



Taking Stock

STOCKPORT GRAMMAR SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



SGS RATED OUTSTANDING

The Spring Term saw the outcome of two significant events in the life of the school, when parents and staff received the findings of both the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) and the Parental Survey.

ISI is the body approved by the Government for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council and this visit was part of its regular programme of inspections.

The inspection concluded that in the Senior School “The pupils’ overall achievement and their learning, attitudes and skills are outstanding.” There was also high praise for the personal development of pupils and the provision for extracurricular involvement, both of which were found to be “outstanding”. Pupils in the Senior School were described as “exceptionally well educated”.

The results for the Junior School were equally pleasing, with the Early Years Foundation Stage considered “outstanding” for “overall effectiveness”, “quality of provision” and “outcomes for children”. The ISI recognised the continuation of high standards throughout the Junior School, describing “the quality of the pupils’ achievements and of their learning, attitudes and skills” as excellent. They gave the same high rating to curricular and extracurricular experiences and to the development of the pupils’ personal qualities.

In the Parental Survey carried out by RS Academics, parents filled out an online questionnaire, and an impressive 98% of respondents rated the Senior School’s academic results in the top two categories of “very good” and “good”, with 90% also rating the provision of clubs and extracurricular activities at this level.

The most popular words chosen to describe the school were “academic”, “welcoming”, “rounded” and “dedicated”.

The survey results for the Junior School were also outstanding, with 98% rating the approachability of staff in the top two categories of “very good” and “good”, and 90% also rating the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills at this level. The Junior School received responses placing them in the top three out of 30 preparatory day schools surveyed by RS Academics.



MASTERCHEF WINNERS

Luke Berry won the school's own *Masterchef 2011* after his stilton stuffed pear with a balsamic reduction followed by Patagonian beef with dauphinois potatoes thrilled the judges. Luke took home a £75 restaurant voucher along with the Middle School Masterchef trophy, while Harry Hunt was named the Lower School winner for his Thai baked salmon and coconut rice followed by chocolate and raspberry brownies.

Having already progressed through two earlier rounds, ten finalists were given just 60 minutes to cook their choice of a two course meal for the judges, chefs from Alderley Edge's *Grill on the Edge*. Winners were chosen on the basis of taste, presentation, skill and preparation.

Mrs Ruth Groves, Head of Food Technology, said: "The standard of the competition just gets higher every year and the chefs from *Grill on the Edge* were blown away by the confidence and skill displayed by the pupils."

MODEL DIPLOMATS IN BATH

Pupils from the Sixth Form enjoyed yet more Model United Nations success at the conference held at Kingswood School in Bath.

Participants researched selected nations before taking on roles as diplomats, debating and developing solutions to world problems. Representing Turkmenistan, Israel and Brazil, SGS pupils debated issues including the situation in Myanmar, the conflict in Gaza and how to solve the AIDS crisis.

After an enjoyable and intellectually stimulating weekend, the Turkmenistan delegation were commended, with individual commendations being awarded to Jack Maclaren, Will Sheard, Rob Samarji, Jamie Webb, Laura Simpson, Anirudh Mandagere and Alastair Watts. This recognition was particularly pleasing as the standard at the conference was very high, with 151 countries being represented, and some of the committees containing over one hundred debaters.

Over the past few years, the school's MUN team have attended conferences hosted by schools in Belfast, Dublin, Bath, Paris, Genoa, Yale University and St Petersburg, as well as hosting their own highly successful conference.



CANOE CLUB HEADS OUTDOORS

During the Easter break, members of the Junior School Canoe Club put their practice sessions in the school pool to good use when they enjoyed an excursion on the River Goyt in Marple with the Manchester Canoe Club.

With the help of club coach Nathan Stevenson and Senior School pupil Alastair Paterson, the children spent an hour learning how to manoeuvre their boats on moving water before some of our intrepid canoeists even managed to paddle all the way down the rapids.

SIMPLE PLEASURES WIN AWARD

The school's Young Enterprise team, *Simple Pleasures*, won the award for the Best Company Report at the Greater Manchester Strategic Final.

The team, whose aim was "to provide high quality simple luxuries in life at affordable prices", were representing the Stockport region in the final after picking up the prizes for the Best Overall Company and Best Trade Stand at April's area final.

This year's competition has also seen Stockport Grammar School named as one of just three schools in the area accredited as a Young Enterprise Centre of Excellence.



JUNIOR HOCKEY TEAM TOURS THE LAKES

The annual Lake District trip wrapped up another successful hockey season for the Junior School's Year 6 teams.

A tough fixture against Westholme opened the tour and despite defeat for the A team, the B team staged a fine comeback to win after being 1-0 down at half-time.

The girls unwound with a good meal and talent show on the Friday night, and visited Ambleside, the famous Grasmere Gingerbread Shop and Wordsworth's Daffodil Garden.

Facing Windermere Preparatory School in their final matches, the Stockport Grammar teams played with focus and energy, overpowering their hosts and ending the tour with 3 - 0 and 2 - 0 wins for the A and B teams respectively.

"ASHES" VICTORY DOWN UNDER

The 1st XI cricket squad celebrated their own 'Ashes' victory after beating some of Australia's top school sides during an amazing 12 day tour, which opened with two magnificent wins against Maroochydore State High School and Sunshine Coast Grammar School.

However, in between a day at surf school in Noosa and a trip to the zoo, Australia reduced the deficit to 2 - 1. Despite superb displays from Alex Jones, David Wright and Matthew Hughes, Matthew Flinders Anglican College defeated the SGS boys.

The tour continued in Brisbane, where they drew 2-2 with St Laurence's College. After exploring Brisbane and the Gold Coast, Brisbane Boys' College welcomed the squad for the final game of the tour where SGS won their third out of five matches.

The team celebrated their success with three days in Sydney, where they enjoyed boat trips, bike rides and sightseeing.





JUNIOR MUSICIANS IMPRESS JUDGES

Following three hectic weeks of auditions and practising, 20 children took part in the Junior School House Music Competition. In front of an adjudicator and an audience of parents and children, pupils demonstrated a whole range of musical styles and instruments. As well as pianists, there were violinists, a double bass player, a tenor horn player, a guitarist and even an accordion player.

JOURNEY ACROSS LA MANCHE

First Year pupils crossed the Channel during the Easter break to spend four days in the Picardy region of France.

Nearly 80 pupils enjoyed beautiful spring weather as they explored the town of Rue, visited the cathedral in Amiens and enjoyed a trip to a sea life centre, as well as playing team games at the 18th century chateau where they stayed.

The children were able to practise their French in the shops and markets and even sampled snails and frogs' legs for dinner.

The trip is now in its sixth year and is an enjoyable confidence-boosting experience for First Year pupils.



The winners for each category were: **Year 3** – George Zelhof, **Year 4** – James Nichols, **Year 5** – Isobel Croft, **Year 6** – Alex Chu, **Vocalist** – India Menaged

A ROMAN MYSTERY FOR WORLD BOOK WEEK

One of the highlights of Book Week 2011 was the visit from *Roman Mysteries* author Caroline Lawrence, who came to give First Year pupils a captivating talk about life in the times of Ancient Rome, her books and travels, as well as to share her secrets on how to write a gripping story - all introduced by the Classics Club's dramatisation of *The Secrets of Vesuvius*.

Elsewhere during a busy Book Week, the reading group discussed Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*, a lunchtime book swap helped keen readers exchange their old books for new, and pupils headed to "paparazzi corner" to be snapped with a book for the reading collage displayed on the Library window.

English classes from the First to the Third Year got involved too as they competed in the Library treasure hunt, while during registration pupils took part in quizzes and watched video clips of their friends and teachers recommending books.



HISTORIANS VISIT PRAGUE & BERLIN

Historians from the Fourth Year through to the Upper Sixth gained first hand experience of Czech and German culture and history on a trip to Prague and Berlin.

On the first leg of the tour, visits to Prague's Museum of Communism, the castle and the Jewish Quarter were followed by a chance for reflection as pupils visited Lidice, a village destroyed by the Nazis in 1942, and Terezin, a concentration camp where many started their journey to Auschwitz.

In Berlin, pupils visited the Brandenburg Gate, took in the Reichstag building and Checkpoint Charlie before visiting the city's new Holocaust Memorial.

The packed trip provided pupils with many valuable memories, as well as helping to improve their understanding of Nazi and Cold War history as part of their GCSE and A Level studies.



FULL HOUSE AT THE RNCM

A sell-out audience gathered at the Royal Northern College of Music for a musical performance that surpassed all expectations.

The Spring Concert brought together 131 Senior School pupils from the Wind Orchestra, the First Orchestra, the String Orchestra, the Chamber Choir, the Chorus and ensembles A Brighter Shade of Orange and The Swing Things.

The audience was delighted by a programme that included Sibelius' *Finlandia*, Chilcott's *A Little Jazz Mass*, Rutter's *Steel Away*, and Ellington's *In A Sentimental Mood*.

Sam Holmes, who has received an offer from Cambridge University to read Music, excelled as the soloist for the First Orchestra's performance of Bruch's *Violin Concerto No. 1 in G Minor*.



JUNIOR NETBALL SUCCESS

The Junior School's Under-11s netball team proved to be one of the best in the north-west with a fourth place finish in the AJIS Netball Tournament, hosted at SGS.

Attended by over 20 north-west junior and preparatory schools, the tournament saw our girls get off to the best possible start by winning all of their games to finish top of their group.

Excellent performances in the afternoon games gave the girls a highly respectable fourth place finish against some very tough opposition.

SGS's High 5 netball team also excelled as they took part in a tournament at Oldham Hulme Grammar School. The girls won all but one of their games to finish second in the competition, with only goal difference preventing them from picking up the gold medals.



HOMELESS IN STOCKPORT

Audiences gathered underneath the school's entrance archway on two evenings for *Homeless*, a Lower School theatre production devised and performed by pupils in aid of The Wellspring. Created over one weekend, *Homeless* gave the imaginative and committed cast of 30 chance to learn about homelessness, as well as the opportunity to raise money for charity.



The performance provided a moving and provocative evening of open-air theatre, with the bad weather adding to the ambience, allowing all involved to reflect on some of the real issues facing the homeless. Over £650 was raised for the Wellspring by the project.

PARIS IN THE SPRING



Some of the most famous Parisian sights were visited by Fourth Year pupils when they discovered the city's culture and improved their language skills on a six day trip over the Easter break.



CHEMISTS WOW JUNIOR PUPILS

Senior School Creative Chemistry Club pupils amazed children from Year 3 in the Junior School with a performance of their own *Legend of the Dragon*, a special showcase of experiments and tricks.

Performed by Zoe Harris, Walid Hassoon, Luke Howarth and Thomas Walton, and backed by animations by Alex Longson, the pupils made jelly babies explode, turned liquid into gold and made a chain appear from nowhere to help tell the tale of villagers banishing an evil dragon.

Once the dragon had magically appeared on a previously white cloth, the finale saw a Junior School pupil invited to the front to ignite a bubbling potion to the amazement of the audience.

LESSONS IN SAFETY FOR THE NURSERY



Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service were the latest emergency service to visit the Nursery when officers from Offerton Fire Station came to give the children a tour of their engine.

This visit came not long after Greater Manchester Police had treated the boys and girls to a talk about safety. The fire officers' visit followed a similar theme with the children being shown the equipment used to help rescue those in trouble.

After sitting in the fire engine, the boys and girls were taken to the back of the vehicle and given the chance to fire the hose across the Junior School field – a highlight of the visit for all of the children.

Days were split between French lessons and visits to landmarks such as the Sacré Cœur, Montmartre, the Arc de Triomphe, Champs-Élysées and the Louvre, whilst evenings were spent staying with local families.

The trip to Disneyland was a highlight for many, and pupils also enjoyed a boat trip on the River Seine from which they admired Notre Dame, la Conciergerie and the Musée d'Orsay.

HOCKEY CHAMPIONS

The Greater Manchester Schools Under-18s Hockey Tournament shield was added to the Stockport Grammar School trophy cabinet after the 1st XI won all three of their matches to win the competition.

The girls scored 10 goals without reply as they beat Altrincham Grammar School, St Bede's College and Bury Grammar School on their way to collecting the trophy.

Sophie Hall scored the pick of the goals with a powerful finish from an acute angle, but Lara Acott's thunderous shot and a cool finish from Amanda Bennison were also among the best strikes.

With three convincing victories and a clean sheet kept by goalkeeper Martha Watson, the 1st XI were crowned Greater Manchester champions as captain Phoebe Broome (pictured below) lifted the shield.



The Under-14s followed suit with a brilliant 8 - 0 win against Cheadle Hulme in the final of the Stockport Schools Hockey Tournament. Their winning streak saw them defeat Marple Hall, Priestnall and Wilmslow High without conceding a goal on their way to the final.



FUNDRAISING FOR STEPPING HILL



Stepping Hill Hospital's Critical Care Unit benefited from a fundraising initiative to help them purchase new equipment when Stockport Grammar Junior School pupils held their annual charity week.

After a guest speaker from the hospital visited to talk to the children about the unit, boys and girls from the Nursery through to Year 6 spent the rest of the week raising money through dressing up, selling cakes, tombolas, dancing and taking part in the 'Mathonaire' quiz.

CLIMBING IN SNOWDONIA

Thirty three pupils from the Third Year enjoyed beautiful weather and stunning views on the annual climbing trip to Snowdonia.

Staying at the Llanberis Youth Hostel, pupils walked, climbed and scrambled on Snowdon and Tryfan.

In addition to their outdoor adventures, the group also enjoyed evening talks on safety by Ogwen Valley Mountain Rescue Organisation and the Cheshire Police Air Support Unit.





ON THE FENCE

A team of six fencers represented the school in the annual three day Public Schools Fencing Championships at London's Crystal Palace, competing against fencers from independent schools across the country. This year's team consisted of Jamie Simpson L7, Aaron Mackay L5, Kristian Lee L5, Luke Dobson L4, Kim St Clair 4C and Ali Drabu 2W. Everyone fenced to an excellent standard, in particular Jamie Simpson, who ranked particularly highly in all three weapons with his best position being tenth in a field of 118. Old Stopfordian, Karol Jaworski accompanied the team as a qualified referee.



JUNIOR CROSS COUNTRY TRIUMPH

Cross country runners in the Junior School achieved some outstanding results in the Stockport Harriers Schools Cross Country League, with the Year 5 and Year 6 girls' team winning the competition for their age group and Joe Davidson finishing first in the boys' Years 3 - 4 category.

In addition, the Year 3 and Year 4 boys' team finished second in their category, the girls' team came third, and, individually in their respective age groups, Daisy Hanson finished second, Morgan Hanson was placed seventh and Christine Bradley came ninth.

Over thirty runners (pictured above) from the school entered the league, competing over a tough and muddy course one Saturday per month throughout the winter.



LEARNING LESSONS FROM THE PAST

Pupils and staff engaged in activities to mark Holocaust Memorial Day against the backdrop of an exhibition of work produced by pupils in different subject areas from both the Junior and Senior Schools.

The day began with a talk for Sixth Formers from the Head of Upper Sixth, Mr Russell, about the Holocaust, the importance of remembering the atrocities and its relevance today.

Head of Life Studies Mr Ehegartner then gave an interactive lesson to Junior School Year 5 on the topic of *Questions of Identity* (pictured above).

Holocaust Survivor, Rachel Lachs, spoke to Second Years and Sixth Formers, about her experiences during the Holocaust.

Pupils from the Lower Sixth (pictured above right), along with Head of First Year, Mrs Lawson, performed the Greek tragedy *Trojan Women*. The timeless quality of this play allowed the inclusion of references to the Holocaust in its script and staging. The play was directed by Head of Classics, Mr Thorley, who also co-ordinated the day's activities and exhibition.



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