarah Boreham (in last year's Year 13) who played for the U18 Surrey Netball team and Katy Holland (now Year 11) who played for the U16 Surrey Netball team (as an U15). Katy was also awarded the "Player of the Inter Counties", which is given to the best player in the tournament.

# Ashcombe student meets Dame Kelly Holmes



JAMES MAJOR from Therfield School and SARAH ORAM from The Ashcombe School wearing the special kit with which they were presented at the Step into Sport conference.

Sarah Oram, now in the Upper Sixth, was one of two students from Mole Valley schools who were rewarded for their sports volunteering efforts by attending the Step into Sport Community volunteer residential camp at Loughborough University last Easter.

Sarah took part in a number of different workshops and training sessions designed to give her the skills, knowledge and qualifications necessary to work in her own community in the lead up to the London 2012 Olympics and beyond.

Sarah had been given the opportunity to attend the Conference through her own volunteering efforts locally.

Sarah was amongst 450 other students from across the country who were nominated for their achievements in sports volunteering and leadership.

The students were welcomed to the conference by Dame Kelly Holmes, who told the volunteers how she and many other top class athletes would have been lost without a dedicated volunteer workforce supporting them throughout their careers.

She added: "Sport, whether at a local level or on a big stage such as the Olympics, relies heavily on a passionate volunteer workforce and it is encouraging to see so many young people being given the skills needed to continue to play a crucial role in the development of sport."

The Step into Sport camp is organised by the Youth Sport Trust and supported by Sport England, Sport Leaders UK and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

# Activities Week

**Year 7** Year 7 pupils not in Germany during Activities Week had a variety of trips out to Kew Gardens, Marwell Zoo, British Sea Life Centre and the Natural History Museum.



**Year 8** Year 8 production in Activities Week of “Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat”.



**Year 9** Mosaics and pottery formed part of a creative arts week.



# Club Activities

## Gardening Club

In the Autumn term the Gardening Club was given a new site to develop into a vegetable and flower garden. The swimming pool site, as it is now known, started off as a patch of grass and now is taking on the look of an allotment with numerous plants cultivated by pupils from the lower school.

During the Autumn three members of staff and a handful of students started to dig out the first of four vegetable plots. It was hard work and the soil underneath was compacted and of low quality. Through their hard work they were able to plant broad beans, garlic and onions before the end of term.

The Spring term saw little work due to the weather. However, by the end of term four plots had been dug and the first early potatoes had been planted along with some soft fruit plants.

Sowing started with a vengeance at the start of the summer term. Runner beans, French beans, cucumbers, courgettes, summer squash, sweet corn and what later proved to be a big favourite, mange-tout, were sown. Herbs were planted in a new herb bed and nasturtiums, sunflowers and sweet peas went into a flowerbed which had been dug along the fence. July turned into the major harvest season and a change in personnel. The club now comprised nine Year 7 students, boys and girls, who have embraced the gardening fully. They harvested the produce, tasting some plants for the first time and taking them home to cook. A compost heap was started and water conservation was practised with a water butt and watering cans.

The future plans are to enlarge some of the plots, harvest the leeks, pumpkins and butternut squash and to improve the soil with our own compost. Most important of all we plan to introduce other students to the joys of gardening and provide a relaxing and safe environment during lunchtime on Mondays and Thursdays.

*Mr Wilkes*

## Windsurfing Club

In the last half of the Summer Term seven pupils from Years 9 & 10 have been travelling to the Aquasports Company at Mercer's Park to windsurf with two members of staff. They were all beginners and ended up by achieving their RYA Level 1 windsurfing award.

Every Wednesday after school the pupils had two hours of tuition from the instructors at the centre. The pupils and the accompanying teachers

all went out on the water and had practical and theory sessions. It was great fun with everyone having an adventure on the lake from near misses from low flying swans, being attacked by trees or succeeding in sailing upwind.

Two pupils who did the course last year during Activities Week, also come along when it is windy enough. They are working toward becoming Junior Instructors.

*Mr Wilkes*



# Business Week

## International Business Week – a Year 10 viewpoint

*Ellie Boyle, now in 11XT, reflects on a very different curriculum week at the end of her last few days in Year 10.*

**O**ut went uniform and in came smart suits!

At the end of last term Year 10 took part in the annual International Business Week (IBW) and dauntingly we realised that the end of our compulsory school days were fast approaching.

The week offered us the chance to participate in business games and activities that allowed us to develop skills that would be needed in the workplace.

It was a tough week in many respects. We had to do interview presentations in really hot weather, but despite the temperatures the whole year group worked well in teams. New friendships and acquaintances were made even when instructions had to be given within those teams and people like me became a little assertive!

During the week we acquired new skills as well as brushing up on old ones such as public speaking. We also learnt some Chinese and Italian.

We were driven throughout the week by the need to get points, because points meant prizes! And the ultimate prize was a team outing to Pizza Express! Team 32 (there were 32 teams in all!) became the “legends of the year group” by winning, having accumulated more points than all other teams over the five days.

IBW was really a milestone for Year 10s. We have fond memories of it and we made new friends.

A big thank you is due to all the teachers, business guests and helpers who made the week such a positive experience.

