



Wargrave Life

Introduction & Welcome

Dear parents, families and friends,

With 8 new starters in September everyone has settled well into the new school year and we anticipate a thrilling year ahead.

September began with a positive acknowledgement from the DCSF (Department for Children, Schools and Families) for our revised and restructured governing body on which parents Sue Olive and Billy Duncan were elected as parent representatives, and ex-pupil Tom Hawkins father, John was elected as Community governor. We are recruiting for Local Authority and Sponsor governors at the moment, but already, the feeling is that meetings are more streamlined and governors' responsibilities clearer.



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

We were reaccruited with our Investors in People award in September and you can read more about this and the new Governing Body in the next issue.

Children themselves have also won awards - their successes in Boccia and swimming are reported on the back page. Very well done to them all!

You may recall the popular British Food Fortnight organised last year for pupils by the catering staff. It literally 'went down so well' then that kitchen staff drew up another fabulous menu this month which was enjoyed by children and staff alike. Thanks to them for their hard work and effort - a very enjoyable treat!

You may also have read or heard in the news about the government abolishing Key Stage 3 SATS. Whilst SATS aren't the focus of learning and teaching at Wargrave, we are proud of those students who achieve in this area and we will be keeping a close eye on what's being proposed by the government to take their place.

Read inside, too, about the new Secondary Curriculum. Having met with colleagues from other schools, Wargrave embraces these changes in school curriculum and we aim to implement the new strategies across the school over the next two

years as we believe this new approach suits our pupils' learning styles.



I am pleased to announce that Gennie Hyde is now the new Head of Education, following rigorous interviews earlier this month. I am certain that through her commitment and high standards of work, Miss Hyde will ensure that the quality of education at Wargrave continues to meet and exceed current values, and I am sure you will join me in wishing her the best of luck and every success for the future.

Best wishes also to Natalie Harrison who gained promotion to Senior RCW for Extended Services.

Extended Services continue to gain support from local authorities, more new pupils accessing the range of facilities on offer here.

If you require any further information, then do get in touch with Steve Bentley (Family Liaison Officer) who will be happy to discuss the programmes.

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Wargrave House School

Issue 14—24 October 2008

Dates for your diary

☉ Staff Inset Days

Monday 3 November

☉ School Opens

Tuesday 4 November

☉ L64 to Space Centre

Tuesday 4 November

☉ Lakeside to Pizza Express

Wednesday 12 November

☉ Anti-Bullying Week

Monday 17 November

☉ Parents Evening

Wednesday 19 November

☉ Book Week

Monday 24 November

☉ Carol Service

Thursday 11 December

☉ School Close for Xmas

Friday 19 December

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Front Page (continued)

It may be half term next week, but there will be an exciting development starting during the half term break. We are preparing to install two brand new classrooms for Lakeside students which should be in place before Christmas, if all goes to plan. We hope to involve students themselves in equipping and moving into the unit and will keep you updated with progress.

Once again, I am overwhelmed by the support for the school from parents and friends with many donations over this last term from families of ex-pupils, and local community and businesses. Donations totalling nearly £500 in cash and including classroom equipment (a microwave oven) will go

towards development of our Extended School Services programmes. We are now looking towards developing a social skills and leisure area on the upper school playground and will be fundraising for play and leisure equipment for this area over the year.

Next half term, leading up to Christmas, promises to be another busy one, so check out the diary of events to make sure you don't miss anything.

Thank you, once again, for your continuing support.

Sheila Jaeger,
Director of Services

Great British Food

Following last years success we celebrated British Food Fortnight again this year and judging by the feedback we received in the dining room the majority of children and staff seemed to enjoy the 'rustic menu'.

Old favourites like Hot Pot, Shepherds' Pie, Roast Beef & Yorkshire Pudding and of course Fish, Chips and Mushy Peas 'went down' extremely well.

As we approach winter we will be adding some of the favourite meals to the new winter menus, which will be in place when we return after half term. Thanks for all your support. The Kitchen Staff.

News from Steve

Hello everybody,

As usual I've been reading information received in the post. Trafford Link Newsletter have listed some websites, one, Signpost may be of interest. It provides information about Autistic Spectrum Disorder and the specialist services available in the UK. The site is designed for parents, people with ASD and professionals. This can be found at

www.signpost/autism.org.uk

Turn2us is a new charity which will provide an on-line service to help people obtain relevant information about all the benefits and grants that are available.

This website can even offer support in applications, the address is

www.turn2us.org.uk

Don't forget I'm only a telephone call away, if you need any help on any subject please get in touch.

Regards, Steve Bentley

Booked Up

As part of the National Year of Reading the Book Trust has organised a programme to promote reading as a pleasurable pastime amongst year seven secondary students, an age where the focus on reading and reading skills can seem to wane. As a participating school all year seven students at Wargrave House will, in the next two weeks, be evaluating a pack of books supplied by the Booked Up programme and, with support as appropriate, be selecting their choice of free books. It is hoped that the books will be available for the students to take home before the Christmas holidays.

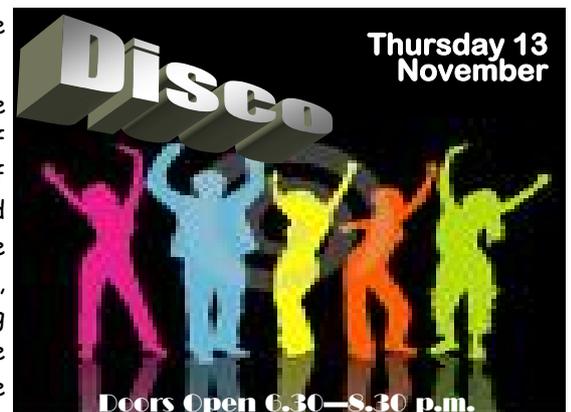
Meanwhile in school we are having a big push amongst staff and pupils to support the Year of Reading through the increased use of our school library. We are hoping that students will, through the directed teaching sessions that will be taking place in the library, come and use the

facilities to enhance their leisure time activities and continue to value reading and sharing books. I think being able to use the bar code reading, just like the librarians at the local library, to take out and return the books independently, will enhance the experience for our students.

Viv Austen

English

Co-ordinator



FoneAid

You may remember this time last year reading the article asking for your old or unwanted mobile phones. I registered our school with an organisation called FoneAid. I am sure you will be pleased to hear that we collected 47 phones altogether for we recently received a magnificent cheque for £174.00.

FoneAid guarantees that every phone is either reused in developing countries or recycled therefore diverting 100% of the phones collected from landfill sites where they cause serious environmental problems.



Due to the excellent response last year I am registering with FoneAid again this year in the hope that we can collect even more phones. I was hoping that you, your friends or

relations would be willing to collect phones on the school's behalf in your workplaces, if this is possible please contact me and I will provide posters etc for display.

Thank you all for a wonderful effort last year I am sure with all the new phones which will be purchased as Christmas presents we would be delighted to receive the old unloved ones to ensure that they benefit the environment and our school.

Anne Marshall,
Senior Teaching Support Assistant.

Sharing Good Practice

Senior members of the school staff have recently been involved in a new initiative to share good practice and promote Wargrave House School as a centre of excellence for education in ASD.

The first of three 'Professional Induction' programmes took place in September with two further courses planned throughout the year. The training is offered over three and a half days providing specialist induction programmes in:

- © Overview of ASD
- © Communication
- © Supporting Behaviour

Once again, training was very well received and feedback reflected a recognition of the value of such a service and the excellent practice which continues at Wargrave House School.

Further support for the wider education community has also been provided through the following:

- © Half day induction support for NQT teacher from Brookfields Special School in Widnes
- © NAS Accreditation support for

staff from Kingsbury Special School in Skelmersdale

- © One week work experience placement for Beth Murphy, a Year 10 student at Rainhill High School, St Helens.

Gennie Hyde, Head of Education

Congratulations

go to

Jim Scott

Kirsty Siddeley

& Natalie Harrison

on successfully
completing their

NVQ Level III

in

Health & Social Care

WELL DONE

Research Request

Recently I received an email from a Research Assistant from the Hesley Group. Below is an extract from the email. If you wish to take part in this research please contact me, Sheila Jaeger, at school.

My name is Elly Pegg, I am a research assistant for the Hesley Group who run residential schools and colleges for people with ASD. We have been approached by Professor John Matson of Louisiana State University to assist in an international research project aimed at developing new assessment instruments for children with ASD. The aim of this study is to develop reliable and valid questionnaires that will assess symptoms of ASD, challenging behaviour, and symptoms of other difficulties (such as nervousness, hyperactivity) often experienced by children with ASD. We are looking for children under the age of 16 who have been diagnosed with an ASD to take part in the study. Parents and/or staff who support their child will be asked to complete a questionnaire regarding their child's behaviour, as well as the associated emotional and behaviour difficulties.

Fundraising

Further to the successes of our 'Playground Project' we are now looking to raise funds for Phase II. Work has already been undertaken in school to identify how best to develop the grounds surrounding the playground to ensure safe and stimulating leisure opportunities for all students.



You may recall we ran a scheme called 'FoneAid' which Anne Marshall, Senior TSA from T1, has written about on the

previous page. Following students requests, we have already purchased three scooters with the money raised and now we're looking at a suitable storage area.

Thank you for the fantastic response to our recent requests for Tombola prizes. As you will recall from my previous letter, Jackie Burton (who has a son in LG2) has volunteered to run an entire Christmas Fair in aid of our school. There have been numerous donations and I look forward to sharing news of the final amount raised in our next newsletter. If you would like to attend the Fair it's on November

1st at Latham Hall in Penketh, Warrington starting at 1.00 pm. Good luck and thanks to Jackie for her continued support.

Staff and students are busy working on the proposed developments for Phase II. These plans will feature in our Christmas newsletter.

Many thanks for your continued support. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you or your friends and family have any further ideas to support our fundraising efforts.

Gennie Hyde

Head of Education

Staff Hello/Goodbyes

Three members of staff have left us this half term. Rebecca Moss and Cheryl Taylor both Teaching Support Assistants and Joanne Melling, Residential Care Worker. Thank you for all your hard work and good luck in your future careers.



We have no 'Hellos' to report in this edition of the newsletter but we have had a few job advertisements running, interviews have been conducted and hopefully we will be able to introduce new staff members in the next newsletter.

Jeans for Genes Day



On Friday 3rd October students and staff took part in the annual Genes for Jeans day, raising

funds for 18 different charities which help to fund care for children affected by genetic disorders across the UK. Students and staff always enjoy having a break from uniform and we managed to raise a fantastic £96 this year whilst looking great! - as demonstrated by a very enthusiastic T3 - well done

everyone, looking forward to next year!



Lucinda Duffy

Deputy Head

Staff Training

Continued professional development of all staff remains a key element to supporting practice and whole school development. There have already been a number of training opportunities for individual staff which have taken place since our return in September.

☺ Lucinda Duffy—Exams Officer Induction training with the National Assessment Agency (NAA) at the Midland Hotel, Manchester.

☺ Jacky Bennison—5 Day TEACCH course in Birmingham to support her role as TEACCH co-ordinator throughout the school.

☺ Nic Breslin, Michelle Heneghan, Natalie Harrison, Katy Knowles and Joanne Harrison—Minibus Driver Safety Awareness Assessment Course.

☺ Gennie Hyde & Lucinda Duffy—11-19 New Secondary Curriculum,

Leading the change workshops run by the National College for School Leadership (NCSL), Lancashire.

☺ Katy Knowles & Linda Van Der Hoek—First Aid Award.

☺ All Waking Night Staff—Administering Medication.

Gennie Hyde

Head of Education

New Curriculum, Gennie Hyde

You may have noticed some changes to your son/daughter's timetable which include new 'areas' of study rather than traditional subjects. This is to reflect the exciting development in the secondary curriculum. The new curriculum is being introduced in all schools throughout the country aimed at raising standards which will help our learners to meet the challenges of life in our fast-changing world.

Changes to the curriculum at Key Stages 3 & 4 will be phased in from September 2008. The aim is to create a curriculum that:

- ⊙ Motivates and engages learners
- ⊙ Ensures young people gain knowledge and skills in English, Math and ICT
- ⊙ Ensures that assessment supports teaching and learning
- ⊙ Gives schools the flexibility to personalise learning and design a curriculum that meets the needs

of their learners

- ⊙ Enables a smooth progression from primary, through secondary and beyond.

At Wargrave House, staff have been working to develop opportunities which incorporate the 5 outcomes of Every Child Matters and will enable our young people to become:

- ⊙ Successful learners who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve
- ⊙ Confident individuals who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives
- ⊙ Responsible citizens who make a positive contribution

The new curriculum continues to recognise the importance of subjects while placing a strong emphasis on the development of skills for life and work. A framework for personal, learning and thinking skills—under the six headings of independent enquirers, creative

thinkers, team workers, self-managers, effective participators and reflective learners—has been built into the curriculum.

In order to achieve these outcomes and to provide meaningful, engaging and ASD specific learning opportunities a thematic approach which includes special 'themed weeks' each term has been established. You may already be aware that our first week 'Book Week' is planned for November. This will be followed by 'Positive Lifestyles' in March 2009 and 'Enterprise & Industry Week' in June 2009.

Here at Wargrave House School we are excited by the opportunities such flexibility will provide for our learners and look forward to successful outcomes for all.

If you wish to know more you can find information on the following website: www.qca.gov.uk

Handy Information

Natalie Critchley, Teaching Support Assistant, who also has a daughter with ASD thought you may be interested in a great website she has found run by The Princess Royal Trust for Carers:

www.carers.org

Natalie has gleaned tons of useful information, tips and ideas and says it has an excellent discussion board and a fantastic chat room!

She also wanted to pass on a few other pieces of information that you may not be aware of and could find useful.

- ⊙ I am sure you know that disabled bus passes are available from any age but did you know that from June 2008 you can now use them

nationwide, they can also be used on trains and ferries and in some local authorities they also entitle a carer to travel free.

- ⊙ Depending on your needs you may be entitled to have some utility bills capped, water bills in particular. Contact your providers for more information.
- ⊙ Any carer or companion can get free admission to the cinema with a CEA card. The card costs £5.00 but lasts several years. You can download an application form from www.ceacard.co.uk its well worth the money!

See you at
the
Carol Service
at St Peters
Church
Thursday 11
December



Boccia Championships 23rd September 2008

On Friday 23rd September Wargrave house entered two teams of pupils from Games Club, into the Merseyside Boccia Championships held at Greenbank Sports Academy in Liverpool.

The venue was packed with teams from all over Merseyside and as a result the atmosphere was electric.

Wargrave B Team got off to a flyer beating their first opponents though the competition was not as one sided as the 7-1 score line suggested. This set the mood for the rest of the day with Wargrave A winning all of their games.

It became evident that the two strongest teams would contest the final - Wargrave A verses Wargrave B - a clash of the Boccia Titans.

The contest was a closely fought affair with never more than two points won at each end. Eventually Wargrave A won through with a 4-1 victory.

Nevertheless both teams were winners on the day demonstrating outstanding skill, excellent teamwork and an attitude to fair play and participation which was exemplary.

Well done all !!!



Merseyside Swimming Gala 9th October 2008

October again saw the annual Merseyside Schools swimming gala held at Europa Pools, Birkenhead.

As usual the venue was packed and the competition fierce.

Wargrave House sent a small but strong team and were able to compete in all races for which they were eligible and as always made a good fist of the competition.

Out of 16 races competed in, Wargrave House had 16 first places, 4 second places and 2 third places, if a team prize had been awarded Wargrave House would have no doubt been crowned champions.



Special mention should go to Oliver Dunlop who was the only pupil to compete in and win races in all three strokes, Freestyle, Backstroke and Breaststroke.