

NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2018



A Message from the Principal

At the end of a very long but hugely successful term for Goffs-Churchgate Academy, we have much to celebrate and share. Our new Year 7 students have settled in really well and are enjoying being a part of our school community, and I am proud to say that our school is now full and we have waiting lists for places in most year groups. Applications for our new Year 7 cohort have increased dramatically and we look forward to welcoming another full cohort into Year 7 in September 2019.

Year 11 are hard at work in preparing for their GCSE examinations and should be credited for their dedication and hard work, especially with many of them staying in school to revise until 5.00pm each evening.

Recently, students from both schools were involved in sampling food during the tendering process for our new catering company, they challenged each company on what they could provide for the students and the school is pleased to welcome our new caterers for the Multi Academy Trust, Chartwells, who are part of the Compass Group. They will be delivering our catering services immediately after Christmas. It is exciting to see that they have many exciting culinary plans for our school and I am sure that our students will enjoy a significant improvement in the quality and breadth of food on offer to them on a daily basis.

We have also had some fantastic enrichment opportunities for our students recently including the hugely popular Year 7 and 8 trip to the Houses of Parliament. It was a privilege to see 180 of our students conduct themselves so brilliantly on this exciting trip. They all learnt a lot about democracy and our parliament here in the UK. Luckily, on the day of the visit there was no Brexit debate, otherwise I am not sure we would have been allowed in! We also had the hugely successful Year 8 trip to the Marriott Hotel and we look forward to building our relationship further with them in due course. Year 11 Geography students also undertook a field trip to Stratford to study urban regeneration. Next year, we have a variety of trips planned including visits to Berlin for History, the Bank of England, Bletchley Park for Maths, and a selection of theatre trips.

As I am sure you have seen in the press and from previous correspondence from the Multi Academy Trust, there is continued pressure on funding for education in England. For our school, like many others, budgets are extremely tight. I would encourage you to keep lobbying your local MPs to encourage them to bring about changes to the funding of education across England.

As is the cycle in education, we have some staffing changes taking place over the Christmas holidays. We welcome Miss Martin joining us in the English department, who is delighted to be joining our school community, and Miss Newman leaves us; I would like to thank her for her contribution to our school this academic year.

Over the Christmas period, please could I remind parents and students of our expectations on uniform, including make-up, false nails, and piercings. When we return on the 7th January 2018, please can you ensure that any false nails, painted nails and excessive make-up have been removed.

I hope that you and all of your family have a lovely Christmas and I look forward to working with you all in 2019.

Thomas Sparks
Principal

A Message from the Executive Principal



This possibly comes with getting older, but each year, Christmas seems to arrive that bit earlier. That has certainly been the case this year, after a particularly busy term. However, Christmas is my favourite time of the year, and it is therefore no hardship to be part of seeing House themed Christmas trees go up; sample Christmas lunches (very nice) and look forward to the end of term Christmas Jumper charity fund raiser.

Both schools have had a successful term. This summer's results at Goffs-Churchgate are something that we are very proud of. We had just 9 months of teaching with last year's Year 11, and, as such, we are very proud indeed to see the school go from being in the bottom 12% of all schools nationally in 2017 in its final results as Cheshunt School, to achieving positive Progress 8 value-added just one year later - a remarkable 105% improvement in the overall Progress 8 scores from the previous year. One person on their own cannot achieve such remarkable change, and this has been, and will be, a real team effort across the school, something that staff, parents and students are rightly proud of.

The creation of the Generations MAT has in absolutely no way undermined the great success seen at Goffs over recent years. Instead, Goffs saw results track up once again, with GCSE results again "significantly above the national average" in statistical terms. The same is true at A Level, where the school achieved some of its strongest results in several years, particularly in the top grades. We continue to send these young adults off to a variety of top-flight universities – many of whom are first generation university students – as well into apprenticeships and employment. As at Goffs-Churchgate, it is the strength and commitment of the team that yields such strong outcomes. Without that commitment across all stakeholders in the MAT, we would be nothing. Parents and carers play a key role in this, motivating, cajoling, perhaps occasionally "threatening", at home, something that is noted, always appreciated and never taken for granted.

Ian Denchfield and I have been working on several MAT wide projects this term. We very much hope to welcome a primary school to our partnership during this academic year, and continue to look at establishing nursery provision on the Goffs-Churchgate. Finding a nursery provider of the calibre we want is taking some time, but getting the right provider in place is more important than the time scale.

The MAT catering tender was a significant piece of work, with many interested companies. Goffs students have enjoyed a very high standard of catering from Cucina for 5 years, something that Ian and I were determined to extend to Goffs-Churchgate as part of ensuring equal provision across the MAT. Students were central to this process from the start, and are to be commended for their active engagement, challenging questions to companies tendering, and enthusiasm in sampling the food. Chartwells was the clear choice of students, Trustees and parents via each school's Local Advisory Body, and we are excited about what they will bring to both schools from 1st January 2019. We have asked that they write to parents in the near future to introduce themselves and their offer, and they will also be attending assemblies at both schools at the start of next term. Whilst Cucina were not successful in this tendering bid, Ian and I are very grateful to them. They have quite literally transformed the dining experience at Goffs and we are hugely grateful.

Neil and I are going to Devon for Christmas to spend the holiday with my brother and his family: my nephew is still just young enough to believe in all the Christmas magic, and I am very much looking forward to it. Whatever you and your families do this Christmas, I wish you an equally enjoyable, happy and peaceful break.

Alison Garner
Executive Principal

Houses of Parliament Trip



Goffs-Churchgate students gained a valuable insight into the inner workings of democracy through a visit to the historic Houses of Parliament. 200 students and staff were expertly guided around the Houses of Commons and Lords as they developed their understanding of the hundreds of years of political change, and the significance of their surroundings. The trip culminated in an unexpected meet and greet with Charles Walker MP, who had helped coordinate the large visit, and to whom we are very grateful. Charles always shows a genuine interest in our school.

“I could not believe the size and scale of the Entrance Hall compared to the size of the House of Commons” said Vashni, a Year 7 student. “You could feel the history in the walls and paintings, and our guides gave us lots of brilliant information about each room and the role that everyone has, to make such a big building work on time”.

Associate Assistant Principal Dave Emmott stressed the importance of the visit: “Politics is as accessible now as it has ever been, and in these uncertain times it is vital that our young people are able to engage with the democratic process and appreciate their role as the future leaders of our society. The students were impeccably behaved and wonderful representatives for our community throughout the day”.



Dave Emmott, Associate Assistant Principal

Charities Update

This half-term, students and staff raised over £400 for Children in Need as part of a non-uniform day. That same week, students participated in a week of assemblies and form time activities, as part of Anti-Bullying Week in partnership with Bullying UK.

These sessions were designed to develop our students' understanding of inclusion and acceptance, two of the central themes of our charity work this year. In addition, we had a successful Hygiene Bank donation drive – a vital organisation that provides toiletries and sanitary products for those in need.

As well as our Christmas fancy dress day for Save the Children on Friday 21st December, please look out for our exciting whole-school projects coming up over the next few months.



Dave Emmott
Associate Assistant Principal

Student Executive

It has been a very busy half-term for the Student Executive. Having been centrally involved in the Open Evening preparations, three students were again part of a whole school project, this time as part of the student panel for the Catering presentations. We are really happy with the choice made as they reflected a lot of what our students wanted from a restaurant provider.

We have also been busily readying ourselves for Christmas by organising the always competitive Christmas Tree decorating competition. Each House was given a theme to follow, and after some rather original (!) and fairly ambitious designs, Rubik came out as winner with their message of Inclusion. Special mention must go to Jemma Smith in Year 10 for her leadership in this competition, and the restraint shown by some of the teachers who were desperate to help their House win!



As we approach the New Year we are really excited to be joining up with the 'Top Team' at Goffs Academy to run inter-school competitions and initiatives. We have also established contact with local organisations and we will be very much involved in the community over the upcoming weeks and months. On behalf of the student body we wish you all a peaceful and enjoyable break, and a happy New Year.

Dave Emmott
Associate Assistant Principal

The Mayor's Debate 2018

On the 21st November, six students from Goffs-Churchgate Academy attended and took part in the annual Mayor's Debate at the Broxbourne Council Offices. The evening consisted of a total of six different schools from the local area presenting to a panel of four councillors, as well as the Mayor of Broxbourne, on issues regarding loneliness and social isolation in the local area. The concept of the event was to create and present ideas on how the Council could further invest their time and money into ensuring that loneliness and social isolation percentages in the local area improve. At the end of the evening, the school who delivered the best presentation and ideas would be named the winners and take home the trophy for 2018.

This year, the trophy went to St Mary's High School who delivered a fantastic presentation and collection of ideas. However, to say that I am proud of our school's team is an understatement. Our group consisted of six students and were by far the youngest team there, with four of our six being from Year 7!

The presentation that they delivered was informative, confident and very well-rehearsed. For such a young and inexperienced public speaking team, they really out-did themselves, with all of them working with me every lunchtime for over two weeks in order to be ready for the competition.

Despite not winning, the students thoroughly enjoyed the evening, especially meeting the Mayor and have informed me that they are ready to go again for next year's event!

I would like to take this opportunity to say another huge well done to the following students:

- Jake Rowley
- Amari-Lee Boyaram
- Vanshi Pujara
- Grace Kitchiner
- Daniella Ako-Nai
- Aimee Foster

We couldn't have been prouder of you and I look forward to working with you again next year for the 2019 trophy!



Sophie Everist
English Teacher
Director of Literacy





Community Enrichment

Year 9 students have been involved in several programmes recently. Each programme is designed to build confidence, work with others, and contribute to our wider community.

Seven students completed a Community Enrichment Programme (tree cutting in the Lea Valley) on Wednesday 5th December 2018. The feedback was really positive. Julie Cottenden, from CHEXS, commented as follows:

“Our enrichment today was a roaring success, with the students working hard and really getting to grips with the reason for the work being completed. They especially looked at the problem solving aspects of the work, such as safety when felling a tree and the best way to complete the task, and hence they all had a very productive day. We also had a visit from Andy Vaughan, the Lea Valley Ranger in charge of the site, who explained to the students how important the work they are completing is to the environment. He also told them he was impressed by the amount of work they have undertaken, almost doubling the amount of meadow area accessible to the public within the designated area.”



On Monday the 3rd December, two Year 9 students went to Fairfields Primary school and were involved in a Christmas Workshop. The feedback from the school was as follows:

“The students were really fantastic. They represented the school well and were a delight to have with us. I couldn't have asked for more from them.

“One of the students initially lacked the confidence to engage with the primary students, but once given a task she rose to the challenge. She was particularly good when a primary student was struggling with his Mum taking over his craft and got upset. I paired the student up with our student and they were having a great chat and the student's mood lifted. The other student again initially lacked the confidence to engage with the primary students. There was a particular student that was extremely shy there with her Nan, and our student sat next to her and gave direction with the craft. The Nan said that our student was lovely to her Granddaughter”.

Jim Clune, Director of Learning, Years 9 & 10

Mental Health

Positive discussions are ongoing as we develop our partnerships with the Samaritans and Herts MIND. Partnership meetings took place on Tuesday 11th December 2018. Subject to confirmation by both Herts MIND and the Academy, we hope to have a formal working agreement in place in the very near future.

At the recent Year 10 Parents' Evening, Herts MIND set up a stall, giving out leaflets and advice to parents. At other recent Parent Evenings, Samaritans and Herts MIND leaflets have been placed in the Hall for students and parents to read and take for their own use.

As a school we raised £382 recently to fund support from Herts MIND here at the Academy. We are currently looking at different types of support, including 1-2-1 mentoring and student workshops to provide the targeted help and support to our students that they require.



Jim Clune,
Director of Learning, Years 9&10

Marriott Hotel Trip



Sixty Year 8 students from the school experienced the fast-paced world of hotel management for a day. The opportunity to learn about the leisure, tourism and hospitality sectors was made possible by the Enterprise Adviser Network, delivered locally by Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership. The programme pairs schools with volunteers from local businesses (known as Enterprise Advisers) to help them expand their careers provision and engage more widely with local employers.

Students got a taste of the wide variety of roles available at the Marriott, starting with a talk from General Manager Michael Regenshardt, followed by a behind-the-scenes tour of the property. Top class customer service was high on the agenda, with students immersing themselves in a series of practical hospitality challenges including laying a table for a wedding, led by James from the Hospitality and Conferencing team; creating a Halloween menu, judged by Head Chef Sanjay; and planning a party, led by Rhea from the Sales and Events team.

As per Government's 2017 Careers Strategy, all secondary schools and colleges are required to work towards the eight Gatsby Benchmarks, which, if achieved, helps ensure young people leave education with a good grasp on their career options and the competencies that employers demand. With this visit, Goffs-Churchgate Academy has provided each student with one of the seven requisite encounters with an employer/employee, with a second event planned for January whereby a team of Marriott chefs will host a Master Chef workshop for students from Year 7.

The Marriott Hotel have provided significant support for us as a school to develop our careers programme, in line with requirements from the Department for Education. We are committed to providing all our students with positive experiences of the workplace and the day was a wonderfully enlightening day for them to see what happens in a hotel. It was fantastic for them to learn first-hand about the sort of employers they have nearby.

A Year 8 student said: "This was a great day. I have learned so much about working in a hotel and all the different types of jobs that people do. It is definitely a career option I will think more closely about."

Sarah Baker
Vice Principal