



Taking Stock

STOCKPORT GRAMMAR SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

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A ROYAL VISIT

Pupils and staff were honoured to receive a visit from HRH Prince Edward The Earl of Wessex on Thursday 18th November. Prince Edward wanted to meet children taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme as SGS celebrates its 20th anniversary of the Award, and the achievement of its 1000th Award. He was greeted by excited Junior School children waving flags as he arrived at the school, before meeting with pupils in the Hallam Hall. He talked to children as they showed him different aspects of Junior School life from sport, to music, science, handicrafts and story time. Prince Edward then met with Senior School pupils in the Sports Hall. Children at different stages of the Duke of Edinburgh Award demonstrated their work in the various sections of the scheme. His Royal Highness took time to talk in detail to the children as they showed him activities that included route planning, volunteering, music, photography, sport, animation, tactical games, fencing, dancing and climbing. The Prince was delighted to be presented with a copy of *A Walkers' Guide to the Lake District* - a book of walks compiled by pupils for their Gold Duke of Edinburgh Awards. Everyone who met Prince Edward was overwhelmed by his kindness and his interest in their activities.

The school currently has 80 pupils engaged in the Silver and Gold awards plus a record number of 96 pupils have enrolled in Bronze this year. Sophie Millington, who left SGS Upper Sixth in the Summer was invited to St James's Palace in October to be presented with her Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award by the The Duke of Edinburgh.

GEOGRAPHERS HEAD TO KESWICK

The Lake District was the destination for Geography students in the Lower Sixth as they undertook two days of AS Level field work in Keswick and its surrounding rivers and mountains.

Pupils spent their first morning studying and measuring the rivers in the Newlands Valley before reviewing Keswick's flood defences and prevention strategies. On their second day, the group walked to Easedale Tarn to explore its glacial and post glacial landscapes.



The trip formed part of pupils' AS Level physical Geography field work and provided invaluable preparation for next summer's skills examination.

PUPILS GET A TASTE OF DIPLOMATIC DEBATE



CHAMBER CHOIR DELIGHTS LISTENERS AROUND THE GLOBE

Chamber Choir performed for an international audience when, for the fourth time in three years, they were invited by the BBC to take part in Radio 4's *Daily Service*.

Directed by Mr Michael Dow and accompanied by organist Mr Simon Lole, the pupils sang wonderfully, not least soprano Maddie Hardy, who held her nerve to sing a solo verse beautifully in the first hymn.

The Autumn term was brought to a fitting close with uplifting musical performances in the Christmas Concert and the Carol service at St George's Church.



Pupils from Stockport Grammar School were once again successful at the latest Model United Nations Conference held at Withington Girls' School. Forty one SGS pupils represented Zimbabwe, Germany, Russia, the UK and Iraq; with the delegation from Russia being commended for their performance.

Ten pupils were rewarded for their impressive range of independent research and speaking, with six

pupils receiving commendations and four being highly commended.

An academic simulation of the United Nations, the conferences involve pupils researching a given nation and acting as the country's diplomats, debating and developing solutions to world problems. This time pupils debated issues ranging from forced sterilisation to alcohol and Palestinian refugees.

ART AT THE LOWRY

Boys and girls in the Infants enjoyed an artistic day out when they visited The Lowry in Salford Quays.

After exploring the artworks, Year 2 used L. S. Lowry's drawings as inspiration for their own works of art. Using different pencil techniques they had learnt, the children then created portraits and are continuing to use their newfound skills and inspiration in their art classes back at school.



PUPILS AND OLD STOPFORDIANS REMEMBER

The annual History Department World War One Battlefields Tour took place in October. Seventy pupils and eight staff travelled to the outskirts of Lille, using that as their base for visits to the Somme region as well as Ypres in Belgium. Pupils were given guided tours of the Somme, taking in the museum in Albert, the Ulster Tower, Newfoundland Park, the Lochnagar Crater and the Thiepval Memorial. At Thiepval, a wreath was laid, commemorating Old Boys who lost their lives during the Battle of the Somme in 1916.

Crossing over the Belgian border, they spent the next day exploring the sites around the Ypres Salient, visiting the Flanders Field Museum, Tyne Cot cemetery, the German cemetery at Langemarck, and the Menin gate, where they laid another wreath during the daily remembrance service.

On Armistice Day, 108 Old Stopfordians visited the school to join pupils, staff and Governors for a Service of Remembrance led by the Headmaster. Some of the pupils who had visited the Battlefields spoke to the visitors about their experience.



RUGBY BOYS PLAY FOR CHESHIRE U16S

Fifth Year pupils Andrew Ward and James Webster have gained representative honours during the Autumn Term for the Cheshire U16s rugby squad.



The boys both started at prop in an emphatic 56 - 7 win against Northumberland and have also been involved in wins against Staffordshire, North Wales and an impressive 29 - 12 victory over Yorkshire.

BUDDING ACTORS SHINE IN BLOOD WEDDING

After a term of diligent rehearsing, a talented ensemble cast of Upper School pupils produced two spellbinding performances of the classic Spanish play *Blood Wedding*. Captivating and demanding in equal measure, *Blood Wedding* told the story of lovers drawn irresistibly together. The cast tackled this difficult play which combines realism with mystical symbolism to produce a swirling and disorientating experience, which left theatre-goers with a rich and rewarding piece of theatre which continued to grow long after the curtain closed.



SPANISH ADVENTURE

During October half-term, fourteen Fifth Year and Lower Sixth Form pupils enjoyed a busy six day tour of Andalucia, Spain. Pupils took in Granada's famous Alhambra Palace, the historic town of Ronda, the caves of Nerja and Picasso's birth town of Málaga. There was even time for some relaxation in the coastal towns of Puerto Banus and Marbella.

Despite this being one of Spain's most touristic regions where English is widely understood, the pupils showed great enthusiasm for communicating in Spanish, with their confidence clearly growing as the week went on.



JUNIOR FOOTBALL: THE STORY SO FAR

The Junior School Under 11 footballers were extremely busy during the Autumn Term, amazingly winning thirteen out of the fourteen matches played. They have progressed through to the second round of both the AJIS and Stockport Metro Cups, and won all four league games played.



The boys are working incredibly hard at all aspects of their game and are gaining confidence in both their personal skills and the team's capabilities, which should ensure they finish the season with a few trophies.



INSPIRATION IN THE LONDON GALLERIES

The Art department's latest field trip saw thirty Sixth Form pupils travel to London to visit some of the capital's most famous galleries.

They spent the day visiting the collections at The National Gallery, Tate Britain and Tate Modern. Among the highlights were the works of the St Ives Group and the fighter jet hung ceiling to floor in Tate Britain. It was an enjoyable and stimulating day, topped off with a surprise journey along the Thames on the Tate Boat.

TEAM MATHS CHALLENGE SUCCESS

Sixth Formers Kaysan Nikkiah, George Toole, Suzanna Eames and Tristan Kemp represented the school in the Regional Final of the Team Maths Challenge. The team competed in three rounds, scoring 188 out of a possible 200 points. This resulted in first place for SGS, meaning that the team has qualified for the National Final in February.

NATIONAL ANTI-BULLYING WEEK UNITES PUPILS

Pupils from across the Senior School got involved in National Anti-Bullying Week in a variety of ways. One team, charged with promoting the event, secured an interview with Tameside Radio and used the opportunity to get positive press for young people who are active in their local community. Another team sold cakes to raise money to fund a fortune cookie distribution, sending compliments and anti-bullying messages to fellow pupils.

There was a pupil-led debate on cyber-bullying, First Year pupils released balloons containing confessions of bullying or being bullied and the whole school wore blue accessories for one day in order to raise awareness.



SENIOR CRICKETERS TRAIN AT LORD'S

The Senior Cricket squad, along with Mr Young and Mr Makinson, spent the day at MCC's Indoor Cricket School at Lord's. The boys were lucky enough to use the HawkEye analysis programme, used by the England Cricket Team. Their bowling and batting were filmed, the speed and swing measured, and they received coaching from the MCC coaches. Their visit was completed



with a tour of the ground and museum with a stop-off in the England Team's changing room. Results from the day's analysis will inform their pre-season training ahead of the Australia Cricket Tour in February. The fastest bowlers on the day were Oliver Hall and Matthew Schofield.

MUSICAL FUNDRAISER

Pupils from the Fourth Year to the Upper Sixth staged the school's annual lunchtime *Gig for Genesis*, organised by Vernon House to raise funds for the Genesis Appeal.

Fifth Year Daniel Paigge opened the show on vocals and acoustic guitar, before talented band *Stolen Smiles*, featuring Fifth Years Emily Houghton on vocals, Will Robinson on guitar,



Harry Vernon on bass and Rick Owen on drums, performed a selection of covers and original material.

The finale came from Sixth Form band *Casto Magnets* who gave a true rock performance, complete with dry ice, again treating the audience to their own material complemented by cover versions.

The performances were arranged by the pupils themselves and money raised on the day totalled £247.

MOCK TRIAL

A team of budding lawyers from the Lower Sixth took part in the Sir Rhys Davies Mock Trial Competition at Manchester Crown Court. Playing the roles of barristers and witnesses, the students participated in a realistic courtroom situation, presenting to a real judge. The team worked very hard in preparation, resulting in an enjoyable experience and a great insight into a day in the life of a lawyer. The highlight of the day was Arran Mackay's and Suzanna Eames's comprehensive defeat of Bury Boys' Grammar School. The performance by the entire team was a credit to the school.

COLOUR SCIENCE PROJECT

Three teams of two pupils have been selected from the Fifth Year and Lower Sixth to visit Leeds University and work on a scientific challenge over the course of this academic year.

The pupils are making water soluble dyes at school, with each team being allocated a colour. The University is supplying software for the teams to make up the inks to required formulations at school before going to the University to continue their scientific explorations.



JUNIOR SCHOOL GOES BACK IN TIME

The Junior School pupils enjoyed several days of living history during the Autumn Term, with Year 3 spending a day as ancient Egyptians, Year 4 as Romans and Year 5 holding a Victorian Day.

Year 3 spent their day dressed up, making masks and canopic jars,

learning about hieroglyphics and mummification, and enjoying drama activities.

For Year 4's Roman Day, Senior School Head of Classics Mr Thorley took the children through a soldier's drill before they were arranged in a 'testudo' formation and marched through the school. Children also wore costumes, constructed shields, made mosaics and, with the help of Classics pupils from the Sixth Form, examined a variety of Roman artefacts.

Year 5 had an entire school day conducted as it would have been in 1876. The children were expected to be silent throughout assembly and lesson time and studied reading, writing and arithmetic. Boys and girls were segregated, and teachers wielded their canes and marched up and down the classrooms in order to maintain discipline. Playtime was spent playing hopscotch and hoopla, lunch was preceded by Grace, and an energetic session of 'drill' took place before home time.



THE GREAT BRITISH WEATHER EXPERIMENT

Pupils from Year 3 in the Junior School through to the Sixth Form in the Senior School were all captivated by the weather when Dr Liz Bentley from the Royal Meteorological Society visited the school as part of the *Great British Weather Experiment*. The crew included Daphne, the VW camper van, and 'weatherman' Graham Smith, who took weather observations and webcam footage utilising the very latest in weather instruments and mobile computing technology.

Pupils were shown how to use weather measuring instruments, something they will be able to apply to the topics that they are currently being taught in Geography.



JUNIORS' CROSS COUNTRY SUCCESS

For the second consecutive year the Junior Cross Country runners from Years 3 to 6 are competing at Woodbank Park. One Saturday every month through the winter, between 25 and 35 children represent Stockport Grammar Juniors on a tough and mostly muddy course.

As we go to press, Daisy Hanson is in the lead for the Year 3 and 4 girls and Joe Davidson in third place in the Year 3 and 4 boys' competition, with many other pupils improving their placings as the weeks go on.



LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE

A small group of Sixth Formers were present for BBC Radio 5 Live's broadcast from the Labour Party Conference.

The two hour broadcast followed a pattern similar to that of BBC's *Question Time* with an invited audience posing questions to a number of senior Labour MPs and union officials including Hilary Benn, Tessa Jowell, Caroline Flint, David Lammy and Derek Simpson.

Taking place the day after the announcement of the new Labour leader, much of the debate focused on Labour's future and the, often heated, discussion saw both panel members and audience in a confrontational mood that made for a very interesting morning.



HOCKEY TEAM MAKE IT TO THE NORTH AREA FINALS

The Stockport Grammar School 1st XI hockey team continued their outstanding start to the season when they competed in the Greater Manchester Round of the National Schools Under 18s Competition.

INSTILLING A PASSION FOR BOOKS

Children's Book Week was marked with a number of activities in the Junior School, including a visit from The Travelling Book Fair giving pupils the opportunity to buy new books. Throughout the week, the foyer was filled with children trying to guess the book titles in the Book Quiz. Leah Bird, Heaven Reed and Oscar Davies were the overall winners at the end of the week.

A new weekly Book Swap Club was set up in time for Children's Book Week. With the help of Year 6 pupils Noa Van de Riet and Maddie Moss, the club is run by teacher Mrs Coombes.

Children's author and illustrator Jackie Morris paid an inspirational visit to the children. She spoke about how she had used her love of drawing to tell the 'stories in her head' from a young age, until she gained more confidence in her reading and writing. She read to the boys and girls and talked about a number of her illustrations. What captured the children's imaginations most of all were Jackie's dragons, one of which she drew for the school to keep.

The week ended with a colourful parade of Infant classes, Year 3 pupils and teachers, who were all dressed up as their favourite book characters.



A 3-0 victory over Altrincham Grammar set the girls on their way, before Manchester High School were also dispatched by the same score line. The girls took on the challenge of local rivals Cheadle Hulme, leading 1-0 until half time when an equaliser came, but Olivia Simpson slotted a ball past the keeper just before the final whistle. The team then went on to beat Bury Grammar School 6 - 0 and Withington Girls' School 2 - 0. The girls, captained by Phoebe Broome, now progress to the North Area Final.

EXAMINING MARINE LIFE ON ANGLESEY

Biologists in the Upper Sixth Form spent three days studying the island of Anglesey's rocky shore.

In work that supports their A Level syllabus, pupils spent their first day collecting and identifying organisms and discovering which species were present, before learning ecological sampling techniques and how to measure the ecosystems quantitatively.



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The External Relations Department
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STOCKPORT GRAMMAR SCHOOL
Buxton Road, Stockport SK2 7AF
Email: externalrelations@stockportgrammar.co.uk
Website: www.stockportgrammar.co.uk
Telephone: 0161 456 9000