



NEWSLETTER No. 2

Cornfield 'Astro'

It is now just over a year since the pupils at Vinehall were able to start enjoying the new Cornfield 'Astro' provided so generously by the supporters of the Vinehall School Foundation.

This fantastic new facility is being appreciated by staff, pupils and spectators too! The children are now able to learn on a top quality pitch and because of its size four hockey matches can be played in one afternoon. During training, the size of the pitch allows two groups to play at a time, allowing more students to be coached in any one session. Having the pitch in the school grounds has also meant that the children can spend more time playing rather than travelling by minibus to the Horntye Astro. Finally, playing home matches at Vinehall means that we now have a real 'home advantage' and we can entertain our guests properly afterwards.

As well as hockey, the Astro has been regularly used for football, tennis, netball, and cricket, so regardless of the weather or the time of day, (courtesy of the floodlights), all the children have benefited.

Bursary Support

We can reflect very positively on the difference the Foundation has made to the first Foundation Award recipients who have now gone on to pastures new. These two talented youngsters joined the school with a huge amount to offer in terms of abilities, attitude to life, work ethic and personality. Vinehall played a key role in helping them to meet their potential as both individuals achieved what was required to move onto their chosen senior schools with financial assistance from those schools to ensure their futures.

All financial assistance offered to pupils through the Foundation is means tested and genuine need is established before any offer is made to families applying for Foundation Awards. The school also needs to ensure that any child offered assistance has a clear, sustainable path to a senior school appropriate for their abilities before an Award is made. Cont/d...

Bursary support is a key aspect of ensuring we meet our obligations as a charity. As you may know the Charity Commission is reviewing fee-paying schools to see if they qualify as charities.

The Foundation is an important part of this but we need to grow the bursary funds in order to meet what seems to be regarded as an 'acceptable' level of public benefit for a charity.

Once again, we would like to thank all of you who have contributed to the Foundation and made such an amazing difference to the school.

Update on the Plans for the Theatre

As I am sure you are aware, our next capital project is the theatre. The cost of the original scheme was more than a million pounds and it was felt that it was unrealistic to have such a huge goal in the current economic climate. The plans have subsequently been revised and the costs are now about c£375,000. This will enable us to make a number of changes and enhancements which are needed to help us get the most out of this much used facility which, over the years, has made such a huge difference to the school. The plan includes:

- New seating. The seating needs improvement and replacement, with a removable section where the orchestra could be.
- Extending further into the auditorium for enhanced stage, room for the piano and improved acoustics.
- New extension at the back to include new dressing rooms.
- Finally we need to improve the heating and ventilation – as those who have been in the theatre on hot summer evening or cold winters can testify!

If you are interested in receiving more information about the Foundation you can contact Caroline Wood, Foundation Secretary Tel: 01580 883052 or e-mail foundation@vinehallschool.com. All enquiries will be treated in the strictest confidence.