



Lancaster Girls' Grammar School

NEWSLETTER TO PARENTS NOVEMBER 2009

Dear Parents

❑ **Improving LGGS Facilities**

We are delighted that we have been granted planning permission for a dance/drama studio and fitness suite which will be built next to Biology laboratories 18 and 19. We have also secured £100,000 in funding from the local authority towards the cost of the project. As you can imagine our students are very excited about this valuable opportunity to improve the sports and arts facilities at LGGS. We are also developing an area of land which we recently acquired, adjacent to our sports field. We hope to create another hard court area, a running track and orienteering course.

These opportunities will enable us to improve the facilities at LGGS for all our students. I hope that LGGS parents will want to support us with these improvements. With the newsletter is the Annual Fund leaflet. This outlines the ways in which parents can help through a financial gift to the school. Many parents of Year 7 and Year 12 students have already received information on these projects and the Annual Fund at our Welcome Evenings earlier this term and hope that you do not mind receiving this information again. I would like to thank those parents who have already given for their generous response.

On the back of the newsletter is the annual fund donation form for parents wishing to make a financial contribution. I hope that you are able to take the time to read through the brochure and help us to enhance the facilities for your daughter at LGGS in whatever way you can.

❑ **Promise Auction – Friday March 12th 2010**

Another way of raising money for the school is through helping with our planned Auction of Promises, to be held in school on the evening of March 12th. We are very grateful to a group of our parents who are organising the event and hope that many of you will be able to support them. A promise auction involves bidding for pledges donated to raise funds. Our auction will specifically raise money for equipment for the fitness suite. Promises can include: services e.g. gardening, ironing, music tuition, sports coaching, work experience, tickets to sports events, theatre trip, a week in a holiday home.

Thank you to the parents and students who have already made pledges, these include: work experience with a GP and a Solicitor, cake baking, babysitting, tickets to the Buckingham Palace summer exhibition 2010, signed Scotland rugby shirt and entertainment for a child's birthday.

If you would like to make a pledge please fill in the slip at the end of the Newsletter or email promises@lggs.lancs.sch.uk. Thank you in advance for your help and I hope that many LGGS families will join us on the evening of Friday March 12th.

☐ **Staffing News**

We wish Mrs Jo Tilley well as she recovers from her operation. Mrs Tilley will not be able to return to school until the summer term. Dr Moody will continue to teach Mrs Tilley's classes. Mr John Haslam is also ill. We are very grateful to Mrs Kirsten Jarman who is covering A level and Year 11 Geography. Thank you also to Ms Rachel Fitch who has taken over many of Mr Haslam's KS3 and Year 10 classes.

☐ **AS Results**

We did not report AS results in the last newsletter as we were waiting for re-marks in a number of subjects. The final results are attached to this newsletter. Well done to the many students who achieved their target grades. Congratulations to the following students for their outstanding results:

6 grade As A Holden

5 grade As A Ahmmed, A Borissova, C Brennan, J Edge, V Golash, R Graham, A Jarman, G Xia and C Xu

4 grade As L Britton, L Brown, C Carter, J Chauhan, S Easterby-Smith, S Fletcher, J Howell, Y Kim, H Martlew, S Molloy, H Nickson, E Ramsey, A Rhodes, E Robinson, H Shaw and A Wild

☐ **Duke of Edinburgh Award winners**

Many congratulations to the following students:

Gold level	Old Girls 08	A Entwistle
	09	R Cornall, S Duffton, S L Hodgson, J Morgan and H Thompson
	Year 13	A Wild
Silver level	Old Girls	M Bousfield, N Gawne, S L Hodgson, M Hutchence, P Smith and H Wood
	Year 13	A Ahmmed, E Britton, F Hetherington, E Rowlands and J Shutt
Bronze Level	Old Girls	P Smith
	Year 13	Y Kim and A Marshall
	Year 12	K Abraham, O Broadbent, S Cocks, E Dean, N Derrick, G Dyer, O Egdell-Page, G Fletcher, E Gradwell, R Hall, K Jefferies, S Sinha, M Walton and C Winstanley
	Year 11	R Crawshaw, A Fleet, B Gavaghan and E Howarth

Thank you to Mrs Yvonne Cunningham, D of E, for all her hard work in organising this scheme. Thank you also to all the LGGS staff who give up their time to assist with the expeditions. We are also very grateful to the Friends of LGGS for their financial support of the scheme.

☐ **Pupil Attitude Questionnaire**

At the end of last term Years 7, 9 and 11 pupils completed an online anonymous Attitude questionnaire and we have recently received the analyses of their responses. This information is extremely useful as it enables us to benchmark their responses with different years and to compare their responses with other pupils in Lancashire Schools. Areas of strength for LGGS where students' responses were very positive included:

- Teaching (almost 100% of Years 7, 9 and 11 pupils felt they were being taught well, placing us as number one in the authority on this question)
- Behaviour
- Low levels of bullying
- Feeling safe in school
- Range of activities and clubs

Areas where there has been a significant improvement during the 5 years we have been taking part in the questionnaire include:

- Pupils' opinions to improve the school are listened to
- Helping learn skills for adult life
- Advice to live a healthy life style

One area where our pupils' responses were lower was "subjects setting targets to help me improve". This was also noted in our recent Ofsted inspection and we are now implementing improvements in our assessment practices and target setting.

❑ **International News**

LGGS has been awarded the prestigious International Schools Award for the fourth time. Mrs Hilary Hopwood our International Coordinator was presented with the award at a special ceremony in London. We are one out of only 16 schools to receive this award for the fourth time.

In October we welcomed 5 students and a teacher from our partner school in Thailand, Mahidol Wittayanusorn a leading science school. In February 4 LGGS sixth formers and Mrs Stephanie Brown will visit Thailand. There have been a number of very successful international visits this term. As always we are very grateful to our staff who are prepared to give up so much of their own time to lead these visits. I hope you enjoy reading the following accounts by LGGS students of their international experiences.

❑ **Exchange with VJDS, Hisar**

This was our largest group yet to visit India with 18 Year 11 students. It was organised as part of our UKIERI work and, in addition to LGGS teachers Miss Jo Gates and Ms Merrill Sheen, two teachers from Dallas Road and Arkholme Primary schools accompanied the visit. Year 11 student E Costley-Wood has written this account of the visit.

The trip I went on to India as part of the UKIERI exchange was an absolutely amazing experience, one I would highly recommend to anyone and something I won't forget. The heat, the smells of the dusty roads and noise of shouting, old vehicles, animals and ceaseless honking did take some getting used to and made English motorways sound ridiculously peaceful. On top of this I personally was amazed by the diversity and culture of the country, and we got to see and experience some world famous sites, my favourites the Taj Mahal, and Golden Temple. We also experienced 'real India' including the market in Haryana, where cows roamed in and out of shops at will and the ceremony on the border of Pakistan and India which was the most exciting but nerve racking thing I've ever experienced. Even the travelling was an experience in itself looking out the windows and seeing amazing temples in the midst of shanty houses and the overwhelming poverty, which stunned us all.

❑ **Hockey Tour of Barbados**

This was our first Hockey tour abroad and a great success. Thank you to the parents and local businesses who helped the hockey team with their fundraising. E Deason's account of the trip is below:

In terms of the hockey I think it was the greatest learning curve for us all, from playing hockey on cold winter's evenings in England to the scorching heat and humidity of Barbados was a shock to everyone's system. We were around twenty minutes from the capital, Bridgetown and saw mostly the south and west coasts of Barbados. I feel we saw 'the real Barbados', we did not go on an all inclusive tour and so we spent time shopping in the local supermarket, and we got the real sense of culture of Barbados. I think it is safe to say that every girl would call it the experience of their lives, not only for the sights and hockey we saw but for the friendships that were made and hope to keep.

We also received this lovely feedback from one of the guests at the hotel where the LGGS team were staying.

The girls had the effervescence and enthusiasm that teenagers should have to enjoy life but managed to mix these with excellent manners and behaviour which was a credit to themselves and their teachers. They not only did well on the pitch but represented their school brilliantly when relaxing off it. The Tour was obviously well organised and supervised but the girls all seemed to enjoy themselves and have respect for other people and what was expected of them. At a time where teenagers are often criticised for their actions it is good to be able to write only positive things and I hope they continue to be successful in the future.

☐ **Music/German visit to Wernigerode**

Another very successful visit to Wernigerode with the LGGS musicians attracting large numbers at their concerts.

We stayed with host families in Wernigerode, a beautiful little town in the east of Germany, which gave us a wonderful experience of German lifestyle as well as improving our German. We had rehearsals almost every day and also did some sightseeing. We got the opportunity to visit Leipzig and see various churches where Johann Sebastian Bach worked, in addition to seeing his grave – a wonderful moment for many of us! The choir sang a piece of Mendelssohn's music in St Thomas' Church (where both Bach and Mendelssohn worked). This sounded magical in the church – definitely an experience we will never forget! The week ended with concerts in which both the band and choir performed, which were extremely enjoyable events. Although this is the second time that I have been on this trip, it was just as fantastic as the first time I went. M Bettsworth 11J

☐ **LGGS Sixth Form visit to China**

The trip started off with an exhausting 12 hour flight to Shanghai, where we spent a week staying at the Suzhou Foreign Language School, taking part in lessons, and visiting the local sights. Over the weekend we each stayed with a Chinese family where we sampled authentic food (jellyfish and duck tongue!), visited restaurants and karaoke bars, and generally took part in their way of life. We then flew down to Yangshuo, in the south of China, where we cycled around the stunning countryside, chatted to the locals, and took advantage of cheap bargains in the market. We also managed to fit in a flying visit to Hong Kong on the way home to Lancaster. Overall going to China was an experience of a life-time, and provided all of us with a glimpse of an exciting and beautiful culture that we shall never forget. S Easterby-Smith

☐ **7th Ritsumeikan Super Science Fair**

We were very pleased to be invited to take part in this prestigious event. 3 Year 13 students, Y Kim, H Martlew and A Ahmmed accompanied by Mrs Sue Street represented LGGS.

We have just spent a week at the Ritsumeikan High School and University in Kyoto, Japan attending the 7th Ritsumeikan Super Science Fair. This is an opportunity for students from all over the world to come together and present their work to one another. We presented a particle physics project (undertaken at Lancaster University) at the Ritsumeikan High School to an audience of other students and teachers. We also displayed a poster in the poster exhibition, we were able to view the research carried out by the other students which was very interesting and we found the other projects fascinating. We worked together with other students to build solar powered boats using new solar panels designed by one of the University Lecturers. This was a great way to make friends with other students and to learn more about the future of solar power. We also visited SANYO's 315 metre long solar ark, a very impressive structure dominating the landscape of Gifu. Here we learnt more about the future of solar power and how by covering just 4% of the world's deserts with solar panels we could power the world. One LGGS pupil visited the National Institute for Fusion Science where she discovered the huge importance of fusion as a possible power source as global warming increases and fossil fuels run out. During the week we also experienced Japanese culture including calligraphy, sumo wrestling and traditional dance. We also visited the beautiful Kiyomizu Temple, a legacy from when Kyoto was the capital of Japan. Our Japanese buddies took us to down town Kyoto where we shopped and sampled traditional Japanese cuisine. We

had an amazing time meeting with students from across the globe and we will never forget this fantastic experience. Y Kim

❑ **Online Safety**

With this newsletter we are sending out to parents of Years 7 to 9 a CD Rom '**Know It All For Parents**' which Childnet have produced. This CD Rom contains information about the positive ways young people use different technologies, what the risks are and how these risks can be minimised when using online and mobile technologies. The pupils receive guidance through their ICT and Citizenship lessons but I know many parents find this a difficult area especially the use of social networking sites and hope you find this useful.

❑ **'SPOOKS' Author, JOE DELANEY, Visits LGGS English Department and Library**

Local children's writer, Joe Delaney, paid the English department a visit on Wednesday 23rd September, 2009 to inspire Year 8 pupils with talk of his popular and locally set 'Spooks' or 'Wardstone Chronicles' series. Students also gained an invaluable insight into the life of a novelist and took advantage of the chance to quiz Joe on what it takes to become a writer.

Pupils of all ages later met with Joe in the school library where he kindly signed copies of his novels and offered personalised words of advice on becoming a fiction writer. His charismatic anecdotes and awe-inspiring tales of witchcraft, captured students' imaginations and inspired them to further delve into the fantasy genre. Mrs Rachael Gibson and Mrs Kathy Edge, the respective Head of English and school Librarian, are also to be thanked for organising and promoting the event.

❑ **Food for Life: Cooking Bus**

We are very fortunate to have secured a visit from the Cooking Bus as part of our Flagship Food for Life work. The bus, which is really an articulated lorry, opens out to form 16 fully equipped kitchen units. The bus is staffed by two Food for life teachers and will visit us from December 7th to December 10th. As it is too big to site at LGGS we are very grateful to Sainsburys who have agreed to host the bus for us. During the week the Cooking Bus will be used by small groups of LGGS pupils and sixth formers and there will also be some community use including primary school pupils.

❑ **Quality Standard Beef and Lamb Young Chef Challenge**

Congratulations to Year 9 pupils K Barnett and A Roberts who are through to the final of this competition to be held on December 1st.

❑ **Garden Group**

The school vegetable garden is now well established and we are planning ahead for the next growing season. We would greatly appreciate donations of any surplus plant pots or seed trays and also the plastic punnets that fruit are sold in as we can use them for seeding.

There will be a collection box in the Rotunda in Technology and any large donations can be handed into Reception.

❑ **Ecogroup Christmas Stall**

Do you have items that you have never used? Perhaps Christmas gifts that you have never opened or items that you no longer need or have grown out of? Then please recycle them by donating them to the Ecogroup Christmas stall. Recycling is a great way to save our resources and not waste them. The money raised from the sale will help ecogroup fund future projects. As well as recycling donated items, we will be selling gift tags and cards made from recycled Christmas cards. The stall will take place at lunchtime on Monday 7th December in the main school hall. You can put your unwanted items into the collection box in the Rotunda in Technology or bulky/numerous items can be left in Reception.

❑ **Chronicle 2008-09**

The new school chronicle is ready to order now, full of pictures, articles and much more! It provides a great way for you to remember the past school year. It is priced at £10.00. Please give your cash and cheques (made payable to LGGS) into Reception in an envelope with your name and form.

☐ **Student Absence**

If your daughter is unable to attend school, can we please remind parents of the need to contact the School on the FIRST DAY of absence. Please telephone Mrs Aitken on (01524) 32010 by 9.30am. If possible, please let us know whether the absence is likely to be for more than one day. When your daughter returns to school, a note to her form tutor is still required to record her absence as authorised.

Our absence monitoring shows that there is more illness this term than is usual. The latest advice regarding swine flu is to keep pupils away from school until they have had one day symptom free.

☐ **Equipment from Sainsbury's Active Kids Vouchers 2009**

We received the following with the Sainsbury's Active Kids Vouchers that were kindly donated by parents

5 Russell Hobbs kettles
6 cutlery sets
14 garlic presses
2 can openers
9 pan stands
2 pastry brushes
2 DVDs (Soup and Pizzas)
9 Rubber discus

☐ **Dates this half term**

Wednesday 18th November
Thursday 19th November
Tuesday 24th November
Thursday 3rd December
Thursday 17th December

Year 12 Parents' Evening
GCSE Music Recital 7.00pm
Year 7 Parents' Evening
Junior Drama (separate letter to follow)
Carol Services (We are holding two Services this year and hope parents will be able to join us – separate letter to follow)
End of term
Re-open for Spring Term

Friday 18th December
Monday 4th January 2010

Receipt of Newsletter

Please sign the page in your daughter's planner to acknowledge receipt of this Newsletter, the Annual Fund booklet and CD Rom.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Cahalin

Headteacher