

TAKING STOCK /

Stockport Grammar
School Newsletter



Issue 55
Autumn Term 2013



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HERE'S TO ANOTHER GREAT YEAR

A LEVEL STAR PUPILS

In a star-studded year our 123 Upper Sixth Formers had plenty to celebrate as they opened their A Level results with a 100% pass rate and 87% of results awarded at A* to B, with 56% at A* and A.

The girls and boys have now embarked on a range of degree courses at the country's most competitive institutions. Thirty eight pupils have achieved all A* and A grades, two pupils each gained four A* grades and three pupils had three A* grades apiece. Six alumni have taken up places at Oxford and Cambridge universities.

The strength and depth of achievement by the year group was shown by their attainment of 97% of all grades at A* to C. The school's excellent reputation for enabling pupils to gain entry to top universities has previously been recognised by the Sutton Trust.



GCSE SUCCESSES

Congratulations to our GCSE pupils who opened their exam results to discover that all their hard work had paid off. The year group of 168 girls and boys gained 91% of all grades at A* to B, with over 71% at A* and A.

A third of the year group achieved a clean sweep of A* and A grades. 40% of the grades were A* and 14 pupils achieved the highest grade possible in all their subjects.

Ten pupils who chose to take Further Maths attained the highly coveted score of A* with Distinction.

In commenting on this summer's exam success Headmaster Andrew Chicken said:

"I am very pleased that the girls and boys have achieved such outstanding results in their GCSEs and A Levels. Their success is well deserved and a great pleasure to share with them. I am sure that they will follow these achievements with many more and I wish those who are now progressing to university every success."

To see the latest figures and read more about some of the individual achievements and destinations of the girls and boys go to the results pages in the Senior School section of the website.



APPOINTMENT OF HEAD OF JUNIOR SCHOOL



The Governors have undertaken a thorough and careful search to find the right candidate to succeed Mr Larry Fairclough who will retire in April 2014 after fourteen years of outstanding service. We are pleased to announce the appointment of Mr Tim Wheeler as the next Headmaster of the Junior School. Mr Wheeler is currently Headmaster of Hereford Cathedral Junior School.

A classicist, Mr Wheeler was educated at the Universities of Sheffield, Cambridge and Bath. After beginning his career at Norwich School, he worked for several years as an educational consultant specialising in strategic school improvement and development planning, before serving as Director of Studies at Bilton Grange School, Rugby. He was appointed as Headmaster of Hereford Cathedral Junior School in 2008.

Chairman of Governors
Mr Ron Astles said:

"I am very pleased that Tim Wheeler has agreed to lead our Junior School forward for the next generation of girls and boys. In a strong field of applicants, Mr Wheeler's vision, integrity and warmth commended him to the Governors. We are convinced that he understands the deep-rooted culture and sense of community that lie at the heart of Stockport Grammar School and will be able to develop the Junior School's successes further."

Mr Fairclough will retire from his post at the end of the Spring Term in April 2014. He will liaise closely with Mr Wheeler throughout the coming months before Mr Wheeler takes up his new position in September 2014. During the Summer Term 2014, the Junior School will be managed by Mr Simon Milnes, who as Acting Headmaster, will work in close partnership with Mr Wheeler and Mr Chicken.

Mr Wheeler commented:

"I am delighted to have been appointed Headmaster of Stockport Grammar Junior School. From my first visit, seeing the happy faces of the children and sensing the purposeful buzz in and around the classrooms, I immediately felt at home. Schools are exciting places to be and I am very much looking forward to getting to know pupils, parents and staff over the coming months and to building on the excellent work of Larry Fairclough as I lead the school into the next stage of its development."

PUPILS' SEAL OF APPROVAL

During the 2013 Spring Term, Senior School pupils took part in an independent and anonymous survey which asked for their views on all aspects of school life.

RS Academics who administered the survey found that "pupils view Stockport Grammar School as a friendly, safe community of which they are very proud to be part. Pupils believe the academic standards of the School are high and feel they make good academic progress. Additionally, pupils believe there are good opportunities to take part in a range of extra-curricular activities and clubs." The survey found that "there are many areas about which pupils are very enthusiastic".

The most popular words chosen to describe the school were "academic", "sporty", "rounded" and "welcoming". 90% of the children rated the standard of teaching as "very high", 94% think there is a good choice of clubs and activities and 98% said they had made good friends at school.

One pupil commented:

"SGS is a very welcoming school, and I feel that I am doing very well here. The teachers are very encouraging, and are always there if you are stuck. The range of sports, clubs, music bands, and extra-curricular activities is enormous. SGS is a great school to be at, and I am proud to be there."

Thank you to all the pupils who contributed to the survey; their responses are helping the school as it plans for the future.



MARK FOSTER INSPIRES

Six-time World Champion Swimmer and five-time Olympian, Mark Foster was the guest of honour as the Senior School community celebrated the school year at the annual Speech Day ceremony. Junior School pupils listened to him speak at their morning assembly and some of the school's top swimmers were given the opportunity to meet with him, discuss swimming techniques and benefit from his motivational advice.

Mark's inspirational speech was the highlight of the Speech Day ceremony, held at Stockport's Plaza Theatre, during which he also presented

prizes to those pupils who excelled in their subjects or made outstanding contributions to school life throughout the year.

The audience was also treated to an impressive performance by the school choir of songs from *The Lion King* and heard speeches by Chairman of Governors Mr Astles, Headmaster Mr Chicken and President of the Old Stopfordians' Association Mrs Johnson. Prizewinners and Upper Sixth Formers later returned to school for a reception in the Woodsmoor Building.

WOODSMOOR – IT'S OFFICIAL

The start of the Autumn Term saw Head Girl Jenny Johnson, Head Boy Tom Morton and the Senior Prefects represent pupils at a ceremony to celebrate the completion of the Woodsmoor construction project. Lady Charlotte Beatson officially opened the Woodsmoor Building at the event which also marked her retirement from the Board of Governors following 21 years of dedicated service.

The project has seen not only the construction of 22 state-of-the-art classrooms in the new building but also an extension to the end of the Languages Building and the demolition of a number of older buildings. The next stage in the exciting transformation of this area of the school site involves the School Council in planning the best use and landscaping of the newly available play space.

FAIRGROUND ATTRACTION

It was a perfect day for the Summer Fair as the pupils and their families helped to raise funds for school projects and cash for local charity The Children's Adventure Farm Trust.

This year's fair had a fairground theme with plenty of rides for the children to enjoy alongside the traditional favourites: the coconut shy, sponge the parent, tin-can alley, penny arcade, hook-a-duck, face painting and jar hoopla stalls.

The Infants paraded in their fancy dress costumes and children learnt circus skills while parents enjoyed a barbecue and afternoon teas.



SPORTING CHANCE



CYCLING FOR CHARITY

A charity bike ride organised by Dan Thorburn and featuring a team of nine fellow Sixth Form cyclists raised over £4,000 for the Teenage Cancer Trust and KidsCan to help the charities continue their vital research and support work.

Dan, along with Harry Nicholson, Charlotte Sheard, Naz Saeed, Ben Oldfield, Dan Blears, Tom Egan, Ed O'Connor, Harry Griffin and Ryan Jude successfully completed the 53 mile ride from Manchester to Chester in six hours.

Dan organised the sponsored ride as a thank-you to the two charities who have helped his sister Katie, also a pupil at SGS, over the past eight months.

A GREAT START TO THE SEASON

The SGS sports teams have enjoyed a great start to the season with the hockey 1st XI defeating Bradford Grammar School 15-0 and a comfortable 36-0 victory for the 1st XV rugby team against Manchester Grammar School at home on a sunny September morning. The same weekend saw the netball teams achieve success at the JCA Tournament at Condover Hall in Shropshire where the U13s were Cup and Plate winners, the U14s plate winners and the U15s finished in 3rd place. In further good news for our netball girls, Megan Taylor has been selected for the U14 Greater Manchester County Academy and Olivia Ronnie and Alice Payne have been selected for the U19s Cheshire County squad.

Head of Girls' Games Miss Topping commented:

"The tournament was a great opportunity for the players to prepare for the season ahead. All the squads worked hard all weekend and it was fantastic to see the U13s win both the cup and plate competition - a great achievement."



COUNTY CUP WINNERS

After a nail-biting final against King's Chester, the U15 cricketers were named Cheshire Cup champions.

A superb all-round performance from captain Mark Orpen helped the team lift the prestigious trophy. This is the squad's second consecutive County Cup win, as they earned the U14s trophy last year, leaving coach Mr Moore rightly proud of the captain and his team.

JUNIOR SCHOOL



JUNIOR SPORTS STARS

Junior Sports Day saw Warren House celebrate a first-place finish after a day during which every competitor gave their all.

Each pupil from Year 3 upwards took part in six events to test their skill, speed and endurance, and with help and encouragement from our Year 6 helpers, the children did extremely well, particularly in a series of very

close hurdles races and a thrilling 600 metre race. With Arden House only four points behind Warren, the outcome was a very close call.

Thanks go to the Stopfordian Parents' Association who kept the spectating families sustained with sweet treats from their cake stall and provided liquid refreshment for the competitors too.



IT'S ALL GREEK

After competing against 1000 pupils in several languages, linguists from Year 6 Nikolai Krywonos, George Zelfhof and Emilia Monks reached the final thirty in the semi-final of the Junior Language Challenge for which they had to learn Greek.

The children demonstrated their understanding of a wide range of vocabulary and useful phrases which they had spent hours learning.

INFANT ATHLETES

The gorgeous summer sun meant the girls and boys from the Infants wore plenty of suncream with their smiles on their Sports Day – and their running, jumping and throwing challenges were watched by well over a hundred spectators including the new Mayor of Stockport, Councillor Chris Murphy.

Arden House were the day's winners with 447 points to Warren's 428, Vernon's 388 and Nicholson's 370 – but, regardless of their placing, all the children really enjoyed the fun and left with t-shirts full of stickers for finishing each event.



This was no easy task – Nikolai commenting

"I couldn't quite believe I was in the top three! I'm looking forward to learning Chichewa for the final!"

With his place in the top three, Nikolai will attend the Final in London where he will test his newly acquired skills in Chichewa, the language of Malawi.



A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S SHOW

Three of Shakespeare's greatest plays came to the Junior School when children from Year 5 performed gripping adaptations of *Macbeth*, *Twelfth Night* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* on an evening of stirring drama.

Directed by their Drama teacher Mrs Sullivan, the actors' grip of Shakespeare's complex language showed their understanding of some of the Bard's greatest characters and the children's performances kept the audience transfixed.

The musical accompaniment on the night was just as sophisticated as the acting, with Music teacher Mrs Cole helping the children to master some difficult chords, melodies and timing as they performed class ensembles drawn from the era's styles.

With plenty of promising performances throughout the three plays' casts, Mrs Sullivan and Mrs Cole are both very much looking forward to collaborating with the year group on 2014's Year 6 Musical.

OLYMPIC VISITOR

London 2012 Gold medal-winner Jonathan Fox MBE joined the Junior School at their Prizegiving Evening just before the summer break.

Jonathan, who won Gold for Team GB in the Men's S7 100m Backstroke at the 2012 Paralympics, presented trophies and prizes to those pupils who have made outstanding contributions to their subjects, sport and the life of the school throughout the year, and gave mementoes to the Year 6 leavers moving on to Senior School.

Pupils, parents, Governors and staff enjoyed the ceremony which also included sparkling musical performances by the Junior School's soloists, orchestra and choir. Afterwards, Jonathan generously spent over an hour meeting and signing autographs for the children.



PUTTING ON THE BLITZ

Year 5 pupils' History lessons on the Second World War came to life when they spent the day as evacuees who had travelled from the city to enjoy the fresh Stockport air and be kept safe during the blitz.



The day's activities included Mr "Ivor Shrapnel-Wound's" first aid course and Mrs "Captain Awol's" make-do and mend lessons, while Mrs "Peggie Washing-Out's" rationed cooking proved to be the surprise hit of the day, with potato hash and sugar sandwiches going down particularly well with the children, including Lydia Johnson:

"I enjoyed the food rationing because the food was nice, I didn't realise that rationed food could be so tasty!"

An air-raid siren meant a journey to the shelter after lunch, but a sing-a-long of wartime songs kept everyone's spirits high before the day got even better when Churchill's victory speech signalled the end of the war and sparked celebrations in the courtyard.

ARTS & CULTURE

PERFORMING IN THE SPANISH SUN

After the success of the music tours of recent years, it was hard to imagine how this year's tour could top previous trips but it certainly did. Fifty nine pupils and seven staff enjoyed a week of concerts, excursions and plenty of laughs in the sun.

The SGS musicians played to large audiences at four very different venues; a church in the small town of Cunit and a church in Barcelona along with outdoor performances at Barcelona's Maritime Museum and in a small village called Prima del Mar where theirs was the first concert of the Summer Jazz Festival programme.

In Barcelona there were also some impromptu performances in Gaudí's famous Parc Güell and at the beach, both of which drew large crowds of tourists and locals.

As well as performing, the girls and boys enjoyed visits to La Sagrada Familia and the Poble Espanyol in Barcelona and they had the chance to relax at a waterpark where there were plenty of adrenaline filled rides to be had!

Music teacher Mrs Taylor enjoyed every minute: **"Pupils and staff had an extremely memorable trip. The pupils were a joy to be with and were terrific ambassadors for the school."**



TAPAS TREAT

Languages pupils studying Spanish at GCSE enjoyed an end-of-term treat at tapas restaurant El Rincon de Rafa in Manchester city centre.

The group sampled all sorts of traditional dishes from Spain and took the opportunity to practise their Spanish speaking-skills.

The visit tied in nicely with the pupils' recent work on Spanish food, drink and restaurants and provided the perfect end to the first year of their GCSE course.

MUSICAL SHOWCASE

The Summer Term's annual Music Festival once again showcased the school's very best instrumentalists and vocalists on a wonderful evening of entertainment, adjudicated by respected conductor Jonathan Lo. The competitive series of recitals involved pupils and ensembles performing short pieces of music during the day's auditions, with the very best being chosen to perform in front of a Hallam Hall packed with parents, pupils, staff and Governors in the evening.

Natasha Sofla, Natalie Clarke and vocal ensemble *The Nine* won the evening's instrumental solo, vocal solo and ensemble prizes respectively, and further cups were also awarded:

Sixth Form instrumental solo

Commended – Quintus Carr, Harry Vernon

Senior ensemble

Commended – Saxophone quartet

Sixth Form vocal solo

Commended – Sam Arrowsmith, Sam Gilliatt

Other prizes

Wind and brass cup – Natasha Sofla
String cup – Ben Oldfield
Pianoforte cup – Sam Gilliatt
Flute trophy – Joanna Brown, Hannah Clayton, Jessica Lloyd, Becki Smith
Adjudicator's cup – Natasha Sofla



LEND ME A TENOR

Rehearsed and staged in less than a week, the Lower Sixth Form performance of Ken Ludwig's Broadway hit *Lend Me a Tenor* provided its audience with two evenings of top comedy.

Directed by pupils Bradley Blackburn, Kim St Clair and Lucy Pilling, the play was "an unpredictable explosion of mistaken identities and unexpected romance" set around Tenor Tito Merelli in 1930s Ohio. The production starred Alex Cosgriff, Dominic Barton, Cathal Berragan, Lisa Font, Maddie Garton, Katie Goodwin, Tasmin Ray and Harry Griffin, who had all just completed their AS Level exams.

Despite the typically unpredictable British weather forcing a last-minute change of venue from the Sixth Form Quad to the Common Room, the audiences were treated to accomplished comedic performances from the entire cast, supported by the strong backstage team.



BRINGING CLASSICS TO THE JUNIORS

First Year Classicists treated an audience of Junior School children to a trio of Ancient Greek plays. The Year 3 pupils were shown three short productions – *Perseus and the Gorgon*, *Theseus and the Minotaur* and *Pandora's Box* – which starred Oliver Helme, Amy Gardner, Megan King, Michael Gilmour, Kitty Grant, Harry Scorch, Mohammed Al-Salam, Edward Heaton, Alex Campbell, Leon Evans and even a pair of puppets made by Textile Technology teacher Mrs Vernon.

Inkeeping with the customs of the period, the audience voted for their favourite performance, with *Pandora's Box* being picked as the winner. Cast member Harry, who attends Classics Club, particularly enjoyed the opportunity to learn more about the stories themselves and said:

"I love Classics and really enjoy performing. I hope I'll be able to be involved in the Sixth Form Classics plays when I am older."

Thanks go to Sixth Form pupils Dominic Barton and Amelia Cooper who worked with the First Years on their productions.



ARTISTS' WORK ON TOUR

Some of the school's finest artists had their work exhibited at the Manchester School of Art's *Out of Schools* show over the summer. This was a celebration of pupils' work from schools across the region and showcased exceptional achievements in Art and Design, where the pupils offered their own interpretations on

the theme *In Your Environment*.

As well as having their work included in the exhibition, Abi Hunter and Nicola Ellwood were selected to attend Manchester Metropolitan University's summer school, where they received expert tuition and were introduced to a range of new techniques.

TRAVELS NEAR AND FAR

TRIP OF A LIFETIME

A team of 32 Sixth Form pupils travelled to Rwanda on a month-long expedition during the summer holidays to explore African culture, work with orphaned children and trek through the Congo-Nile divide. The main aim of the trip, made possible after months of fundraising and planning, was to discover how the country has moved on since the deaths of a million people during the Rwandan genocide in 1994.

The expedition's highlights came during the five days spent at L'Esperance Orphanage where Iona Griliopoulos remembers:

"We were overwhelmed by the kindness of the staff at the orphanage. They gave us a tour and we learned about how they are trying to become completely self-sufficient. We also spent time painting boats for an eco-hostel that the Orphanage plans to create.

We had lots of opportunities to spend time with the children, which included looking after and playing with them. We enjoyed a bonfire with the whole orphanage."

Following three nights on Amahoro Island with just a monkey for company, a four-day trek in the vast Nyungwe rainforest exposed the team to some of Rwanda's most stunning wildlife scenery, with a hike to the summit of Mount Bigugu and stop-offs at some of the forest's magnificent waterfalls. The team ended their month-long stay with an exciting safari in Akagera National Park.

Head of Life Studies Mr Alex Ehegartner, who led this trip and one to Namibia two years previously, commented:

"The pupils that took part in this expedition should be proud of their achievements. This trip is a part of their education that will never be forgotten. They are now young ambassadors for the Rwandese people and I do hope they continue to explore the world they live in."



WE HAVE LIFT-OFF

NASA's Kennedy Space Centre in Florida was the destination for an out-of-this-world trip for a team of Sixth Form physicists this summer.

Not only did pupils learn about space travel and meet astronauts during their two days at the space centre, but they boarded a space shuttle, used a mission control simulator and experienced the dizzying multi-axis trainer and trajectory chairs.

Lunch with former astronaut Jack Lousma, one of the first pilots of the iconic space shuttle, was one of the trip's highlights on a day when the group also toured NASA's colossal launchpads and hangars and explored the centre's huge exhibitions. Away from the space centre, pupils managed to fit in trips to the Orlando Science Centre and Disney's Magic Kingdom, a hovercraft ride through the Everglades and plenty of sunbathing, shopping and eating before the flight home. Sixth Form pupil Flossie Eastwood described it as:

"the best trip of my life, and we all give massive thanks to Mrs Fenton, Dr Ellis and Dr Glarvey for making it possible."

MOUNTAINEERING IN THE ALPS

On the school's third course with the International School of Mountaineering, the pupils had boundless energy and enthusiasm. They embraced the challenges and learnt an enormous amount about equipment and techniques necessary for winter mountaineering in the UK, as well as glacier travel and crevasse rescue in the Alps. They also learnt how to stay safe, with guidance on how to recognise the dangers on glaciers, how to make route choices and to appreciate weather patterns and the impact of global warming.

A combination of practical expeditions which included ice-climbing, abseiling, walking across crevasses and expert lectures on subjects such as glaciers and avalanches gave the group a varied and exciting itinerary against a backdrop of breathtaking views. They also experienced life in mountain huts, which brought its own challenges with no hot water and very 'cosy' dorm arrangements for four days!

Sixteen year old Tasmin Ray enjoyed the trip tremendously:

"This was a totally new experience – the first time I had climbed anywhere like that. My favourite day was when we climbed the glacier, and the views were stunning."



HISTORICAL TOUR

Third and Fourth Year historians visited Nuremberg, Munich and Salzburg this summer to tour some of the most historically important sites relating to the rise of the Nazis and the Second World War.

In Nuremberg the group were taken on guided tours of the city, focusing on the Nazis' annual rallies there between 1923 and 1938, and also visited the Nuremberg Trials courtroom. The superb guides on the city tour along with an excellent exhibition above the courtroom really helped to further the children's understanding of these two hugely significant periods.

The trip also took them to Dachau concentration camp as well as some key sites in Munich, before moving on to Austria where they toured the bunker system underneath the mountain which housed over a thousand Nazis to allow them to continue the war from underground.

Necessary breaks from the intense programme were provided in the form of traditional German and Austrian cuisine, stunning architecture and scenery.

The girls and boys eventually returned to Stockport after a packed few days having seen first-hand the locations of the topics they study during their work on the Second World War in the Third Year and at GCSE level.





PARTICLE PHYSICS IN GENEVA

Sixth Form physicists had the privilege of enjoying an extensive tour of CERN in Geneva before the end of the school year.

The famous Large Hadron Collider, where a Higgs Boson-like particle was discovered last year, is in scheduled shutdown until June 2015, so our team were allowed to go underground to see the Compact Muon Solenoid – one of the four detectors in which protons travelling at over 99.99% of the speed of light smash into one another.

Seeing the detector so close-up meant our pupils could admire the incredible engineering behind one of the largest and most complex experimental facilities ever built. But this wasn't the only rare privilege our pupils enjoyed, as school Governor Professor John Dainton also gave them an in-depth tour of the NA62 particle experiment on which he is currently working.

After such a fascinating day of Physics, there was still time for the group to see CERN's Microcosm Museum and explore Geneva before jetting home.

TOURISM IN THE PEAKS

Geographers from our Second Year made the short journey to the Peak District to look at the impact of tourism on the area as part of their work on National Parks.

Our pupils visited the picturesque village of Castleton, "shivering mountain" Mam Tor and Treak Cliff Cavern on a packed day of activities which allowed them to see plenty of real-life examples of conflict between the need to conserve and enhance the area while promoting its use by visitors. As well as the more obvious

negative effects of tourism such as litter and footpath erosion, our Geographers also saw how "honeypot" villages like Castleton can suffer from congestion and the displacement of shops for the local community.

All these observations will support our pupils' work back in their Geography classrooms as they continue to study the management of the UK's National Parks.



WEEKEND IN WHITBY

Whitby was the destination for the final First Year Residential of the school year, with the girls and boys enjoying a weekend surrounded by the places made famous by Bram Stoker's *Dracula*.

Staying in the youth hostel next to St Mary's Church and the ruins of Whitby Abbey at the top of the famous 199 steps, pupils listened to Mrs Lawson's spine-tingling tales from the classic gothic novel while looking at Tate Hill Pier.

Pupils also explored the Abbey and witnessed the battle against coastal erosion being fought on the cliffs below the church.

A visit to Pickering's medieval castle, a ride on the North Yorkshire Moors Steam Railway and a trip aboard a replica of Captain Cook's ship *The Bark Endeavour* all made for a fantastic weekend to help the children wrap up their first year in the Senior School.

ADVENTURE IN GRASMERE

Adventurers from our Second Year enjoyed perfect weather for plunging into rivers and climbing crags during a long weekend in Grasmere.

As always, the highlight of the annual trip to the Lakes was the physically challenging but tremendously fun day of scaling waterfalls, pool-jumping and traversing rocks in Stickle Ghyll, all under the guidance of climbing professionals.

Based at a youth hostel in Grasmere, our pupils explored breathtaking scenery during walks of the surrounding areas and had plenty of time to relax in the picturesque village as they recharged their batteries ahead of their next activities, which included kayaking on Derwentwater, abseiling and rock climbing.



WATERSPORTS IN WALES

The Plas Menai National Watersports Centre on the Menai Strait in north Wales welcomed a group of ten Fourth Year pupils in the Summer Term for a weekend of recreation on the water. Kayaking made up most of the first day, with pupils tackling the sea water around Four Mile Bridge as they learnt

how to kayak in a tidal rush and jump into the fast-flowing water from the bridge.

Sunday was spent off the banks of the Menai Strait learning how to windsurf and sail individually while enjoying the centre's stunning setting.



SUMMER SCIENCE

A group of Fourth Year scientists made a trip down to London to attend the Royal Society of Chemistry's Summer Science exhibition, which showcased pioneering science and engineering from across the UK. Hands-on experiments along with demonstrations from a fantastic group of staff helped the children to understand some of the more difficult aspects of cutting edge science. In addition to the exhibits which ranged from DNA sequencing to dark matter to carbon nanotube wires, the girls and boys also enjoyed an engaging interactive talk on medical myths and misconceptions.

Amy Suddards and Alice Coombes found the day very useful:

"We had a fantastic day... the event fuelled our scientific interests and provided thought-provoking ideas for us to take back to school."

The weekend ended with the pupils having being introduced to many new activities helping to develop their skills and confidence in the water.

ANIMATION HAT-TRICK

Animation Club's Christian Anderson dominated this year's Manchester University UK Schools Competition, winning an amazing three top prizes for his creation *Antimatter Really Matters*.

At the awards ceremony, held as part of the University's Inspirational Computer Science Day, Christian came first in the age 14-16 individual category, as well as winning the prize for the best use of Flash and the Electronic Arts Recognition Award – a hugely impressive haul from a field of well over a thousand entries from across the UK.

Christian's movie, created using professional multimedia authoring software Adobe Flash, is the result of months of hard work in his spare time and with Mr Clarke and Mrs Hodgkinson in the school's Animation Club.

Christian, who is now in the Lower Sixth and plans to study medicine at university, intends to combine his animation skills with his medical training to create animated films for hospitals to explain medical procedures to children.

Talking about the winning films he said:

"The concepts evolved over time, and with hard work and advice from the teachers it all came to fruition."

Christian has become a veteran of the competition, having won the Alan Turing prize and being highly commended and commended in 2012, and highly commended in 2011. Christian's latest win makes it the fourth consecutive year that children from the SGS Animation Club have won awards in the competition.

CONGRATULATIONS



DESIGNS ON ENGINEERING

Three engineers from the Lower Sixth have been presented with prestigious Education Engineering Scheme (EES) and Gold Crest awards after completing six months' work on a project with Cheshire-based Senior Aerospace BWT.

Ben Richmond, Daniel Smith and Raymond McCulloch designed a test rig to move a set of silicon rubber bellows in three axes simultaneously for the company, who are world leaders in ultra-lightweight low pressure air distribution and insulation systems.

The project was part of an Engineering Development Trust's scheme to encourage pupils to show industrial

enterprise, creativity and innovation while gaining extensive experience of problem-solving, team-working and project management. It also allowed our pupils to use Sheffield Hallam University's engineering workshops alongside the state-of-the-art facilities here at Stockport Grammar to develop, build and test solutions to meet Senior Aerospace BWT's specifications. Speaking about the scheme, Design Technology teacher Mr McKinna-Whitby said:

"It's been a great experience for the pupils to work with Senior Aerospace BWT on solving a real-life problem and we'd all like to thank the company for their time over the last six months."

BUDDING FILM-MAKERS

Third Year pupils Sam Howard and Finley Nolan's short stop-motion German language film *Rache ist Süß* won first prize in the Goethe Institut's national Digital Days Film Competition, with Eileen Chen, Lauren Jones, Katy Brown, Ruby Wright and Laura Welch being named runners-up.

The pupils worked on their entries in their German lessons during the last two weeks of their Second Year.

The judges chose the film as the best from a field of over 100 entries and praised Sam and Finley for their creativity, movie-making skills and grasp of the German language.





LINGUISTS EXCEL

SGS dominated the annual European citizens' National Languages Competition for Schools, by not just winning both age group categories, but also all four runners-up prizes.

Entrants in the Key Stage 5 category had to develop a teaching aid based on any European cultural topic, while pupils in Key Stage 3 produced a poster, leaflet or essay about the continent and its people.

KS5 Winners

First prize: (pictured)
Portia Hunt, Lisa Font, Ruby Cotter and Catherine Whatley
Second prize: Harrison Marsland-Quinn, Ben Oldfield and Tom Egan
Third prize: Megan Casey, Helen Merrick and Lydia Griffiths

KS3 Winners

First Prize: Arisha-Jane Marsh, Holly Royle and Hannah Jones
Second Prize: Lucy Daniels
Third Prize: Rebecca Hill and Hamaad Chaudhry

With half the marks awarded for the quality of language and the other half given for vision, appropriate content and ingenuity, the girls and boys were rewarded with vouchers and the prizewinners' trophy for their talent in producing engaging and accurate content in French, German and Spanish.

The competition, open to all schools nationally is supported by the Independent Schools Modern Languages Association, the Alliance Française, the Goethe-Institut and the Instituto Cervantes.

DEBATING IN GERMAN

Fourth Year German pupils practised their debating skills when teams from each class debated against one-another, and proved themselves to be competent linguists. The teams who made it to the final had five minutes to prepare their debate on the unseen title 'Everyone should learn a language'. Both teams gave outstanding performances and debated convincingly, but Natasha Lodhi and Emily Morton-West won by a narrow margin.



German teacher
Mrs Christmann said:

"Well done to all participants. They all demonstrated a great ability to think on their feet in German."



CAMBRIDGE FRESHERS EVENT

SGS was pleased to be asked to hold the first-ever Cambridge University Pre-Freshers event for students from across the north-west. Hosted by the chaplain, Rev Liz Leaver, the evening was an important part of the settling in process for the students who attended just a few weeks before the start of their first term at Cambridge. Old Stopfordians (2012) Suzanna Eames and Chloe Withers helped at the event and are pictured with 2013 leavers Peter Smith and James Brett.

SUMMING UP...

Following his outstanding performance in the Junior Mathematical Challenge earlier in the year, Second Year pupil Sam Howard was invited to take part in the Junior Mathematical Olympiad in June. Not only was he awarded a Distinction for scoring in the top 25%, but he achieved a Gold medal for his excellent performance along with a prize for being amongst the top fifty entrants in the country.

A TASTE OF MODEL UNITED NATIONS

Newcomers to MUN excelled during their debating debuts while representing China and Iran at a conference in Manchester.

Ali Drabu, William Wicks (outstanding delegates) and Lili Jones (commended) picked up awards in their individual debates while all our pupils made significant contributions during discussions on weapons of mass destruction, Syria, the rights of women and international terrorism.

Delighted with his award, Ali said:

"MUN encourages everyone to get involved and it gives us great experience in public speaking."

UN is a simulation of the United Nations and this particular event was aimed at younger, inexperienced debaters.

It has whetted the appetite of our First and Second Years who are very keen to be involved in future conferences across the UK, as well as the events we host here at Stockport Grammar, the most recent of which was organised entirely by our pupils and attracted over 250 pupils from other north-west schools.



BRIGHT FUTURE FOR INNOVATORS

Winning the Best Presentation award in May's Young Enterprise Young Innovators Final in London looks like it will be the start of a bright business future for school team *Kaizen*, who have developed an innovative sports drinks bottle.

The team were represented at the final by Alex McKeown, Ryan Jude, Aaron McRoberts and Will Spence. Their product was praised by competition judge and presenter Rahul Powar, Head of Mobile Application Development at Thomson Reuters, for its slick and innovative design.

The team were also named as best company runners-up and Alex McKeown reflected on the successes of the day:

"Most importantly we were able to network with the business community and speak to potential investors."

An application for a patent means that company managing director Alex doesn't want to reveal too much about the product at the moment, but there are plans to take the business further this year.

Initial funds came from fundraising projects throughout the school year by the team, which includes Daniel Thorburn, Ben Haigh, Cara Bills, Vinay Mandagere, Amelia Cropper, Will Coombes, Emily Crossley, Vicky Webster, Gwen Harris, Nicola Ellwood, Shareef Sbaiti and Ben Hamer.



UP POMPEII

Second Year Megan King's moving short story about the catastrophic eruption of Mount Vesuvius in AD79 has taken third place in the 11-13 years category of international Ancient Rome writing competition The Golden Sponge-Stick. The annual competition, named after a ghastly artefact that might have been found in ancient Roman latrines, is promoted by *Roman Mysteries* author Caroline Lawrence, who visited SGS on World Book Day in 2011.

The youngest entrant in her category, Megan said:

"I did it for fun – I really love writing and I was proud to do so well."

Her research of Vesuvius and her knowledge of Roman daily life helped her finish so highly among over 200 other entrants, and her harrowing first-person account of the immediate aftermath of the volcano can be read in full on Caroline Lawrence's blog.

