

Message from the Principal

In August, the Academy recorded another impressive set of GCSE results, reaffirming that it is the most successful non-selective school in the borough. In total, 68% of pupils achieved 5+A*-C (including English and Mathematics) and the Academy recorded a Progress 8 (the new way school performance will be measured from 2016) of +0.58. The latter means that, on average, pupils achieved over half a grade higher than expected.

In 2014, the Academy was rated in the top 5 schools in the country when compared to similar schools. I expect that, with the publication of the 2015 results, the Academy may edge its way up this list and get close to Mossbourne Academy, a school whose former Headteacher was Sir Michael Wilshaw (Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services).

Although only 7 weeks into the term, pupils have already availed several opportunities outside of the classroom e.g. visits to Boulogne and Ypres. I have also had the pleasure of arranging a visit to Oxford University (Hertford College) for a group of Year 11 pupils and hope that such opportunities offer an invaluable and memorable insight into undergraduate life.

Mr. N. Houchen BSc (Hons), PGCE, NPQH

Careers Education

Careers has been restructured this year by integrating it within the curriculum - one hour a week in Year 9. In short, this involves developing a 'flightpath' to pupils' chosen careers, in addition to the opportunity to acquire 'life skills' e.g. personal finance. There will be several workshops and activities throughout the year, many of which will be practical based and operated by external providers.

As a further commitment to providing pupils with substantive careers education, all Year 10 and 11 pupils will receive independent, impartial careers advice from *Connexions* as well as in-house support with post-16 applications, CVs and interview techniques.



Trip to Domaine de Segries, France

During the summer closure period, the Academy took a group of pupils to France for a PGL activity holiday. Pupils participated in a range of water sports including: catamaraning, windsurfing, swimming, banana-boating, pico sailing, kayaking, and even some ten-pin bowling! The pupils and staff also enjoyed a night of 'sleeping under the stars' on an evening where a spectacular meteor shower entertained those who were able to stay up until 2 a.m. to witness it.



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Student Leadership Team

A Year 11 pupil, Billie-May Holt, has received the inaugural 'Prefect of the Month' award. In recognition of her sustained contribution she was also made a Senior Prefect and appointed to the Student Leadership Team.

Mr. N. Houchen met with Billie-May personally to discuss her award and appointment.

On 17th November, the Student Leadership Team will be visiting Oxford University (Hertford College) where they will undertake a tour, attend lectures and speak to staff and undergraduates.



First Lego League

Following its introduction last year, the Raspberry Pi Suite has been put to excellent use by Year 8 pupils who have been studying Python code - a programming language used by both Google and NASA. Projects have spawned from this, most notably, the First Lego League Competition, which is overseen by Mr. L. Abbott.

The aim of the competition is to design and test a robot made of Lego to tackle a pre-designed obstacle course. This year's theme is 'recycling' and will require modifications to the robot the pupils have already built to enable it to sort different coloured objects and operate Lego machines, mimicking the recycling process.



Academically More Able

The Academy is proud to announce that it is now a member of NACE (National Association for Able Children in Education). This enables AMA pupils to be further stretched and challenged both inside and outside of the classroom with workshops, competitions, events and visits to Russell Group universities.



Ofsted Triad Project

On Thursday 15th October, the Academy hosted the Ofsted School-School Improvement Project. The project involves, Ofsted HMIs, National Leaders in Education (NLE) and 9 schools across Southend and Essex working together in triads. The purpose of the project is to facilitate a school-led improvement system that drives up standards within Education. The Academy was invited to join the project as a result of its consistently strong track record in GCSE performance.



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Trip to Stratford-upon-Avon, England

The English Department is pleased to announce, after its maiden adventure, the second trip to Stratford-upon-Avon to see the famous Shakespeare sites, watch *A Mid Summer's Night Dream* at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, and take part in a 'drama and wig and costume' workshop. Last year's trip was a huge success and highly beneficial for the pupils. Given the stronger importance now placed on Shakespeare in the new GCSE exam syllabus, such visits will undoubtedly prove invaluable when attempting to interpret the text. It is a three day residential trip with a two night stay in a bed and breakfast guest house from Sunday 3rd July - Tuesday 5th July 2016. Please ask for a letter from Mrs. P. Suttle or Mrs. I. Hogan or email PSuttle@eastwood.southend.sch.uk for further details.



Trip to Boulogne, France

On Friday 18th September, 40 pupils and staff made an early start across the channel to spend the day in Boulogne-sur-Mer in France. The morning was spent looking around the old town and learning about the history of Boulogne. Pupils visited the famous Ramparts, Cathedral and the Town Hall, each containing a wealth of history. Escaping the rain, pupils jumped onto the coach to *Le Beussent*, a local chocolate factory. Here they were able to see how chocolates are produced, from cocoa bean to the end product, and sample a variety! Following this, pupils made their way to Le Centre Commercial Auchan, where they were able to order (in French) food and drink in the local cafés as well as buy some souvenirs and gifts.



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Literacy

The Academy has introduced a number of initiatives in its drive to improve literacy. This has included: appointing a Literacy Coordinator, Mrs. L. Childs, introducing 'Drop Everything and Read', providing all pupils with a pocket Literacy Guide, offering Year 7 pupils a £4 book voucher, deploying Reading Mentors and Literacy Ambassadors and much more. Mr. N. Houchen said: "Nationally 1 in 5 pupils still leave secondary school unable to read well enough – this rises to 1 in 3 among the most disadvantaged children. I see it as a fundamental moral and social duty to try and eradicate this."



'Developing a love of literacy for all'

On Monday 19th October, the Academy held a Book Fair where pupils had the opportunity to look at over 400 books and collect a £4 book voucher which they were able to redeem against a book of their choice.



E-Safety

On Monday 12th October, the Academy held an E-Safety Evening for the parents of Year 7 pupils. During the evening, there was a presentation from Mr. N. Houchen and an 'e-clinic' where parents could speak to staff about any aspect of E-Safety. Please refer to the Academy's website for information and resources.

As a follow up to the evening, any parent wishing to undertake 'Level 1 E-Safety Awareness' through an accredited provider (NCS), please contact Vice Principal and CEOP Ambassador, Mr. C. Niner, CNiner@eastwood.southend.sch.uk



Feedback

The Academy is keen to source parental feedback and will be offering the opportunity for parents to complete an e-survey during scheduled parent consultation evenings.

During the Year 7 Transition Evening, parents completed an e-survey. The Academy is pleased to report the following:

98.9% said that their child was happy at the Academy.

98.2% said that they felt their child was safe at the Academy.

97.4% said children were well-behaved at the Academy.

97.2% said that their child was well taught.

97.0% said they would recommend the Academy to another parent.

If you wish to provide any feedback in the interim, please use the Ofsted facility Parentview.



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