



# Maryhill High School

## *A Media Arts College*



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### **End of Summer Term Newsletter July 2009**

Dear Parents,

Here is your final newsletter of the school year. You will find also a summary of student attendance and achievements in your child's yeargroup. Has your child featured in these this year?

#### **Uniform reminder**

A complete uniform list was published in the last newsletter. Please refer to this when buying items for next school year. Ties and blazer badges are available from the school for £2.50, which is cost price.

#### **The da Vinci day**

Friday 3 July saw all of our students taking part in a variety of activities that had been inspired by the life and work of the great Italian artist and scientist Leonardo da Vinci. This 15<sup>th</sup> century genius was responsible for so many brilliant original works, ranging from paintings (Mona Lisa) to inventions (helicopter, tank, mirror writing). The students all participated in a challenge or discovery activity that took the place of the normal timetable, enabling mixed age groups to plan and carry out the tasks. So, lots of skills were developed such as problem solving and working with others; key skills that the students will need when they go out into the world. At the end the students agreed that the day had been really enjoyable and, yes, they had been learning as well! There will be more days like this next school year. To see pictures of the day go to the school website.

Also significant was the £350 from the non-uniform day raised for the Mandaur Primary School in the Gambia. This school is in a very underdeveloped and poor part of Africa and it is being supported by our students who are working with Mark Bright. We are really pleased that Mark has retained his links with us and has introduced our students to a world so different from theirs. There is more information on the website.

#### **Students' Fashion Show**

Organised entirely by the Student Council, this event took place in the hall on 9 July. The aim was to raise money for the charity of the students' choice, Epilepsy Action and the Council's own projects in school. Again, paying £1 for the privilege of wearing their own clothes meant that the students donated £200 to the charity. The show was introduced by Lily Savage (aka Mr Nicklin) and other staff also showed what good taste (or otherwise) they had in fashion. Most impressive was the way the students were able to look after the show themselves, from encouraging staff and students to take part, to contacting the charity to arrange a guest speaker and arranging for the press to attend.

## **Marie Steel**

Students have also been active in raising money for ex-student of Maryhill Marie Steel, who is a cancer sufferer. The school was also open on 4 July for a family fun day organised by friends of Marie.

## **And that's not all ...**

Friday 10 July was the official launch day for the North Staffs Prostate Cancer Support Group website. You can visit this on [www.nsprostatecancer.org.uk](http://www.nsprostatecancer.org.uk) and if you do you will see a fully functional, professional website that gives information and contacts to help cancer patients and their carers. But the amazing thing is that the site is the work of our students! Year 11 students in Mrs Burgess' ICT class finished their exam work early and, having already achieved their target grades, were able to work on the design of this website. Thanks to the students, Mrs Burgess and Mr Dooley for putting together a really fine job and another example of how active our students are in supporting community projects.

If any other community groups would like us to design a website for them we would love to hear from you.

## **Calling all gardeners!**

Friday also saw the **George Finney Memorial Garden** opened officially by the Mayor and Mayoress of Newcastle-under-Lyme, Marion and Carol Reddish. The Reddish sisters are daughters of the first headteacher of Maryhill High School (or Kidsgrove Grammar School as it was at first). George Finney taught at the primary school for many years and was the high school chair of governors until his untimely death in 2007. He had the vision of using the grounds the schools share as a source of learning experiences for the students and this memorial garden, which you are welcome to see (ask at the office for the key) is the first stage in realising that vision. You will be able to find pictures on the school website. We would also like to call on any local gardeners who might like to hold a "master class" for our students to contact the school, so if you are a keen gardener or know a friend or relative who might be interested please let us know. George's garden contains all manner of flowers, fruit and vegetables and it has been sponsored by many local community bodies and the Lottery Fund.

## **Staff retirements**

Three long serving staff are retiring this summer. Mrs Leese our librarian has been at the school for 15 years. Many students will know her for her patient work with them at lunchtimes.

Mr Farrar our subject leader for geography is leaving us after 26 years. Many hundreds of students will have him to thank for enriching and widening their knowledge of the world, both in class and on field trips.

And last but by no means least; Mrs Matthews leaves us after 36 years of service. During this time she has been a teacher of PE, RE, maths and citizenship and head of year, head of KS4 and assistant head in charge of student support. She has guided hundreds of students and helped them to develop into mature and responsible adults. Not only that, she has developed a multitude of links with charities and community groups and involved our students in many different activities to support these groups, thus making them more aware and building the ethos of caring that is now such a strength of the school.

We wish Claire, Dave and Jan all the very best as they start the next stage of their lives.

### **The teaching awards**

I mentioned in the May newsletter that Mr Chapman had reached the finals of the teaching awards. Although he did not win he received a commendation, itself an outstanding achievement. Well done to Mr Chapman! The teaching awards scheme runs each year and individuals can nominate staff. If you would like to nominate any member of staff here please contact the office and we will help you to do it. Simply being nominated gives staff a tremendous boost.

### **Advance notice for 2010-11**

Holiday dates for the next but one school year are affected by the position of Christmas and Easter Bank Holidays (all dates inclusive):

Autumn half term 2010	25 to 29 October
Christmas holiday	20 December to 3 January
Spring half term 2011	21 to 25 February
Easter holiday 2011	11 to 25 April
Summer half term 2011	30 May to 3 June
Summer term ends	22 July

### **Thursday 16 July**

School will finish early, following a final awards assembly, at about 1pm. We will supervise any students who need to be picked up later. Please let the form tutor know via the planner.

### **Holiday dates**

Dates for 2009-10 were included in the April newsletter and will be given again as you will receive a calendar of school events in September. If you have lost these dates and wish to book holidays for 2009-10 please contact the school or check on the website. Staff return to school on Monday 7 September and students start back on **Wednesday 9 September**.

Have a good summer break  
Yours sincerely,

Dr A Jones  
Headteacher