



The
CHATHAM & CLARENDON
GRAMMAR SCHOOL
Federation

NEWSLETTER: DECEMBER 2011

Staffing News

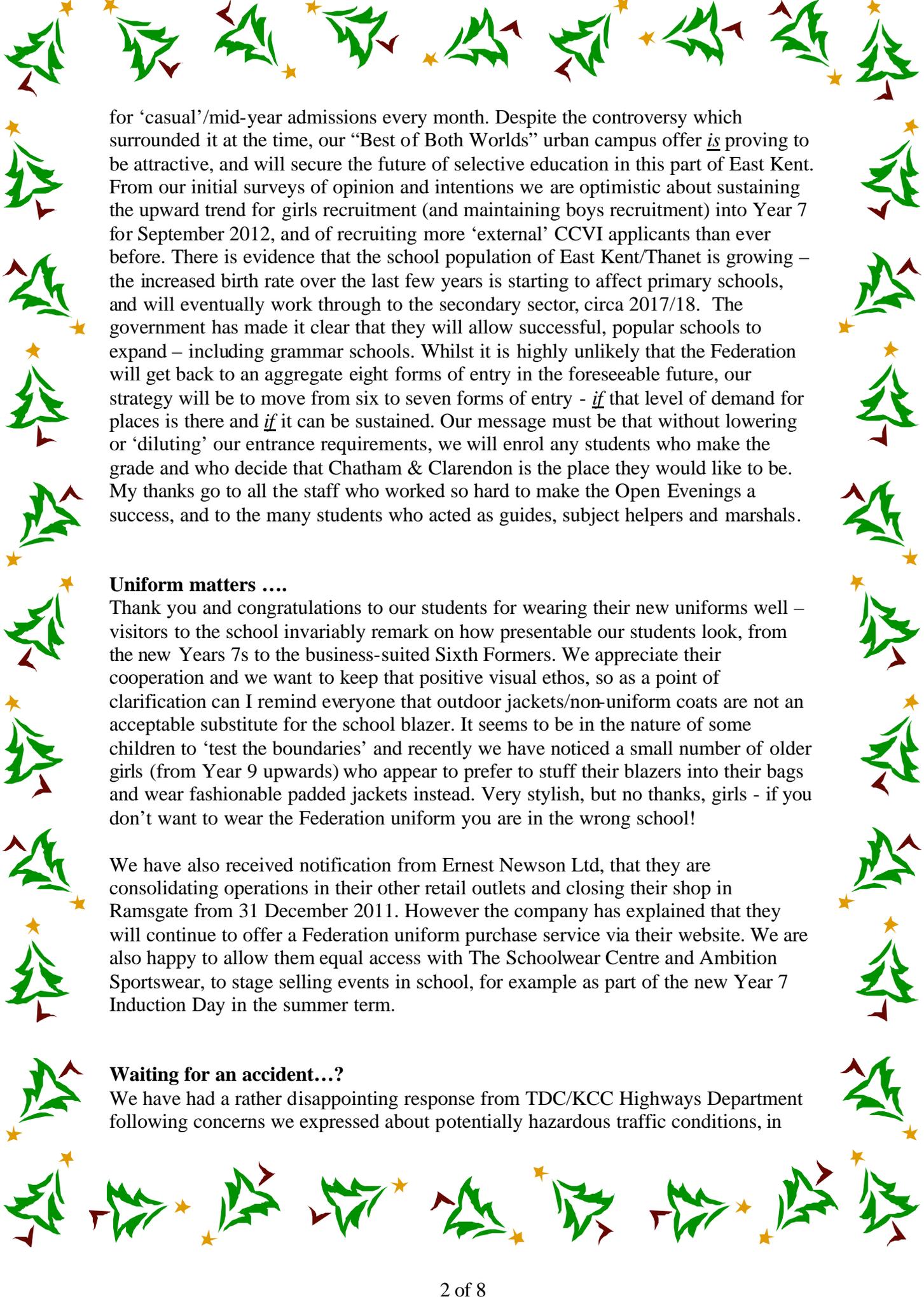
On behalf of students past & present we wish Ms Kouthouri every success and happiness in her new promotion as Head of Physics at St Lawrence College from January, and thank her for all her hard work at the Federation. From January for the rest of this academic year the staffing gap will be covered by Mr Wakeling, a highly experienced Physics specialist; we will be advertising for a permanent Physics post in January, to start from September 2012.

We also welcome Mrs Blackwell and Ms Christodoulou, both experienced specialist teachers, to cover a staffing gap in English for the rest of this academic year.

Terms 3 & 4 are 'high season' for making GCSE and Sixth Form option choices, identifying staffing needs, initial timetable planning, and recruiting teaching staff. Federating the schools, operating the functional merger and the extra resources generated by Academy status undoubtedly helps to maintain a wide curriculum and the staffing levels needed to deliver choice for students. Separately neither school could support a viable Sixth Form, operate a full KS4 GCSE curriculum, or invest as much to improve the learning environment. Unlike most other Thanet schools we have also managed to avoid the necessity of redundancies, although because the economic position will be very tight for the next few years we cannot relax our efforts to operate on cost-effective lines.

A strategy of expansion in the future

I am delighted to report high levels of attendance on all three recruitment evenings (the two Year 6 into Year 7 Open Nights, 18th & 20th October, and the Sixth Form Open Night: 1st December), with lots of very positive feedback from visitors to the school. The Admissions Registrar, Mrs Hurrell, is organising tours for prospective students and their parents on a weekly basis, and testing in response to applications



for 'casual'/mid-year admissions every month. Despite the controversy which surrounded it at the time, our "Best of Both Worlds" urban campus offer is proving to be attractive, and will secure the future of selective education in this part of East Kent. From our initial surveys of opinion and intentions we are optimistic about sustaining the upward trend for girls recruitment (and maintaining boys recruitment) into Year 7 for September 2012, and of recruiting more 'external' CCVI applicants than ever before. There is evidence that the school population of East Kent/Thanet is growing – the increased birth rate over the last few years is starting to affect primary schools, and will eventually work through to the secondary sector, circa 2017/18. The government has made it clear that they will allow successful, popular schools to expand – including grammar schools. Whilst it is highly unlikely that the Federation will get back to an aggregate eight forms of entry in the foreseeable future, our strategy will be to move from six to seven forms of entry - if that level of demand for places is there and if it can be sustained. Our message must be that without lowering or 'diluting' our entrance requirements, we will enrol any students who make the grade and who decide that Chatham & Clarendon is the place they would like to be. My thanks go to all the staff who worked so hard to make the Open Evenings a success, and to the many students who acted as guides, subject helpers and marshals.

Uniform matters

Thank you and congratulations to our students for wearing their new uniforms well – visitors to the school invariably remark on how presentable our students look, from the new Years 7s to the business-suited Sixth Formers. We appreciate their cooperation and we want to keep that positive visual ethos, so as a point of clarification can I remind everyone that outdoor jackets/non-uniform coats are not an acceptable substitute for the school blazer. It seems to be in the nature of some children to 'test the boundaries' and recently we have noticed a small number of older girls (from Year 9 upwards) who appear to prefer to stuff their blazers into their bags and wear fashionable padded jackets instead. Very stylish, but no thanks, girls - if you don't want to wear the Federation uniform you are in the wrong school!

We have also received notification from Ernest Newson Ltd, that they are consolidating operations in their other retail outlets and closing their shop in Ramsgate from 31 December 2011. However the company has explained that they will continue to offer a Federation uniform purchase service via their website. We are also happy to allow them equal access with The Schoolwear Centre and Ambition Sportswear, to stage selling events in school, for example as part of the new Year 7 Induction Day in the summer term.

Waiting for an accident...?

We have had a rather disappointing response from TDC/KCC Highways Department following concerns we expressed about potentially hazardous traffic conditions, in



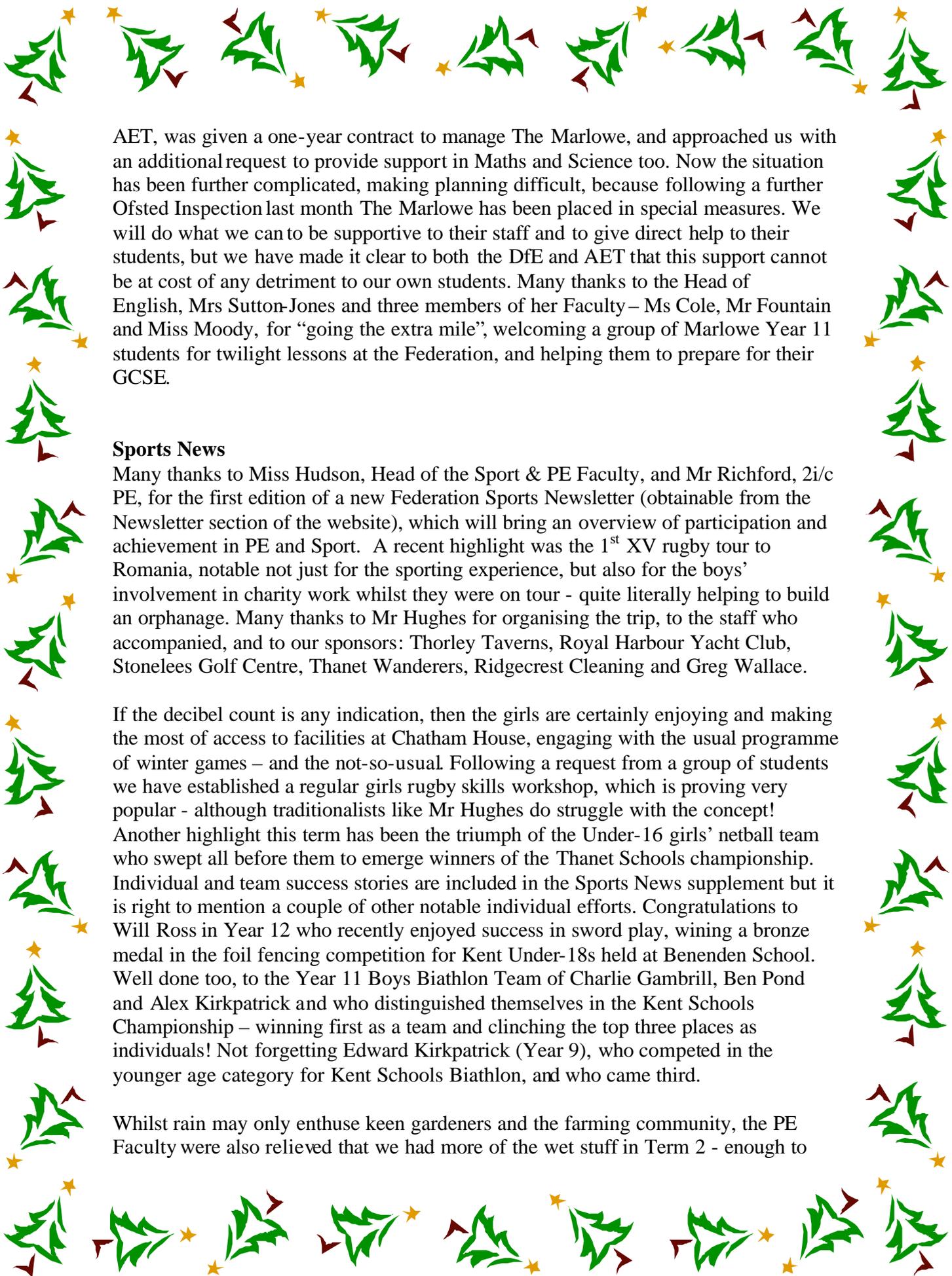
particular around the Lower School (Chatham House) site. Whilst everyone appreciates that local government funding has been cut, the relevant authorities say they cannot put up hazard warning signs because their criteria for prioritising expenditure are based on reported accidents and associated injuries. In a nutshell these stipulate that there has to have been a pattern of personal injury crashes within the last three years before they will put up signs. The difficulties around Chatham Street are there for anyone to see – at peak times up to 600 students will enter or exit the school mostly on narrow pavements - parking narrows the road further and some vehicles go down or up the road at excessive dangerous speed, there are no “School: Slow!” signs, there is no designated safe crossing point, and the safety barrier to fence a small section of the pavement directly outside the school we have been promised still hasn’t been installed. The problem has been exacerbated by work to convert the former Netto site to an Asda store. For our part we have deployed more staff on ‘gate duty’ and continually remind students about the traffic hazards and the importance of taking great care – thank fully the vast majority respond sensibly. However I must remind parents, again, *please* do not park in ways which makes the situation even more difficult – i.e. parking on the zig-zags, double-parking outside Farleys, etc.

Connecting with the real world

It has never been more important for students to relate their subject choices to what awaits when they join ‘the real world’. The more so in the light of government cuts and a change of focus from 2012 which will mean a sharp reduction in the Connexions service, and an end to Work Experience below Sixth Form level. Our Careers & Guidance Manager, Mr Fenner, is looking to work with parents/carers who would like to assist our students investigate and plan their future career path. This help could take the form of speaking to interested individuals or small groups of students about your own career path, vocation or profession: we are sure there is a wealth of expertise ‘out there’ and this is an opportunity for some direct input into the work-related curriculum at the Federation. Additionally, any assistance that parents/carers could offer our students in preparing for interviews would be greatly appreciated. If you feel you would like to know more or get involved in the careers programme, please contact Mr Fenner by email kfenner@clarendonhouse.kent.sch.uk

Support for The Marlowe

As part of their national policy whereby newly-designated “outstanding” Converter Academies support the work of other schools in challenging circumstances, we were approached by DfE officials to organise support for The Marlowe Academy. A senior HMI, acting on behalf of the School Commissioner, Elizabeth Sidwell, visited the Federation in July to request that we provide The Marlowe with specific assistance for GCSE English during this academic year. In September another Academy chain,



AET, was given a one-year contract to manage The Marlowe, and approached us with an additional request to provide support in Maths and Science too. Now the situation has been further complicated, making planning difficult, because following a further Ofsted Inspection last month The Marlowe has been placed in special measures. We will do what we can to be supportive to their staff and to give direct help to their students, but we have made it clear to both the DfE and AET that this support cannot be at cost of any detriment to our own students. Many thanks to the Head of English, Mrs Sutton-Jones and three members of her Faculty – Ms Cole, Mr Fountain and Miss Moody, for “going the extra mile”, welcoming a group of Marlowe Year 11 students for twilight lessons at the Federation, and helping them to prepare for their GCSE.

Sports News

Many thanks to Miss Hudson, Head of the Sport & PE Faculty, and Mr Richford, 2i/c PE, for the first edition of a new Federation Sports Newsletter (obtainable from the Newsletter section of the website), which will bring an overview of participation and achievement in PE and Sport. A recent highlight was the 1st XV rugby tour to Romania, notable not just for the sporting experience, but also for the boys’ involvement in charity work whilst they were on tour - quite literally helping to build an orphanage. Many thanks to Mr Hughes for organising the trip, to the staff who accompanied, and to our sponsors: Thorley Taverns, Royal Harbour Yacht Club, Stonelees Golf Centre, Thanet Wanderers, Ridgecrest Cleaning and Greg Wallace.

If the decibel count is any indication, then the girls are certainly enjoying and making the most of access to facilities at Chatham House, engaging with the usual programme of winter games – and the not-so-usual. Following a request from a group of students we have established a regular girls rugby skills workshop, which is proving very popular - although traditionalists like Mr Hughes do struggle with the concept! Another highlight this term has been the triumph of the Under-16 girls’ netball team who swept all before them to emerge winners of the Thanet Schools championship. Individual and team success stories are included in the Sports News supplement but it is right to mention a couple of other notable individual efforts. Congratulations to Will Ross in Year 12 who recently enjoyed success in sword play, winning a bronze medal in the foil fencing competition for Kent Under-18s held at Benenden School. Well done too, to the Year 11 Boys Biathlon Team of Charlie Gambrill, Ben Pond and Alex Kirkpatrick and who distinguished themselves in the Kent Schools Championship – winning first as a team and clinching the top three places as individuals! Not forgetting Edward Kirkpatrick (Year 9), who competed in the younger age category for Kent Schools Biathlon, and who came third.

Whilst rain may only enthuse keen gardeners and the farming community, the PE Faculty were also relieved that we had more of the wet stuff in Term 2 - enough to

return the pitches to playable condition. We are now hoping for very few hard frosts over the next few months, so that the full programme of practices and fixtures can be completed!

We are pleased to welcome Mr Walton back to the staff team as our new School Games Organiser (a new role funded directly by the government and replacing the now defunct SSCo programme). Mr Walton will continue and strengthen our existing links as a former SSCo hub school with a large number of primary schools, and take a lead in organising activities to celebrate the Olympic Games and the post-Olympic legacy.

Royal Command Performance and other music news ...

Friday 11th November was a special day for music staff and students, who played “by royal command”! The new Turner Gallery was packed with assorted local dignitaries who had been invited to celebrate the royal visit and official opening of the Turner Contemporary. Such is the Federation’s reputation for producing high quality music, our concert wind band was invited to play for the



official reception. Yet another skilful performance earned praise from many of those present – for example the heads of other local secondary schools, were highly complimentary about the standard of musicianship and the composure of our performers. The students got a grandstand view of the Queen as she arrived and Prince Phillip spent a little time with the band talking with Miss Hollman and members of the band. Almost as thrilling was the impromptu TV interview afterwards by Rob Smith of BBC News South-East – sadly in the event only a very small snippet was actually broadcast - but many thanks to Rob for the time he spent talking with our musicians.

Many thanks to all the parents and friends of the Federation who are regular or occasional shoppers at Waitrose and who dropped their green token into the Chatham & Clarendon box during Term 2 to support our Music Dept. The upshot is a cheque for £282 from Waitrose which Miss Hollman will be putting towards Music software for the benefit of students from Years 7 to 13.

Within the school the next phase of the minor works programme to develop the basement areas of Chatham House as our Music Centre of Excellence, is to create a new full size recording studio facility, adding to that which already exists in the Music Studio (aka “The Pit”). Many thanks to Mr Gibbons for his hard work in designing and fitting out the new facility which will be fully operational from January.



If you need further evidence of just how good the Music at the Federation is, do come along to one of our world famous (ahem!) Christmas concerts. Held on Tuesday 13th & Wednesday 14th December at the Holy Trinity Parish Church, Broadstairs from 7pm. Tickets are £6 and £3 and available from the music office or Chatham House main office. These concerts are always delightful and very popular occasions so anyone intending to come along is reminded to get their tickets sooner rather than later.



★ The music team are also starting work on a longer term project, to produce a CD-DVD double pack, Year In Music, showcasing the best of music making at the Federation throughout the year. This will comprise a selection of items from concerts, shows, competitions, group and individual musicians of all ages – to stand as a memento of their time at the school and, no doubt, a gift to delight family and friends. The aim will be to offer free copies in exchange for a suitable donation to music department funds!



★ The Music Department has had a particularly exciting start to this academic year and has evolved since combining resources with Clarendon in September, which means that our highly dynamic musical activity can continue to develop further. We now have the advantage of a unified team of staff which means we have a range of musical disciplines in one place. We are very pleased to have welcomed our GTP to the department, the very lively and enthusiastic Mr Ovenden. Amongst the various Extra Curricular Ensembles which we host, Mr Ovenden has established a Steel Pan Group which caters for pupils who are absolute beginners and not necessarily familiar with standard notation. Miss Hollman has been leading a Ukulele Club since last Academic Year which is also for beginner pupils and has been met with a remarkably enthusiastic response. We are therefore very proud to be able to say that, the music department have ‘something for everyone’! The other, longer established, ensembles; Choir, Jazz band, Intermediate Band, Advanced Vocal Ensemble (AVE), Barbershop Group, Senior Wind Band, String Ensemble, Jazztet, and Flute Choir continue to progress and flourish.



★ Encouragingly is the percentage of Year 7s who have taken up instrumental lessons is higher than last year and the range of instruments being taken up is wider. There are a notable number of junior pupils taking part in the various ensembles mentioned above. We are establishing a tradition in the Lower School of an annual Carol Service, which started last year after a hiatus of around a decade. This year two rehearsals are being held for this event. Apart from the obvious outcome, which is to achieve a good sound on the day, we also hope to reduce our pupils’ self consciousness about singing, and to encourage their participation and enjoyment of communal singing. Music is one of the great strengths in the Chatham & Clarendon Federation and we are confident that this will continue.





Other charitable fundraising

Both the boys and girls are engaged in year-long campaigns to raise money for their chosen charities. Naturally Federation students also support the various national good causes which have become regular features of the fundraising year. With some donations still to come in, the total raised so far for Children In Need stands at £1,224. Many thanks to all who supported this for their generosity.

Parent Governor Election

I am pleased to advise you that as a result of the recent parent governor election process, we have appointed two new parent governors. We are currently processing their details and will update the governors list on the website early in the New Year.

Politics with a Capital P

Many thanks to Mrs Da Costa and Mr Lewis for organising the recent CCVI trip to Parliament to attend a Sixth Form Politics Conference. Our students have always been interested in the workings of the political system and recent cuts to EMAs and increases to university tuition fees, have served to sharpen their concern! The speakers included Tony Benn, the Rt. Hon. Alan Duncan MP Minister for International Development, the Rt. Hon. John Bercow MP the Speaker of the House of Commons, former Home Secretary the Rt Hon. David Blunkett MP, Simon Hughes MP Deputy Leader of the Liberal Democrats, Sir George Young MP Leader of the House of Commons and Nigel Farage MEP Leader of UKIP and parliamentary candidate for South Thanet in 2005. After the conference the students walked across to the Houses of Parliament to listen to debates in both the House of Commons and the House of Lords.



Talking of politics parents/carers may also be interested in the latest official circular from the DfE which encourages parents/carers who may be eligible for **Free School Meals** to apply. Further information about this can be found via the following link:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/premium/b00200056/increasing-registrations-for-free-school-meals-and-the-pupil-premium>

Use of Photographic Images

In common with most schools we like to publicise the achievements of our students, both in the news media and in our own publications and website. When students join the school as part of the induction package of documents we offer parents/carers an explicit 'opt-out'/do not give permission to use photographs clause. Full details of the school policy can be found on the website in the document zone or via the following link: <http://www.ccgrammarschool.co.uk/2/document-zone>



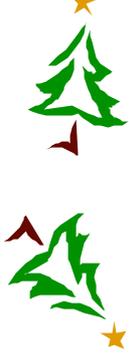
Buildings News



We are currently working on the detail of plans to convert Clarendon House Library to a specialist “Art & Design Barn” for GCSE and A Level students, hoping to complete the project by Term 4. We will then be able to concentrate all the Social Science subjects, including Business Studies, in the CCVI Centre. This in turn releases space in the Clarendon main building for an additional computer suite, to support subject learning and serve as a private study facility at breaktimes. Many thanks to Federation Librarian Mrs Myhill for her hard work in adapting the Chatham House Library as a central resource for Key Stage 3 students - we will enhance this next summer by adding a specialist annexe for Sixth Form students.



A successful bid to the Academies Emergency Repair Fund has secured circa £70,000 of DfE grant to carry out safety work and upgrade the mains electricity supply to the Chatham House site. This expenditure illustrates the scale of problem after the final cancellation of our £multi-million BSF Wave 4 rebuild - namely there are several areas of our campus which badly need improvement works. Whilst the very oldest buildings, the original Victorian Chatham & Clarendon House structures, are in better condition, the 1960s/70s era science-maths ‘wing’ is in a poor state, generating disproportionate amount in heating and maintenance/repair costs. We have already reached the point where it makes more financial sense to replace it with modern modular specialist accommodation than keep patching it up. The leadership team and governing body, assisted by Project Manager Steve Rose, are currently investigating the options to replace all the ‘Maths Mobiles’ and the worst sections of the Redman Wing with a new integrated STEM Block (Science, Technology & Maths) from September 2012. Of course we will continue to press for “basic need” and repair funds from central government, but we are also in talks with interested parties, looking to capitalise assets we don’t use – i.e. “The Red House”. Subject to the Secretary of State’s approval this would liberate funds to help tackle the legacy of unsuitable buildings.



And finally

Here’s wishing everyone a very happy and relaxing Christmas & New Year break, with the usual reminder that school resumes for Term 3 on Wednesday 4th January 2012.

