

September 2011

Dear parents and carers,

A warm welcome to families new to the Foundation and a warm welcome back to those of you returning from the summer holiday! Families in the Pre-Prep and Junior Schools will have received newsletters from Mr James and Mrs Hecht but will, I hope be interested in reading the Foundation news as well as some items aimed at a Senior School audience. I should add that it is has been a pleasure to welcome Mrs Hecht as Principal of the Pre-Prep in succession to Mrs Kennedy who is relocating with her husband Daniel to Australia in January 2012 and, I am pleased to report, remains at Highgate as Assistant Head (Foundation) until that time.

Public examination results

Provisional results are published on the website but the headlines are that the leavers of 2011 (the Class of 2011) secured 90.5% A*-B, thus meaning that Highgate sixth-formers have a four-year average of 90% A*-B. Eighty-five per cent of applicants to university secured places either at their first or insurance choices in what was the most competitive year for entry to higher education, very similar outcomes to last year's round of applications. Year 12 achieved record-breaking results with the strongest A grade count (61.1%) we have seen which bodes well for their A2 chances. Year 11 broke another school record with 88.6% of all papers graded at A* or A and 59.5 at A*. Again details may be read on the website. Congratulations to all candidates, and a pat on the back to parents and carers who gave much-needed support along the way.

Chrysalis summer schools

Highgate ran three summer schools, one jointly with University College School in July for Year 4 pupils in primary schools in Haringey and Camden, and two in August for Year 10 and Year 12 pupils. The Minister for Schools, Nick Gibb MP, spent a morning with Year 12 pupils and was impressed both by the teaching and the initiative. The *Ham & High* covered his visit and you may have seen an account of his impressions. These summer schools are part of an extensive programme of outreach activities which Highgate runs. For more details, please look at the *Partnerships* section of the website.

Fund in memory of Georgie Willett

Families may wish to be reminded of the opportunity to make donations in memory of Georgie Willett, younger brother of Jamie and Matthew Willett. Follow the link to <http://www.justgiving.com/Georgie-Willett>. The Willett family is very grateful for all the kindness shown by Highgate families. Those who knew Georgie will note that a memorial service is to take place on Friday 16 September in the School Chapel at 4.30 pm.

Foundation Sponsored Walk, Wednesday 18 October

The biennial sponsored walk takes place on Hampstead Heath (or Senior Field for those with very young legs), on Wednesday 18 October, the eve of half-term. You will receive details about the arrangements from Mr Pullinger who is co-ordinating the day's activities. We are hoping to raise £45,000 for the Great Lakes High School in Kirima, South West Uganda. The money which your children helped raise in 2007

and 2009 enabled the Great Lakes High School to be built and kitted out; a group of eighteen Year 13 pupils has just returned from a visit to the school and their impressions you will be able to read on the website. This year, we aim to start a permanent endowment for the school to enable children whose parents cannot afford the £180 annual school fee to receive a good education. A really determined fund-raising effort will make a significant, life-changing (and in some cases, a life-saving) difference: now we have a school which is built and staffed, it would be great to think that a lack of funds will not prevent children from going to this excellent school. Do support your children in their fund-raising ready for the day's walk.

As has been our custom recently, we will be donating the costs of lunches on that day to the Great Lakes High School project so that there will be no lunch on the day of the walk.

Serious Fun on Saturdays and the Crest Academies, Brent

The 'Serious Fun on Saturdays @ Highgate School' programme will take place again this term. This is a literacy project for 30 Year 8 and 9 pupils from the Crest Academies in Brent sponsored by the charity SHINE. The pupils, mainly from asylum or refugee status backgrounds, will attend Saturday literacy lessons provided by Highgate teachers under the stewardship of Ms Saunders and Ms Church; the 'fun' element was provided by an introduction to Eton Fives, coached by staff and pupils, although the lessons also provided plenty of 'serious fun' too! Remarkable progress was made in the first ten weeks of the project earlier this year when a key role was played by some 40 Year 10 and 11 Highgate pupils who acted as mentors.

The new classroom building, North Road

You will see that building work for the new classroom building on North Road, which will provide a new home for the English and Geography Departments, a new science laboratory and a replacement ICT lab and will create a new entrance to the school, is well under way. There will be some disruption to usual routines: pupils will be briefed and we will monitor their well-being and safety carefully throughout the building process. The major work takes place this term and the project should be completed by September 2012.

New staff in the Senior School

Details of new staff are attached and I am delighted to welcome on your behalf a new generation of teachers. By way of context, I explain that four new posts have been created in the Chemistry, Physics and Mathematics Departments, in part to accommodate an increase in numbers taking up those subjects and in part to develop our outreach teaching. In mathematics, we are continuing our outreach teaching whereby each member of the department spends a proportion of his or her time running enrichment or extension classes and master-classes to children in those local schools where subject specialists are in short supply. A joint venture with the Ogden Trust has allowed us to co-fund, with the help of donations from parents and former pupils, a new teaching post so that teachers in the Physics Department can also provide outreach teaching in our partner schools.

Ms Debbie Picton is on maternity leave and her role as Head of Higher Education is being covered by Dr Julie Welch; Mr Kamaljit Bains, Head of Chemistry, is Acting Head of Science for Dr Welch. Ms Emma Duggan, Ms Verity Smith and Ms Joanne Gosney will be taking up maternity leave during this term. Mr Newton will be Acting Head of History during Ms Duggan's absence.

Information evenings in the Senior School

Information evenings for all parents, including those new to the School, take place as follows:

- Thursday 8 September (Year 12)
- Monday 12 September (Year 7)
- Tuesday 20 September (Year 9)

These begin at 7 pm in Dyne House Auditorium (on Southwood Lane), and are followed by refreshments in Big School. The evenings will be in two parts: the first, in the refurbished auditorium, will give senior staff an occasion to brief you on key academic and pastoral procedures and expectations, and to answer questions you may have; representatives from the Parents' Association will also attend to talk about activities already planned for the year and about how you can become involved. The second part, which will take place in Big School, is an informal opportunity for you to catch up with your child's tutor and/or housemaster and to meet other parents in your child's form or tutor group. It is not a consultation evening; these take place later in the school year when you will meet your child's subject teachers.

Head Master's forums

New for your diary are Head Master's forums to which you will be invited as follows:

- Lower School (Years 7 & 8): Tuesday 31 January and Wednesday 9 May 2012 at 7 pm
- Middle School (Years 9, 10 & 11): Wednesday 28 September 2011 and Monday 12 March 2012 at 7 pm
- Sixth Form (Years 12 & 13): Monday 28 November at 7 pm

If any date is inconvenient, you should feel free to attend an alternative even if your child is not in the section of the school. My intention is to give an update on the school's progress, our plans for the future and cast an eye across educational developments and to allow you to ask any questions and to reflect on your child's experience to date. I will not be revealing anything startling but know that it is of interest to parents and carers to know how the school is faring; equally, I am interested to hear how you feel things have gone and are going.

Changes to games afternoons

Pupils will notice that games arrangements have been altered for the academic year: senior games on a Wednesday afternoon will now only comprise Year 12 and 13 pupils, with Year 11 having the run of the sporting facilities on Tuesday afternoons. This change should provide the opportunity for the provision of a greater variety of activity for those pupils taking part. Pupils and parents should note that Year 11 will continue to have the opportunity to represent their house with sixth form pupils; senior house competitions in the major sports will take place after school as per the calendar. Indeed, judging by the healthy crowd that were present at last year's senior house football final, this will allow for pupils to watch their peers in action. A further change is that Year 7 and 8 will now have Games on Wednesday mornings after break; a chance to enjoy some activity before a well-deserved lunch! For any queries about games arrangements or fixtures, please consult the website calendar, the teacher-in-charge of your child's game or the Head of Games, Mr Colin Henderson or the Co-ordinator of Girls' Games, Mrs Lisa Sursok.

Senior School Open Day, Saturday 15 October and early finish, Friday 14 October

The Senior School hosts an open day for about 600 parents and carers of prospective pupils on Saturday 15 October. A number of pupils will be invited to assist on that day as tour guides and organisers, including all pupils in Year 8. Although the day is scheduled to last from 9 am to 3 pm, pupils will only be asked to help out for three-hour periods. In order to set up displays for the visitors, **the Senior School only will finish at 3 pm on Friday 1 October**. I apologise for any inconvenience that this will cause and for the omission from the school diary. My thanks in advance to all pupils who help on that day.

Dates

Please remember that the Senior School also closes on **Thursday 12 January** for the 11+ entrance tests.

Parents of pupils with younger siblings may like to note that the closing date for applications for 2011 entry to Year 3 and Year 7 is **30 November 2011**. The closing date for Sixth Form applications for 2011 is **Friday 4 October**, and the Assessment Day for 16+ entry is **Saturday 5 November**.

Policies

The School is required to bring to your attention the existence of statutory policies. These are all available on the website ('policies' button on the home page) and cover: ethos and aims; safeguarding and welfare; anti-bullying; substance abuse; health and safety; guidance on religion; bursaries; admissions; complaints procedure; pastoral care; educational visits; acceptable ICT use; PSHE programme of study, including sex education.

It is also a requirement to inform you of the name and contact address for the Chairman of Governors which I have pleasure in bringing to your attention:

John Mills CBE, MA, BLitt
c/o The Secretary to the Foundation and Clerk to the Governors, Mr J C Pheasant,
Highgate School, 70 North Road, London N6 4AY.

Correspondence is forwarded (unopened) to the Chairman by the Secretary.

I look forward to seeing many of you during at welcome evenings, parents' evenings and on the touch line or in the Auditorium or the Drama Studio and wish you and your families a very happy and productive year.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,



A S Pettitt
Head Master

H I G H G A T E

New staff 2011

Kwasi Agyei-Owusu joins us from the International School and Community College, East Birmingham, to teach Chemistry. He read Medicinal Chemistry at University College London, and then completed a PhD at Homerton College, University, before joining the Teach First programme. Kwasi is a keen footballer and squash player.

Jim Allchin joins us to teach Art, following a PGCE at Canterbury Christ Church University, and a Fine Art degree from Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford. A practising artist, Jim's interests also include football and cross-country running.

James Bingham also joins the Art Department from Oakham School. James read Fine Art at Falmouth College of Art, followed by an MA at the Royal College of Art. He is also a practising artist.

Polly Brownlee joins the Mathematics Department. She read Mathematics at King's College, London, followed by an MAsT in Mathematics at Robinson College, Cambridge.

Rebecca Burridge joins us to teach Geography following a PGCE at the University of Cambridge. She read Geography at the University of Edinburgh; her course included a year in Vancouver. Rebecca's interests include skiing, sailing, trampolining and singing.

Jennifer (Jenny) Byrne becomes a teacher of History, joining us from the Teach First programme at Eastbury Comprehensive School. Jenny read History at the University of Edinburgh. She is a keen sportswoman and has a particular interest in charity fundraising.

Séverine Collins joins us from Haut-Lac Bilingual International School to teach French part-time. She studied English Language and Literature at the University of Tours, and then read Computing at the University of Sussex, followed by a PGCE in Modern Languages.

Benjamin Dabby joins us to teach History after reading History at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge. He has recently completed a PhD. His interests include drama and debating.

Andrew Dales joins the Mathematics Department from Cranford Community College. Andrew read Mathematics at Trinity Hall, Cambridge. He worked in financial services for some years, and then undertook a PGCE.

Peter Davey joins us to teach Chemistry. He read Chemistry at University College Oxford, and then took a PGCE. During his time at Oxford, he acted as a College Ambassador at conferences for both teachers and pupils, offering information about Oxford and encouraging applications for Chemistry. His interests include badminton and performance poetry.

Natasha Grigorian joins us from Sevenoaks School to teach French and Russian. A native Russian speaker, Natasha read French and German at Magdalen College, Oxford, followed by a PhD. She was Rutherford Research Fellow in Modern Languages at Cambridge from 2007-10.

Gemma Gulliford joins us from St Olave's School to teach Biology. Gemma read Biological Sciences at Queen's College, Oxford, followed by a PGCE at Keble College. Gemma is a keen sportswoman and has been heavily involved with the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme at St Olave's.

Philip Harrison joins us to teach Geography. He read Geography at Edinburgh and has recently completed a PGCE at the Institute of Education. His interests include rugby, cycling, horticulture and poetry.

Kelly Johnston joins us to teach Girls' Games and PE, following a PGCE at Liverpool John Moores University. She read Sport Studies at Liverpool Hope University, and has represented Ireland at basketball.

Stuart King becomes part-time Head of Woodwind. He studied Music at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. He is a professional clarinettist and teaches at schools and colleges in London. Stuart is the artistic director and founder of the Chroma chamber ensemble.

Elizabeth Milton joins the school to teach History. She read History at St John's College, Oxford, followed by an MA in Art History at the Courtauld Institute. She then worked at Christie's and at the Royal Army Museum, and has just completed a PGCE at the Institute of Education.

James Morrow joins us to teach Classics during Verity Smith's absence on maternity leave. He read Classics at Jesus College, Oxford, and has just completed a PGCE at Cambridge.

Laura Morton joins us from Nonsuch High School to teach English. She read English and History at Exeter College, Oxford and then taught English at St Paul's Girls' School before spending a year in Australia.

Benjamin Newell joins the Mathematics Department. He read Mathematics and Physics at the University of Warwick and is currently completing an MAsT in Applied Mathematics at Robinson College, Cambridge. His interests included music production and playing the guitar.

Kevin Quinn joins the Physics Department as Ogden Physics Teaching Fellow. He read Physics with Astrophysics at Queen's University, Belfast, followed by a PhD. He is currently completing a PGCE at Canterbury Christ Church University. His interests include playing the guitar, singing, squash and cycling.

John Shinkwin joins us to teach Classics during Debbie Picton's maternity leave. He read Classics at Merton College, Oxford.

Diane Silverthorne will be teaching History of Art part-time. She also lectures at Birkbeck College. She read History of Art at Birkbeck College, University of London, and last year completed a PhD at the Royal College of Art.

Maria Vranaki will be teaching Chemistry, following the completion of her PGCE at the Institute of Education. She read Chemistry with Italian at University College London. Maria's interests include languages, dance and sports.

Pawel (Paul) Walter joins the Mathematics Department. He read Mathematics at the Jagiellonian University of Krakow in Poland, and has just completed an MPhil in Computational Biology at Wolfson College, Cambridge.

Ben Wells joins us from UCS to teach History during Emma Duggan's absence on maternity leave. He read Modern History at QMUL, followed by an MA in Slavonic Studies at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, and a PhD in Russian history at QMUL.

Mark Willingham will be teaching RE and Philosophy during Joanne Gosney's maternity leave. He read Theology and Religious Studies at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge.

Junior School

James Entwisle joins the Junior School as a Key Stage 2 Teacher, following a PGCE from the University of Warwick. James read Psychology at Warwick. He is a keen sportsman and a fully-qualified tennis coach.

Kirsty Jamieson also joins the Junior School to cover Emma Dunne's absence on maternity leave. She read American Studies at Nottingham University, followed by an MA in Critical Theory. She has just completed a PGCE at Canterbury Christchurch University.

Pre-Preparatory School

Diane Hecht becomes Principal of the Pre-Preparatory School. Mrs Hecht was previously Deputy Head of the Junior School at St Columba's School in Kilmalcolm, Glasgow, a post she took up in 2003 following fourteen years' service, including a spell as acting deputy, at Calderwood Lodge Primary School. In her role at St Columba's, a co-educational, independent (HMC) school, she was responsible for pupils in nursery to year two.

Mrs Hecht trained as a primary teacher at Jordanhill College of Education, now part of the University of Strathclyde, and taught as a nursery, primary and learning support teacher in local schools before taking a career break to bring up her three children, two of whom now live and work in London.