



Vinehall School

ANNUAL REVIEW 2006/07 - ACADEMIC

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Year 8 Scholarships and Awards

Vinehall pupils have achieved eight scholarships this year from a scholarship class of only thirteen pupils which, although fewer than recent years, is a respectable result and much as expected. Alexander Moore was third on the Winchester election roll, an outstanding achievement.

Jarvis Duthie-Jackson	Eastbourne College	Drama Exhibition
James Harmer	Eastbourne College	Music Scholarship
Dodie James	Benenden School	Major Academic Scholarship
James Mannion	Tonbridge School	Academic Scholarship
		Drama Scholarship*
	Eastbourne College	Academic scholarship
Alexander Moore	Winchester College	Major Academic Scholarship
George Orsler	Eastbourne College	Drama Exhibition
Isobel Wingrad	King's School, Canterbury	Major Academic Scholarship

* This award was not taken up as the pupil went to a different school.

The following pupils secured places at their respective schools on the strength of some very good marks in the scholarship papers:

Alexander Cowan	Tonbridge School
Patrick Dunn	Ampleforth College
James Hogan	Eton College
Jamie Johnson	King's School, Canterbury
Seth Maynard	Sevenoaks School
George Whaley	King's School, Canterbury

This year's 13+ leavers go to the following schools: Benenden School, Cranbrook School, Downe House, Eastbourne College, Eton College, King's School, (Canterbury), Lancing College, St Leonard's School Mayfield, Monmouth School, Sevenoaks School, Stowe School, Tonbridge School and Winchester College.

The Year 8 leavers are kindly donating a sundial which will be installed in the De Beer Garden and will become a feature of science and maths lessons.

Other Leavers

Jemma Cleary is taking up a place at St Mary's School, Ascot, Zarina Olujobi is going to Roedean School and Peter Stollery is taking up a place at The Judd Boys' Grammar School in Tonbridge. Lily Prendergast and Hannah Coles are taking up places at Tonbridge Girls Grammar School and Molly Nicolson is going to Sevenoaks School. Ben Crisford is moving on to Heathfield Community College and Jessica Exley is going to Millfield School. Our Spanish visitors, Ana Gonzalo, Carmen Laffon, Ignacio Martinez-Fresneda, Ignacio Moreno, Paula Paternina and Gonzalo Sunyer all return to Spain as planned.

Also leaving at the end of term are Alicia Bassett, Alistair Gethin, Layla Hayes and Poppy Pearce from the Prep School and Rory Acock, Charles Exley, Kit Hart, Ryan Hayes, Coco and Tallulah Jacobs and Joel Pearce from Pre Prep. Reece Furneaux is leaving for a year to go to Finland but is coming back in 2008. We wish all our leavers every success in the future.

ART

It has been a busy and satisfying year for the Art Department, where children were engaging in cross-curricular projects with Maths and DT departments and the Pre-Prep school. Many children, mainly Year 7, have been attending art club to develop their creativity and art skills.

Vinehall School, filled with colour and creativity, is now displaying art, pottery and DT work from across all the year groups.

On the activity day, held at Eastbourne College, young artists from Vinehall were invited to a range of challenging and inspirational activities. This included painting, ceramics, cookery and model making. All the children agreed that it was an extremely enjoyable and fulfilling day.

The art festival week in the Pre-Prep was an excellent opportunity to celebrate the Prep School art. During that week we accommodated Year 2 for carpentry, DT and art lessons following their African art theme.

We established continuity between art projects and pottery clubs allowing children to extend their project ideas in ceramics.

The end of year was celebrated by the art scholars' exhibition and whole school art exhibition. The standard of work was very high showing skills in a wide range of media.

Art and Carpentry departments, children and parents were all helping to produce the back drops for plays and productions.

BOARDING

The boarders have had another busy term. There have been outings to Hampton Court, the National Gallery, Mount Caburn, the Imax Cinema, the Natural History Museum, Scotney Castle, Covent Garden, the Enchanted Forest in Groombridge and Newhaven Fort. There have been walks on the beach at Hastings and Bexhill, a ride up a funicular railway, sailing at Bexhill and a wonderful day of canoeing, sailing, wind-surfing and body boarding in Eastbourne. Back at school boarders have sampled a diverse range of activities including a treasure hunt, a cheese-tasting session, basket weaving and card-making, as well as the usual favourites like Mr Gunning's sports hall sessions, golf, cycling and the famous boarding house water slide. One of the boarders' highlights is usually the Startechz Rock and Pop Day, and this term we probably had our most successful yet. The Antarctic Baboons (Bobby MacLean, Jamie Johnson and James Harmer) won first prize, and staff band The Good Copies (Mrs Callard, Mrs Robinson, Mrs Judd and Miss de Meza) had the audience dancing in the aisles with their debut performance of "Help"! This coincided with the first of our Year 6 Taster Boarding sessions, which seemed to be enjoyed by all. Some of those who joined this have since signed up for full boarding, and we look forward to having them with us next year.

A boarding letter is enclosed for parents of boarders along with a list of Saturday activities for next year's Year 7 and 8 (the weekday activities form will be sent at the end of the holidays).

CLASSICS

Classics goes inter-active! All Latin classes at the computers are keen to log into Cyberlatin, the website where Mrs Cooper has added all sorts of fun activities to encourage the pupils, who in return for answering questions correctly, may “flint their teacher” amongst other things. This year saw the publication of “The Classical Word”, the 2nd CD-rom from Senlac Language Publications for whom Mr Hooper is busy preparing the Grammar Zone, available next year, and expected to be the best of the three.

Mrs Cooper’s first set of scholars produced good grades from King’s and Tonbridge and half of Mr Hooper’s Common Entrance top set gained grade A including all thirteen level 3 pupils.

In March we hosted the District 3 Satips Classics general knowledge quiz and our pupils have once again benefited from visits to Lullingstone and Richborough.

DESIGN TECHNOLOGY

In technology this year we have focused on the practical side and a large proportion of the practical work was completed. Year 8 made electronic Christmas cards before their final art and technology project, animating a pop art picture, all just finished in time for the parents evening in May. Year 7 each produced a piece of jewellery, the enamelling and powder coating producing some professional effects which were shown off in vacuum formed packaging. A display in the front hall allowed a wider audience for their work. Acrylic clocks in Year 6 and newspaper chairs in Year 5 were perennial favourites and successful as ever. There were also some imaginative ideas for the Year 6 cam models where a simple mechanism was used to animate the children’s inventions. Year 4 have enjoyed making looms and weaving. Wood turning is labour intensive from the time and supervision points of view but the wood turning club on a Wednesday enabled a small group of enthusiasts to produce some good work and push the limits on the lathes. New techniques are being tried all the time and work is now being presented in assemblies.

DRAMA AND THEATRE

“The theatre that never sleeps” is an apt description of the theatre at Vinehall.

The Michaelmas term culminated in frenzy of glitter and sparkle which was the Year 3 and 4 production of “Cinders”. The audience was entranced by the confidence of the young performers who coped so professionally with the challenge of their first full-scale production. The singers were trained to perfection by Mrs Glossop who always manages to elicit first-rate performances from the children in her charge.

Less than a week later the stage was transformed into one of the most magical vistas of all in theatre “Neverland”. Mrs Monckton’s exquisite drawing was interpreted with sensitivity and flair by the highly talented Mrs Anne Overall who brought a translucent mysticism to the backdrop. An enormous cast of sixty senior pupils graced the stage and worked the audience up into real pantomime fever, booing and hissing Captain Hook (James Mannion), clapping to revive the dying Tinkerbell (Sigi Koerner) and cheering Peter Pan (Jarvis Duthie-Jackson) in his efforts to outwit the hapless pirates.

A new venture in the Lent term saw all pupils in Year 5 presenting workshop performances of three Roald Dahl plays. Parents were fascinated to see how the children are prepared for their final performances and were pleased to be given an insider’s look at the techniques of drama teaching. Everyone was encouraged to see even the most reticent of children enjoying themselves on stage.

Twelve children were selected to enter the Group Drama section of the Tunbridge Wells Arts Festival and their interpretation of “Sherlock Holmes and the Limehouse Horror” was placed first in the competition and earned them a distinction certificate.

Forty other children from Years 3 – 7 competed in the individual Poetry and Sight-Reading classes and all were extremely successful. Jessica Compton was awarded the Festival Speech and Drama cup for gaining the highest overall mark for an individual entrant.

The Summer term is always busy in the Drama department and this year was no exception. “Bugsy Malone” proved a popular choice with many of the Year 8 pupils who enjoyed all the slapstick and splurging. The lively songs allowed everyone to feel involved in the singing and gave the audience an opportunity to enjoy both energetic group work and some excellent solo performances. Victoria Reid, Harriet Green and Isobel Wingrad all sang beautifully and won rapturous applause from the capacity audiences each night. Bobby MacLean gave a mature and wholly professional performance as Bugsy Malone, Fed Buchanan was outstanding as Dandy Dan and Charlie Hole excelled as Fat Sam.

A six-performance run is quite a tall order right at the end of the school year, but the actors all surpassed themselves and gave every ounce of their energy to each performance.

This year sees the end of Mrs Gearey’s time in the Drama department and both Miss Libby and Miss Sally Waters will also be stepping down from the posts in Costumes and Props. Mr Phil Young takes over as Head of Drama in September and he is looking forward to getting started down in the theatre. Anyone who is interested in helping with any aspect of backstage work should contact Mr Young via the office.

ENGLISH SPEAKING BOARD

3E and 3R performed splendidly with lively poems, impressing the examiner so much that they were both awarded distinctions.

All the Year 4 pupils were entered for the grade 1 individual exam and this year a record number of children scored distinctions (21) and merit plus. The examiner commented on how entertained he was and how much he enjoyed the variety of topics presented. These ranged from cat’s cradle and cricket to cooking chocolate crispy cakes. Many colourful posters were made and some have been displayed in the de Beer corridor.

FRIENDS OF VINEHALL

The Friends of Vinehall Committee Chairman this year has been Melanie Todd and Catherine Elliott has now taken over from her. The Friends have again organised a range of highly successful events this year, including the bonfire night with fireworks in the Michaelmas term to the Quiz Night and Easter sale of cakes in the Lent term. In the Summer term they organised the popular Pet Show and the summer picnic which, owing to the torrential rain, had to be moved at speed from the marquee to the dining room! They have supported the school through fund-raising and they have kindly donated money towards the school jetty, cooking equipment for cookery club, gym leotards and have given a generous donation to Pawel and Kasha Rosa, the Polish couple who are on our support staff, when they had a very nasty accident earlier in the year. The Friends also donated £2500 to Rwanda, £500 of which was raised from the sale of Christmas cards.

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE COMPETITION

This year’s General Knowledge contest opened with the usual Christmas quiz, now a popular Vinehall tradition and a fitting curtain raiser to the GK competition which runs throughout the Lent term.

The 2007 Lent term was a busy and exciting one for GK with record numbers of pupils answering daily and weekend questions and gaining extra points for their house. Those scoring the highest number of points qualified for the semi-final where they were faced with a challenging written test to see who would win themselves one of the twelve coveted places in the final. This was held on Friday

16th March in the theatre and was a keenly fought affair. It was won by Ashton, with Rushton taking second place.

Every year prizes are awarded to those who score most points throughout the whole competition. This year they went to Archie Todd (Seniors, 46 points), Charlotte McNally (Middles, 42 points) and Clara Taylor (Juniors, 34 points).

Vinehall also played a key role in two external competitions this year. In January Vinehall won their heat of the IAPS John Bickmore Shield and qualified for the final which was held in May. The hosts, Solefield School, won with 67 points but our team did very well to come 4th with 59 points and coped heroically with some very searching questions.

In February twenty pupils took part in the SATIPS General Knowledge competition. We were delighted to hear that Seth Maynard came 19th out of 900 participants in the Senior section and was presented with a book token for this excellent achievement.

MATHS

Primary Maths Challenge 2006

In November all of Year 6 plus the top mathematicians in Year 5 took part in the Primary Maths Challenge. Once again the pupils excelled themselves earning 7 gold, 19 silver and 21 bronze certificates. Madeleine Kowitz and Freddie Williams also qualified for the Primary Maths Challenge Finals which were held in February.

UK Junior Mathematical Challenge 2007

In April 60 pupils in Year 6, 7 and 8 sat this tough challenge and 35 were awarded certificates: 6 gold, 12 silver and 17 bronze. Alex Moore was the top scorer in the school.

These National Competitions are supported by many, many schools and many thousands of children participate, therefore to win an award is very special – so Very Well Done!

Maths week

Maths week was celebrated with a special mathematical hat challenge, mental maths races, matholympics and a superb challenging day by the Happy Puzzle Company which had staff and pupils solving brainteasers all day.

MUSIC

This has again been a busy year for the Music department with concerts, musicals and success in Associated Board Examinations, the Hastings Festival and IAPS courses.

At Christmas the Junior Choir visited Five Villages Oast to sing carols for the residents. The Year 3 choir joined the junior and senior choir for the Carol Service at Salehurst Church.

We attended the annual Lancing Prep. School Music Days and Year 6 had fun participating in Captain Noah and his Floating Zoo for the Choral Day. We visited Dulwich College Prep this year for the Prep Schools Orchestral Day and some of our more advanced choristers sang in the Eastbourne Choral Evensong. The junior musical, "Cinders", was a great success and involved a cast of hundreds.

The junior children enjoyed a visit from "Shake, Rattle and Roll! and the Pre Prep, Years 3, 4 and 5 participated in Samba workshops and an afternoon concert. During the Pre Prep Arts Week the strings and brass played for assemblies. The Junior Orchestra (now with over seventy-five members!) gave performances of "Mexican Clapping Song" and "Scotland the Brave" at the Orchestral Concert.

Our jazz musicians attended the Eastbourne Jazz day which was a great success. The Lancing Rock Day was great fun and the pupils looked at the workings of a rock band and the composition process.

A group of senior musicians gave a lovely summer concert at St Michael's Hospice with a performance of solos, duets and quartets with a selection from Buggy Malone and scholarship and exam pieces. The children played superbly and were charming with the old people, who were delighted to be entertained.

The senior 'cellos and senior strings played beautifully at Prizegiving and Mr Mitchell's brass ensemble has brought a festive atmosphere to the Whole School Assembly.

The eighteenth season of subscription concerts has provided some wonderful musical moments and attendances have been excellent. Our audiences, from all over Sussex, have been as keen as ever to come to Vinehall for chamber music of the highest quality. Highlights of the season included some tremendous performances by internationally renowned musicians such as Peter Donohoe, Tim Hugh and the clarinettist Michael Collins.

TOWNSEND WARNER HISTORY COMPETITION

As usual, Vinehall entered a team for this highly competitive annual inter-prep schools history competition. There were 810 candidates from leading prep schools and Vinehall, once again, was one of the strongest teams. James Mannion excelled and took first place in the entire competition. A superb achievement!

YEAR 6 CAMP

Camp 2007 was a successful venture. It was, in the words of one child, "fun and exhausting"! The occasional heavy shower did not in any way dampen our spirits as the children took part in various activities including a 10 km trek, swimming in a river, ball games, a quiz and who could forget the cricket at 5.00 a.m.!

In what proved to be the closest competition in years, the leaders throughout most of the camp, "Drake" were beaten right at the end by the "James Cook" tribe. Of course everyone is a winner in some way because all present (children and staff) experienced a great weekend.

SCHOOL GARDEN

A mild winter left a rather overgrown garden once Dr Jarratt and Mrs Pickerill set to task in the spring. Mrs Pickerill had wisely brought along garden gloves; I am fairly sure it is a scientific fact that stingers are more aggressive when in a new flush of growth! The wildlife area was planted up to fill some gaps and along the Victorian garden wall there are now a number of climbers as well as sun loving lavender and rosemary. An interesting addition has been three cardoons which should grow to be quite a spectacle, although I noted a fondness for them by blackfly.

The children's plots were cleared and some new plots added. The biggest improvement has been the addition of woodchip paths around the beds. The woodchip was recycled from felled trees in the grounds and we must thank our groundsmen for their help in transporting this as well as keeping the area neighbouring the garden free of weeds and nicely mown.

Many children have enthusiastically tended their plots. The rather damp conditions of the last half of term did subdue some people, but congratulations to Kajal Radia and Charlotte Ward on winning the cup this year. A word of advice to future contenders: keep weeding!

SCHOOL COUNCIL

The School Council has had regular meetings and has continued its work to bring the pupils' ideas forward to enable change. This year saw the successful return of Lenten Lunch, the internal references to special needs lessons changing "One-to-One" although the department is still officially Special Needs; the school council box will be renamed the Alert Box and will be used so that pupils can inform us of good news as well as problems; house photos would be introduced in September. The discussions are on going with regard to wet break activities. The senior seating plan for the dining room is now amended at the end of the Michaelmas term by the Food Committee. The Vinehall Way posters are in place around the school and will be personalised by the pupils in September during PSHE lessons.

CONCLUSION

Once again we have had a tremendous year, full of activity and achievement. This has been made possible by the dedicated and professional team of staff, who work tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure that all our children receive so many varied opportunities. Vinehall's busy timetable enables us to offer the children the best of a traditional prep school education along with the special ingredients that make Vinehall unique.