

### *Message from Ms J Costello, Principal*

We are now almost half-way through the Spring Term, and consequently half-way through the school year. It is amazing how quickly the time passes by!

As always, students at the Academy have been busy demonstrating their talents and accomplishments in a variety of ways, which I hope you will enjoy reading about in the newsletter.

The Academy's drive towards "Outstanding" continues, and we were very pleased with the successes highlighted by the recent DfE performance tables, including those areas which are the focus of the current government, such as 5 A\*-C including English and Maths and exceptional performances in both core subjects. It is particularly pleasing that of 55 schools nationally with a similar intake, we are ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in terms of our performance at GCSE for 2014.

It only remains for me to wish you a restful and enjoyable half-term break and I look forward to continuing to work in partnership with you to ensure that all of our students are enabled to achieve to the very best of their considerable ability.

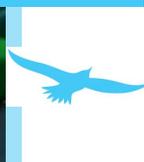
### **Spring term Book Fair**

We are delighted to share the news that our Scholastic Book Fair held in February was extremely successful. Students could browse the selection of over 200 books, including award winning authors, and choose titles they wished to purchase. It was a great way to get everyone enthusiastic about books and reading every day.

This was the third Book Fair held at the Academy and each event raises funds to buy new books for our Learning Resource Centre (LRC). The February event raised £289.24 for the Academy, increasing our grand total to £858.59. Thank you to everyone who purchased books and stationery, and we look forward to replenishing the shelves in the LRC.



### **Learning Resource Centre**



Our brand new Learning Resource Centre had its inaugural use during the Year 8 Opening evening on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> February.

Students and parents /carers had the opportunity to see first-hand this superb new facility at the Academy. New equipment, books, dedicated activity areas, quiet reading and learning zones, ICT provision, a state of the art teaching wall, and information centre, along with a new careers and meeting room, will benefit all at the Academy.

The Learning Resource Centre will be open to the whole Academy after half term, where it will be phased in by year group, for students to gain direct experience of how this new area is going to be used.



### **Let's make our Academy Outstanding!**

My Student Voice leaders organised and led school assemblies for all year groups on how we can all contribute to making our Academy outstanding.



Presentations included raising awareness and promoting a culture that values education and the wonderful learning environment we now have since the build programme. They spoke about how young people could emulate the passion and success of Malala, the youngest Nobel Prize Winner, who has dedicated her life to the right of all children to education.

Addressing the assembly, Amy Cooper, Year 9, said, "We are proud of Malala and everyone who is trying to be the best they can be. Let us all play a part in making our Academy an outstanding institution of learning, achievement and success."



Congratulations to all those students who have excellent attendance this term. There is a proven direct link between student attendance and higher achievement. For example, six days absence in an academic year equates to 30 hours lost learning time.

Good attendance helps improve learning because students do not miss lessons and therefore allows them to manage and plan their work.

Our Academy goal for students is a minimum of 95% attendance. We therefore ask that, where possible, any medical appointments are made outside school hours, and if this is not possible, students should return to school promptly.

If your child is going to be absent please call the attendance hotline 01621 787855.

Attendance %	School days lost	Learning hours lost per year	Learning hours lost over 5 years
99%	2	10	50
97%	6	30	150
95%	9.5	47.5	237.5
90%	19	95	475

## Ormiston Rivers Academy Parent Forum

Rivers Parent Forum held their first meeting of 2015 in the Academy's brand new Teaching and Learning suite on

Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> February. Principal, Ms J Costello welcomed the Forum members and thanked them for their continuing support of the Academy.

Along with Maths teacher/KS3 Coordinator, Mr Conway, Ms Costello highlighted the progress being made by our reporting tool, Go 4 Schools and the next step which will enable parents to access teacher assessment and reports electronically. This is a major part of our endeavour to involve parents in monitoring the progress of our students towards their targets.

The Forum also paid a brief visit to our new state of the art LRC which will be open to students very shortly.

Most parents will now have seen our revised student progress reports from the Go 4 Schools platform, and your feedback has been excellent. We continue to plan for online access for parents by the summer term, and in the meantime paper copies will be made available for you.

During 2014-2015 academic year, the following student reports have been issued or are planned:

Year 7	February Interim Grade Report	April Full Written Report
Year 8	January Interim Grade Report	March Full Written Report
Year 9	January Interim Grade Report	July Full Written Report
Year 10	February Full Written Report	May Interim Grade Report
Year 11	December Full Written Report	March Interim Grade Report
Year 12	December Interim Grade Report	February Full Written Report
Year 13	December Interim Grade Report	February Full Written Report

## Student Reports

You will receive a text from the school when your child's report has been issued. Please continue to let us know of any changes to your e-mail address, and any other changes to address and telephone details. Any changes should be e-mailed to [mhall@ormistonriversacademy.co.uk](mailto:mhall@ormistonriversacademy.co.uk), or addressed to Mrs M Hall, Data Administrator, Ormiston Rivers Academy.

## Cats, The Musical



Students from the Academy's Performing Arts Department went to the London Palladium on 19th January to see Andrew Lloyd Webber's legendary musical 'Cats', starring Pussycat Dolls singer Nicole Scherzinger. The show is based on a poem by T S Elliot about a group of felines called the Jellicle Cats and features hits such as 'Macavity: The Mystery Cat', 'Jellicle Song for Jellicle Cats' and 'Memory'.

It was an excellent opportunity for the GCSE students to learn about the real life world of musicals and theatre, and to encourage them to develop their own skills in dance, drama and music. Sitting in the Royal Circle at the theatre, the students had a wonderful view of the stage show.

Performing Arts teacher, Miss M Davies accompanied the students to the theatre and commented, "All students thoroughly enjoyed the musical and their experience in the West End of London. They were a credit to the Academy and the knowledge gained from this trip will help with the skills development unit of their studies."

they awarded two students, Alan Morhall and Rhys Newton, first place; the runner up was Leah Griffin.

Alan Morhall cooked pan fried sesame chicken with mango hollandaise and steamed broccoli; the dessert was lemon and almond cheesecake. Rhys Newton prepared salmon en crouete, duchess potatoes, spinach and tartare sauce followed by white chocolate cheesecake with a strawberry coulis. The two winners were awarded their chefs white jackets; all three successful students received cheques, and everyone collected a certificate from the competition.

Mrs Anita Smith, Head of Design Technology at the Academy was overjoyed with the standard this year: "All the students were outstanding, producing two high quality meals in an hour and a half is no mean feat! I am very proud of their achievements. We are now preparing for the district finals and wish our students every success."

This year, the Geography Department had the opportunity to present one student from Years 8 through to 13 with the Academy's Endeavour Award. This prize rewards a student for going the extra mile, constantly striving to be their best, with a relentless work ethic shown on a daily basis. Declan Brown in Year 9 has won this award which provides him with a fully paid trip to the Bay of Naples on the upcoming Geography International Trip to Italy!

## Endeavour Award



After hearing the excellent news Declan said, "I cannot believe I got this, it's great... am I really going to Italy?". Miss Judge, Head of Humanities at the Academy, commented, "Students like Declan study relentlessly hard every day, with such a committed work ethic. It is extremely pleasing to reward outstanding geographers, and I would like to congratulate Declan on achieving this prestigious award."

## Rotary Young Chef Competition

Year 11 Food Technology students participated in the first stage of the annual Rotary Young Chef competition. Their challenge was to create a nutritious and healthy main course and dessert for two people with a budget of £10, in just 90 minutes.

Work in the Academy's teaching kitchens was intense as the students showcased their food preparation skills and cooked an amazing selection of food. They were assessed on the techniques used, planning skills, budget, presentation and taste. Head Judge, Academy Chef Paul King, and Rotary Club representatives were so impressed with the menus that



## North Norfolk Coastal Study

A-level Geography students attended a weekend residential trip to the North Norfolk coast in January. They took part in various geographical skill improving activities, including research on the impact of tourism in Cromer. They conducted investigations of Index of decay and Index of tourist impact – a method of measuring and comparing - along with tourism retail mapping. In the nearby small town of Holt, they looked at rural studies along with mapping the change over time for this settlement.



Coastal and river studies are such a big part of geography that no fieldtrip could be considered complete without them. Students undertook an in-depth coastal study at Clifton Way and Overstrand: the coastal protection methods employed in this region gave excellent food for thought and discussion. Beach and groyne profiling were key skills embedded in this area. Finally, everyone put on waders and got up close and personal with the River Glaven where they measured the wetted perimeter, gradient, float time, flow velocity, and decided upon how best to apply Power's Index to pebble size and shape.

Head of Humanities, Miss Judge commented, "The behaviour and enthusiasm of all the students who participated on the trip was excellent. Students were working from 9am until 9.30pm both days of the trip, and while they were tired upon their return on Sunday night, the geographical skills embedded over the weekend will be invaluable to their upcoming examinations."



## Enigma

ICT students visited Bletchley Park on 12th January as part of their GCSE studies. The purpose of the trip was to explore and discover the history behind computing, to challenge mathematical ability by attending a workshop on codes and cyphers, and to take a tour of the site. Two students wrote about their experiences on the day:

"Our class travelled to Milton Keynes by coach and went to Bletchley Park to look at the Enigma machine and see how they work and how they helped during the Second World War. They showed us different types of codes and ways to decipher them, and make them up. We looked at the facilities at the park and its impact during the war. We also learnt about the code breakers who lived there, as well as the mansion that they worked in. It was interesting to see how much they helped during the war." Nathan Tracey.

"We travelled to Bletchley Park in Milton Keynes to look at the Enigma machine and see what the park did in the Second World War. We had some code breaking activities to do when we arrived and we learnt about codes and cyphers. We also learnt how the Enigma machine works and its use during World War Two. We then had a guided tour of the park and looked at many of the facilities that were used back in the 1940s. I enjoyed my experience at the park as it was fascinating to see how the people that were there helped to win the war and the equipment they used." Josh Trussell.

## School Closure Procedures

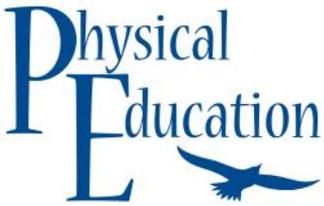
Essex County Council have introduced a new weblink to ensure that information regarding unplanned school closures is available on the internet.

[www.essex.gov.uk/Education-Schools/Schools/Dates/Pages/Emergency-School-Closures.aspx](http://www.essex.gov.uk/Education-Schools/Schools/Dates/Pages/Emergency-School-Closures.aspx) will update as information is received from schools.

Should the Academy feel it necessary to close, for the safety of students, a text will be sent to parents early in the morning advising them of this decision. Information will also be posted on the website [www.ormistonriversacademy.co.uk](http://www.ormistonriversacademy.co.uk). In the event that the Academy makes the decision to close during the school day; due to deteriorating weather conditions and to ensure that students can return home safely, the same procedures will be followed. It is imperative that the contact and emergency plan details are complete, and up to date, in the student Learning Journal; this can be found on the inside front cover. It should be noted that the Academy will only take the decision to close following consultation with bus companies, the Highways Agency and Met office; safety of our students is paramount.



## Cross Country



During lunchtimes of the week commencing 2nd February, students in Year 7 and 8 participated in the Academy's Inter Mentor cross country event. Even though the weather was cold and sometimes snowing, the competitors, student spectators and PE staff all enjoyed the event.

Eighteen Year 7 boys took part and all completed the race. Harry Duck finished in 1st position, Harrison Scofield in 2nd and Jamie Rashbrook in 3rd position. Eight Year 7 girls took part and all finished - Aimee Freeman achieved 1st position, Daisy Hogger was 2nd and Anntony Harwood in 3rd position.

In the Year 8 girls event there were six competitors where Jessica Crosbie finished in 1st position, Rebecca Crosbie in 2nd, and Neve Johnson in 3rd position.

*Well done to everyone who entered the competition.*

## Year 9 Netball

Undefeated! What a fantastic term to be able to describe the Year 9 netball team at this point in the year. The girls have developed both their own skills and the team performance to become a strong team within the MESSA league. They have had excellent support and training from our parent/coach Vicky Symons who I would like to thank on behalf of the girls and the P.E. Department. I would also like to thank Mrs Angela Mahoney for securing the girls a quality new match kit which they will be proud to wear.

The girls have one game left to play against Sandon School on 24<sup>th</sup> February and the CESSA tournament on 10<sup>th</sup> March.

Congratulations girls on your successes this year! *Ms K Nicholls*

Netball Training: Monday 3.20pm



## Rotary Youth Leadership Award - RYLA 2015

Applications have been coming in from ORA students hopeful to compete in this year's

Rotary Youth Leadership Award, with the first round taking place on 12<sup>th</sup> April at Bradwell Outdoors' centre.

The Academy has been represented in this competition for the previous two years and it's been an Ormiston Rivers Academy student who has won both years, achieving the Essex and Herts Rotary Youth Leadership Award. The Academy is very keen to see our students perform to that level again this year and achieve the hat-trick.

The Physical Education department here at the Academy pride themselves on developing our students as leaders; offering them the opportunity to practice these skills within the sporting environment. With the plethora of primary sporting festivals hosted here at the Academy, our students have many experiences in varying roles to support the successful running of such events.

We are hopeful that all our young leaders will take the opportunity to compete in this year's RYLA - application forms are available from the P.E Office.

## Science News

Year 7 and 8 students have been very lucky to have Mr Press

from Greensward Academy running Science Club this half term. Activities included making bouncy balls from custard powder, articulated fingers, making gunpowder and setting light to it in our fantastic, new mobile fume cupboard.

We also ran a competition to see who could make the tallest structure from art straws which could hold a marble for 10 seconds. The winners were Ben Griffiths, Megan Davidson and Laura Spackman.

Next term's activities will be based around British Science Week. Any student wishing to join should speak to Mrs Anderson. British Science Week runs from 13<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> March and will involve activities at lunchtimes in the Academy's science department and also during Tuesday's Science Club. Thursday the 19<sup>th</sup> March is "do a demo day" where there will be demonstrations in the fabulous, new science open area to host lots of exciting activities. Please ensure you keep checking the science notice board for more information.



## Year 10 Drop in / Extension Sessions

	Lunch	After School
Monday	Business – KCA: IT Geography – LJU (inform her the day before) History – JWA: H24 (inform him you are attending)	RMT Practical – RSM: Workshop
Tuesday	Business – KCA: IT Geography – LJU (inform her the day before)	Science
Wednesday	Business – KCA: IT Geography – LJU (inform her the day before)	ICT/CSC – EMU: IT
Thursday	Business – KCA: IT Geography – LJU (inform her the day before)	RMT Theory – RSM: DT IT History – JWA: H24
Friday	Business – KCA: IT Geography – LJU (inform her the day before)	

The Plume Music Competition this year takes place on Sunday 1st March.

Students of any ability, any instrument, and singers are welcome to take part. Please see Miss Carroll as soon as possible if you are interested.



### February 2015

**16th** Geography controlled assessment day

**16th - 20th** Half term

**23rd Feb - 6th March** Fair Trade Fortnight

**24th** Essex Young People's Drug & Alcohol Service

### March 2015

**3rd** Year 12/13 Parent's Evening

**3rd** Year 11 English & Maths Evening

**4th** World Maths Day

**4th** Primary Gifted & Talented Event

**5th & 6th** Jack Petchey Public Speaking Workshop

**5th** Snow Skills - Ski Trip students, Hemel Hempsted

**6th** The Brilliant Club, Year 9/10 Clare College Cambridge

**6th** Primary Schools Tag Rugby

**9th** AS History Conference, London

**10th** Year 8 Options Evening

**10th** Business Accounting Year 12/13 Anglia Ruskin

**11th** Year 12/13 Physics in Action University of London

**13th** Red Nose Day - Non uniform

**17th** Primary School Mini Athletics

**18th** Primary Schools CVL Football

**19th** Community Morning

**22nd** Battlefields Trip - 4 days

**26th** Oxford & Cambridge Student Conference Year 8

**28th** Ski Trip

**28th** French Trip - Nice

**30th March - 10th April** Easter Holidays

**7th - 10th April** Bay of Naples trip

Dates  
for your  
diary

## Examinations 2015

**SUMMER 2015** Examination Session:  
5<sup>th</sup> May to 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2015

### TIMETABLES

Summer provisional timetables have already been sent home. If you have any queries please contact Mrs Clark on 01621 787861. All students will receive their **FINAL** summer 2015 timetable during the week commencing 20<sup>th</sup> April, which will be printed on pink paper.

Students are responsible for bringing all the equipment they need to every exam they take, the school is not obliged to provide equipment and will not have pens, pencils, calculators etc. to loan.

**Summer 2015 exam results** may be collected as follows:

GCE - Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> August 2015.  
GCSE – Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> August 2015

## Car Restoration Club

Ormiston Rivers Academy runs a Car Restoration Club for a group of Year 9 and 10 Engineering and Motor Vehicles

students. They meet every Monday during term time to work on an old automatic Morris 1100 from 1969 and plan to get it running again.

The students have made amazing progress with this endeavour and have written about their experience so far: "We are working on converting the Morris 1100 to a manual. So far we have stripped down the car on the inside and out, plus we have removed everything from under the bonnet including the engine. Currently we are preparing to take off the sub frame. Meanwhile we have also been restoring the original gearbox as well as a new manual engine we bought. The plan for the car after we have dropped the sub frame is to start welding new floor panels, wheel arches and sills. We also wish to have the engine and gear box working and ready to be installed after we have re-painted the car.

From this project we have learnt how to recondition an engine and gear box, and how to weld; not to mention the amount of parts we have discovered and seen how they work on the car. Finally, we learnt that if you buy a car more than 50 years old, there may be a lot of rust."



### WANTED! - Your old car !

The motor vehicles team require replacement cars for the students to work on. If you have an MOT failure, or accident damaged vehicle, we may be interested. Please email Mr Smith [rsmith@ormistonriversacademy.co.uk](mailto:rsmith@ormistonriversacademy.co.uk)



Fifty one Year 10 GCSE geographers travelled to Walton-on-the-Naze to study the managed beach area and the non-managed cliff collapse area. They undertook infiltration tests, landform profiling and groyne measurements.

Ms Judge, Head of Humanities said, "While the day was bitterly cold, the students acted excellently and gained some very important primary data to use for their coursework."

## Walton-on-the-Naze



## Ballet audition success!

A few of our students went along to the English Youth Ballet auditions held at Southend High School for Girls on 3rd February. The company selects 100 young dancers from a radius of 80-100 miles of regional theatres, giving students an opportunity to experience rehearsals and performance of exciting ballet productions.

Congratulations go to Rachel Cottee in Year 8, who made it into the company and will train with the English Youth Ballet and perform in their next ballet 'Coppelia'. Danielle Olliffe and Charlotte Parsons, Year 9, also did extremely well - both made it onto the reserve list.



Miss Davies, who accompanied the students, was delighted by their achievements: "They were only looking for 100 dancers and have been auditioning around the whole country. The audition process was an evening workshop with professional ballet dancers. I'm very proud that our students participated in the audition and look forward to watching the final performance."

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