

Tanbridge House Review

Autumn 2006



Dear Reader

I hope that you enjoy the first edition of "The Tanbridge House Review". This publication, the name of which has been suggested by the "Editorial Team", heralds the start of a new chapter in our work and life as a Specialist College.

You will find its pages packed with accounts and pictures of our well established ongoing activities alongside reports of

some of our new departures. Certainly, we are confident that the chosen snippets will allow you to glimpse the excitement of the busy Autumn Term.

We wish you all an enjoyable read, a special Christmas and wonderful New Year.

Maureen Johnson, Headteacher

Simon Wins Top GCSE Award

Simon Rafferty picked up an award in November for an outstanding performance in his GCSE Physics Examination in June. He was selected as the top candidate in the Physics group of GCSEs offered by the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA), out of an estimated 415,000 entries.

The award was presented at the AQA Annual Seminar and Awards held in Westminster, where only 14 students in the country received GCSE awards at the event, in subjects ranging from Mathematics to Drama and Humanities.

Also present was Maureen Johnson. "It was a great privilege to watch Simon collect his award. He is a credit to the school and I'm delighted that his achievements have been publicly recognised."



Little Shop of Horrors

After months of hard work, mad scientists and man-eating plants took centre stage as students performed the zany rock musical "Little Shop of Horrors", at the Hawth Theatre, in Crawley. Mrs Johnson said the preparations for the big production caused a real buzz around the school. "Although it demands commitment, the entire cast and stage management team of "Little Shop of Horrors" grew in confidence both as individuals and members of the team."

Everyone played and sang their part superbly, but particular mention has to go to the main characters; Ryan Lancaster's acting was excellent as the nerdy Seymour and Rachel Holland, as his love interest Audrey, produced some stunning singing. Edd Casey as the voice of the flesh-eating plant fitted in perfectly and Andrew Mann made the most of the great role of Orin the Dentist.

Student Voice

Thanks to an exciting new project called 'Student Voice'. Students are being encouraged to take a more proactive and empowered approach to their education and are working with staff looking at school structures, curriculum and are being given the opportunities to become actively involved in many of the decisions affecting them.

Supported by the LEA, the initiatives include a comprehensive review of student council, a student interview panel for teacher recruitment and a review of teaching and learning styles across the school.

The project is being co-ordinated by two Year 11 students, Lawrence Davies and Michael Smith.

"... from a student point of view, it is a very good feeling when you know you have made a difference." Michael Smith



Specialist School Update

This is our first term as a Science, Mathematics & Computing College!

It has been a very busy and exciting time starting with our breakfast launch on 5th September to our first Steering Group meeting at the end of December. The impact on the students learning has been considerable, with them experiencing new technologies in Mathematics and ICT. Our ICT suite has relocated into a newly designed, air conditioned area with 4 classrooms fitted with 120 computers and also benefits from

30 laptops giving all students greater access to ICT facilities. Our Learning Resource Centre has also been refurbished and is home to 30 mobile laptops.

Mrs Garley, Head of Mathematics, enthuses over the excitement and student motivation during "Maths Alive" lessons, introduced this term at the start of our Specialist Status. Head of Science, Miss Edwards, "Our state-of-the-art and contemporary equipped science laboratories combined with interactive ICT resources and support, aids teaching to provide stimulating and engaging learning opportunities for all our students."



Science

On Tuesday 17th October, twenty-five Year 5 and 6 students from Shelley Primary School visited THS Science Department as part of their Science week. During the visit, they made their own indicators from red cabbage and tested a range of solutions to identify whether they were acid or alkali. This was a fantastic opportunity to enthuse and excite students and we look forward to this becoming a regular event.



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Editorial Team

Sixteen students from Years 9 and 10, have been given a fantastic opportunity by Gary Shipton, the editor of the West Sussex County Times. The Editorial Team are working closely with the West Sussex County Times reporters, who are assisting in developing the students' news gathering and writing skills and helping them to prepare for the Times Educational Supplement Newsday Competition to be held in March 2007.

The students' first task has been to prepare, distribute and collate a market research questionnaire about the West Sussex County Times.



Drivetime

"Drivetime", written by Steven Pearce, tells the story of Michael Clarke from his 16th Birthday through to his 18th. Through an upbeat, entertaining performance, the cast of four professional actors highlight the pressures faced by young people as they learn to drive and become passengers in their friends' cars.

The play was very well received by all Year 11 students and will hopefully help them to consider their responsibilities to road safety.

European Day of Languages

As part of this international event celebrating the diversity of language throughout the world, some Tanbridge House students volunteered to teach a lesson in a foreign language to some fortunate Year 7 classes. The MFL department thanks Alex Curran, Chris Mason, Cecilia Amankwah and Anastasios Vourexakis, who taught some Japanese, Russian, Twi and Greek. Each 'teacher' provided a fascinating taste of some different languages and cultures.



Celebration of Achievement Evening 2nd November

Celebration of Achievement was an opportunity to celebrate the efforts and achievements of students and to welcome former students, parents, staff, governors, guests and guest speaker, Martin Brunt, Crime Correspondent with Sky News. The Tanbridge prize winners, were delighted to collect their prizes from Martin Brunt. Thirty-one students who sat their G.C.S.E. examinations in the Summer returned to receive Prizes for Excellence for their outstanding G.C.S.E. grades. The four top students Simon Rafferty, Niall Browne, Sheran Owens and Helen Chesters are pictured here with Martin Brunt and Maureen Johnson.

Mrs Maureen Johnson, Headteacher, gave a review of the last academic year and said "... the climax of the evening was certainly the opportunity we had to congratulate all our Year 11 prize-winners and the year group overall. What they have achieved both personally and collectively this year is very special. It was super to have some time together to show how proud we are of their success".



Motivational Day

At the end of October, our Year 11 students took part in a "Brain Training Road show", run by Quantum Training Company. Many new skills were learnt from how to achieve better results to juggling techniques. Students thoroughly enjoyed the sessions; "It was perfect, thank you", "It was very useful", "Fun Fun Fun!"...

Mrs Pinington, "I really hope that everyone went away with at least one idea on how to get the most out of their final year at Tanbridge House School".



History Matters

Just before half term a group of Year 9 students spent a day in Belgium exploring the First World War battlefields and cemeteries. This was an opportunity for our students to get closer to history; to imagine that these waterlogged trenches where they stood in the sunshine today, were possibly where their relatives had lost their lives fighting for 'King and Country' ninety years ago. Hopefully our students will, as the words on our wreath promised, 'remember them'.

Back in school Year 7 students got a chance to fill in a postcard explaining why history is important to them. These postcards will be entered onto the 'History Matters' website where they will form part of a permanent national record of what people in 2006 thought of history. On his postcard, Jordan Birchall chose to quote Marcus Garvey in explaining why he thought history

mattered. "History matters to me because people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture are like a tree without roots."



Champion

Tanbridge House School student, Oliver Rogers –Year 10, winner of the Sussex under-15 Golf Championship. Oliver beat 52 of the best young players in the county to win the title on 23rd October at Pyecombe Golf Club.



Mid Sussex Year 7 Football Tournament

Tanbridge House School A team reached the final of this tournament in October and won 8-7 on penalties after extra-time!



Girls' Cross Country

Tanbridge Girls' Cross Country continues to be strong. At the National Cross Country Sussex Round our students performed extremely well. The Junior Girls finished in 4th place, with Stephanie Grain finishing in an excellent 3rd place. The Intermediate Girls finished in 3rd place and have been chosen to represent Sussex in the Regional rounds. This was an outstanding team performance; a special mention must be made of Amicia Lee 2nd and Jessie Fisher 5th.



New School Minibus

Staff and students were delighted on Friday 29th September to take delivery of a brand new Vauxhall Movano 17 seater minibus; made possible by the ongoing sales and service support Stevens Vauxhall give to Tanbridge House School.



Visiting Heads

On Friday 10th November 2006, Tanbridge House School, once again hosted a party of visiting educationalists from Rochdale. The party which included Local Authority school improvement officers, Headteachers and an official from the National College of School Leadership were visiting us to learn from our experience of CPD, Continuing Personal/Professional Development, through the Expert Trail. West Sussex County Council's senior CPD officer also attended because the Real Trust from Rochdale are planning to repeat the visit to the Local Authority later in November. This forms part of the national drive in education for succession planning (training our future leaders from within the existing staff).

Our visitors listened as presentations from Tanbridge House School staff, Keith Pailthorpe, Sue Ely, Geraldine Garley, Becki Smale and Suzanne Pienaar explained how the Expert Trail has worked at Tanbridge House School.

A different party visited us from the Real Trust in June, so it was encouraging a second group have now visited us.



Jeans 4 Genes Day

Again students rose to the challenge of raising funds for Jeans for Genes Day. This is the tenth year Tanbridge House School have supported this annual fundraising event raising £1198.36 and over the ten years more than £12,000!



The West Sussex Children's Book Award 2006 – 2007

This exciting initiative is a joint venture between the Schools Library Service, the Library Service and the School Improvement Support Service.

The focus is on the shared enjoyment of some of the best new paperback fiction by students in primary and secondary schools working together. Students from the schools are reading and energetically debating their favourites from the short list of 10 titles. This year Tanbridge House School is working with Arunside Primary School, Castlewood Primary School, Southwater Junior School and St John's Catholic Primary School. We have had a very successful initial group meeting and are looking forward to a visit by Philip Ridley, one of the authors on the short list. The overall winner of the award will be announced in March.



Computer Club for Girls (CC4G)

Computer Club for Girls. Year 7, 8 and 9 girls designed an interactive presentation for prospective parents to view on Open Evening. The girls were hugely enthusiastic. They enjoyed taking photographs of the school grounds and staff, if they could catch them! Whilst others set up the presentations and added written content.

The results were fantastic, informative and relevant presentations were offered, giving an overview of the school from a student's point of view.

The girls also had the opportunity this term to create their very own jingles by recording layers of sound onto a computer to create different effects!



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