

insight

Newsletter • Issue 1 • Autumn 2008

Welcome

Welcome to the first Harris Academy Falconwood INSIGHT

I am delighted to be able to send out this first edition of our "In house" Newsletter. We have had a particularly exciting first half term at the Academy and we want to share some of the highlights with you.

Hopefully from the photographs you will be able to see how smart our students look in their new uniforms. We have received so many positive comments and feedback from the students, parents, local residents and visitors to the Academy about the marked

improvement in attitude and behaviour of the students recently. Some of the lovely letters that we have received makes me feel extremely proud of the student body at the Academy. One quote from the letters reads "How smart the children look in their new uniforms and this is reflected in their behaviour in the street – it is so noticeable". How great is that to read!

On Monday 6th October we had the formal opening of the Harris Academy Falconwood, which was attended by special guests. The unveiling of the plaque in reception by Michael Gove was a powerful moment, but certainly started to get me excited about thoughts of a second grand opening when we have our new buildings in 2011.

We have included a photograph of the Academy staff, which will help you get to know some of the new staff at the Academy this year. Whilst talking about the staff, I should mention the fantastic training event that took place on Friday 24th October. All the teaching staff from across all seven Academies in the Harris Federation attended a quality training provision which catered for over 700 teachers. The feedback from the staff was extremely positive and was the first opportunity for Falconwood staff to sample Harris Federation events.

I hope you enjoy the first of many editions of The Harris Academy Falconwood INSIGHT and that the articles on events such as visits to the Young Vic theatre and Swan Lake and our various Enterprise activities is just a taste of the new exciting educational experiences that we now provide for the students at the Academy.

Best wishes

Ms Terrie Askew – Principal



Message from the Head Boy and Girl

It is with great honour that we find ourselves writing for the first edition of the Harris Falconwood Newsletter. As the first Head Girl and Head Boy of the Academy we feel we are in a very privileged position.

In our new roles we will aim to model the values and ideology that underpin all the Academies within the Federation. We will assist in the running of the Academy by providing a voice for our students and both encourage and support them whilst helping them with any concerns they may have. Congratulations on what can only be described as a fantastic start to a new year and a new Academy. We look forward to speaking with you soon.

Leanne and James



Staff at the New Harris Academy Falconwood

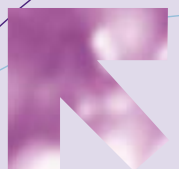
Front Row from Left to Right: Mrs Larkin, Mrs Edwards, Ms Dugbo, Mrs Allen, Mr Faith (Assistant Principal), Mr Jenner (Vice Principal), Mr Evans (Vice Principal), Ms Askew (Principal), Mr Dickson (Vice Principal), Mrs Divakaran (Assistant Principal), Ms Brewer, Mrs Longhurst, Mrs Sutcliffe, Mr Watson.

Middle Row from Left to Right: Ms Uddin, Ms Okuwa, Mrs Hollas, Ms Binder, Ms Johnson, Ms Bawden, Mrs Nock, Mrs Johnson, Mrs Cawley, Mrs Joyce, Mrs Ottaway, Mrs Martin, Mrs Healey, Mrs Rock, Mrs Davis.

Back Row from Left to Right: Mr Woodhams, Mr Piper-Masha, Ms Hobbs, Mr King, Ms Biggs, Mr O'Neill, Mr Hawkins, Ms Plank, Mrs Gallardo, Mr Merryweather, Mrs Aderanti, Mr Broadway, Mrs Edgeler, Mr Weston, Mrs Leech, Mr Townsend, Mr Peck, Ms Anderson, Mrs Kucherenko, Mrs Mehmet, Mrs Lee, Mrs Turner, Ms Joubert, Mrs Cleary, Mr Easter, Mrs Tierney, Mr Mills, Mrs Close, Mr O'Brien.



The New Harris
Academy
Falconwood
Student Council





Year 11 Drama Trip

Year 11 GCSE Drama Trip to the Young Vic on 4th November

As part of their GCSE coursework, the students are required to write an evaluative essay about a live performance. They need to be able to review the effectiveness of the performance conditions, for example discuss the set, costumes, lighting, use of voice and movement etc. The students also need to comment on the social, cultural and/or historical influences on the play. For their final performance piece, most of the students will be devising their own piece of theatre. Attending this performance gave the students material to write about in their evaluative essay and ideas for their devised piece and how to set it and perform it.

Twelve students and two staff attended a performance of 'In the Red and Brown Water', a new play by Tarell Alvin McCraney. This was to give the students a chance to see a live performance in an interesting stage space and to test out their evaluative skills. The play is set in Louisiana and the actors mainly used southern American accents. Many of the actors 'multi-rolled', i.e. they

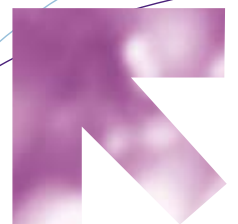
played more than one part. The Young Vic is a performance space 'in the round', which means the audience are placed all around the stage. What made this show unique was the fact that it was set in four inches of water, literally. The water almost became another role within the play. The actors moved around in the water, floated symbolic objects on it and the lights reflected on it, evoking many different moods and atmospheres. There was also some superb live music, played and sung by the actors. The twist-in-the-tale ending was particularly chilling and students found this climax dramatically effective.

So, there was lots for the students to reflect on – from learning of drama mediums to the drama elements and the explorative strategies used in production and performance. All topics they are required to learn, use and write about in GCSE Drama. The students enjoyed the experience of going to the theatre together, and connected and responded intelligently with the themes and ideas portrayed. I was very proud that

they were able to articulate what they liked and disliked about the production and was excited to hear them make connections to the text they are currently studying.

In January I am hoping to take the students to see a completely contrasting piece of theatre, most likely a West End musical. I am sure this contrast will give the students further ideas and inspiration for their final externally examined performance. We have a wonderful, creative, hard working GCSE cohort this year, they are all stars and I expect them all to do well.

Lorna Hollas – Drama Teacher



Opening Day

On Monday 6th October the Harris Academy Falconwood was officially opened by Shadow Education Secretary, Michael Gove, who unveiled a plaque to mark the creation of the Academy, which will have a new Sixth Form next year and a brand new state of the art building by 2011. Lord Harris and guests were able to meet senior students and prefects at a reception in the conference suite before moving on to the new visitors' area. Dr Dan Moynihan, Chief Executive of the Federation, welcomed guests and said "Work only began on this school in March this year and already we have a thriving new Academy". He thanked parents, staff, students and the council for their work in helping to make all this happen.

Lord Harris gave a speech with anecdotes about his life and his Federation, addressing many of his remarks directly to the students present, giving them an understanding of the man behind the title. Principal, Terrie Askew said "We have very exciting times ahead of us and are looking forward to our new buildings, which will be spectacular". She also expressed her appreciation to the Senior Team for all their efforts.

After the ceremony guests, who included Federation Principals and Bexley Council Leader Teresa O'Neil, toured the Academy and were given the opportunity to observe lessons and meet staff and students.

Richard Dickson – Vice Principal



Enterprise at Harris Academy Falconwood

Enterprising in the classroom

Our Enterprise specialism was launched in September and the response has been excellent from both staff and students. During National Enterprise week 17th–21st November 2008, every subject at Harris Academy Falconwood organised a team Enterprise challenge to develop key enterprising skills. These activities were filmed and edited by students. Some of the challenges included:

- MFL – Promote Tourism in London to the French Market
- RE – Philanthropy "The Secret Millionaire challenge"
- ICT – Design and develop a booklet for parents to advise them of the Internet safety
- Geography – Develop an advertising campaign to promote Fair Trade
- Science – Designing and marketing a space suit
- Mathematics – Designing and creating a domino game

Independent Enterprise Challenge

Students were asked in assembly "if they could run their own business for the children in need week, what would it be?" The following students were selected and set up their own business during national enterprise week. The businesses were launched during year 7 parents evening.

Year 7	Cloe Jackson	Making and selling cakes
Year 8	Taryn Wells and Charlotte Jones	Personalised mugs
Year 11	Gemma Donovan	Sport's leaders' challenge
Year 11	Anuranjan Chatta	Stationary

All the above students were assisted by helpers and our wonderful academy prefects. The Head Boy and Head Girl were also attached to provide support.

Enterprising events coming up

Students have been selected for the **Dragons' Den Challenge** to develop a unique product or service for the academy. Four teams have been selected to sell their idea to the Dragons at Falconwood. These teams will be funded by local and national businesses.

Talent and Fashion show will be coming up, Falconwood would like to challenge other Harris Academies to this competition.



Enrichment Programme 2008/2009

Our Enrichment programme is for all students and takes place on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 2.40 onwards. This is an excellent opportunity for students to gain extra support in a variety of subjects as well as experiencing new and exciting challenges. A full programme of GCSE revision classes are offered during this time to assist year 11 students with their exam preparation. Additionally year 10 are offered coursework clinics to help them develop the best possible coursework folders. An example of just a few of the many sessions offered are:

Tuesdays	
Year 7	Art, Netball, Homework Clinic, Football
Year 8	DT, Maths, Drama, Music
Year 9	MFL, English, Record Club
Year 10	ICT, BTEC Sport, Art Coursework, Dance
Year 11	ICT Coursework, Maths Revision, Sport

Wednesday	
Year 7	Homework Clinic, Ecology, Trampolining, Open Mic
Year 8	Chemistry, Football, Music
Year 9	Dance, Environment, Science
Year 10	Coursework Support, Rugby, Drama Coursework
Year 11	Retail Clinic, Media Clinic, Ceramics, Art, Graphics

Thursday	
Year 7	Exploring Europe, Multi Skills, Cricket, ICT
Year 8	Rock Bands, PE, ICT
Year 9	ICT, Football, Music, Maths with ICT
Year 10	DT, Science, BTEC Sports, Music
Year 11	History, Science, Art, BTEC Sports, Child Development

We hope all parents will encourage their sons/daughters to take advantage of the opportunities offered and attend a full range of enrichment.

Harris Academy Falconwood Friends Association

The Harris Academy Falconwood Friends Association (HAFFA) has been formed to strengthen the vital link between home and academy. The aim of the group is to create exciting fundraising activities, develop extracurricular opportunities and foster greater parental involvement, which will make a significant contribution to the wellbeing of our students. We need as many volunteers as possible, so if you feel you are able to offer us some time and support, no matter how little or sporadic, please contact one of our Joint Chairpersons.

Contact Karen Edge: karen_edge77@yahoo.co.uk or Gina Hanington ginaandkevinhanington@hotmail.com

Term dates

Autumn Term 2008

Term Dates: Wednesday 3rd September 2008 to Friday 19th December 2008

Half Term: Friday 24th October 2008 to Friday 31st October 2008 incl

Year 6 Testing Day: Monday 15th December 2008

Spring Term 2009

Staff Inset Days: Friday 13th February 2009 & Friday 3rd April 2009

Term Dates: Monday 5th January 2009 to Thursday 2nd April 2009

Half Term: Friday 13th 2009 to Friday 20th February 2009 incl

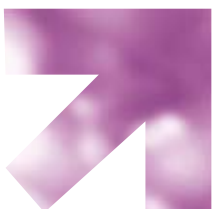
Summer Term

Staff INSET Days: Monday 20th and Tuesday 21st July 2009

Term Dates: Monday 20th April 2009 to Friday 17th July 2009

Half Term: Monday 25th May 2009 to Friday 29th May 2009 incl

Bank Holiday: 4th May 2009 & 25th May 2009



The Student Information Centre (SIC)

The Student Information Centre (SIC) is the hub of our home-academy support service, which students, parents and teachers can all use when they have any concerns about the welfare of a student.

The main issues that SIC deals with are attendance, punctuality and student health. We know that good attendance has a significant impact on the learning and achievement of all students. We aim to work in partnership with all our parents and carers to ensure that students miss time for only the most serious issues.

The Harris Academy Falconwood SIC is operated by Mrs J. Stapley (SIC Manager), Mrs J Cowley (SIC Officer) and Mrs S. Joyce (Attendance Officer)

What Parents Can Do?

- If your son/daughter is absent due to illness, phone SIC on the first day. Please follow this up with a phone call every day your son/daughter will be away.
- Please also send in a signed note detailing the reason for the absence. We must have a signed note as a formal record.
- Please do not request or plan for holidays during the term time.
- Encourage your son/daughter to be punctual for the start of the Academy day and to all lessons.
- Only encourage your son/daughter to take time off when they are really too ill to attend the Academy.
- Please arrange medical appointments outside of the Academy day.

What will the Academy Do?

- Contact parents on the first day of absence if no call has been received
- Deal with any attendance issues through working with parents on a one-to-one basis if required

Useful Contact numbers:

Tel: 0208 304 4916

24 hour Attendance line – Option 1

Student Information Centre – Option 2

Trip to The Royal Opera House

Trip to the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. Schools Matinee Performance of Swan Lake. Friday 3rd October 2008

Year 11 GCSE dance students were given the opportunity to visit the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, thanks to the sponsorship of the annual Schools Matinee performance of Swan Lake by Zoe and Martin Harris.

On arrival, they were lead to excellent central seats in one of the balconies. Sympathy was expressed for whoever was sitting in the Royal Box, as during a previous backstage tour they had marvelled at how poor the view was and why anyone would want to sit there.

The atmosphere at a school matinee has to be experienced to be believed. The chattering, leaning, pointing and exclaiming builds to a crescendo until the lights dim when it breaks the sound barrier in a cacophony of excitement. Throughout the Overture the expectations are high and there is huge applause when the lowliest member of the corps steps onto the stage at the beginning. Many of the group, seasoned dance performers themselves, albeit in a very different style to ballet, remarked again at how gratifying it must be for performers to meet such adulation. It cannot be denied that Swan Lake is one of the classics; the loveliest of great Romantic Ballets. The music by Tchaikovsky intensifies the emotion, and the costumes, characters and the set provide a spectacle that lives long in the heart and mind after viewing. The choreography is by the great Marius Petipa and Lev Ivanov, with additional pieces by Frederick Ashton, and David Bintley, who is still alive and whose other works the girls are familiar with.

It may be wondered what a story of enchanted swan maidens and princes and evil spirits in the shape of an owl has to do with modern day life, but it could be argued that the notion of true love conquering deception and malice is timeless. Besides which our girls agreed that nothing beats the experience of a live performance, and the chance to see one of the best ballet companies in the world performing in the beautiful space of the Royal Opera House. This could be adequate reason for the trip alone, and yet it accomplished so much more. The girls have to work very hard to achieve a pass at GCSE, needing a sound working knowledge of many difference styles and their techniques. This was an unrivalled opportunity to see how the parts become a seamless whole, where the gruelling hours of rehearsal spent honing technique takes off in a seemingly effortless display of the highest standard. The girls were awe-struck when one of the lifts during a pas de deux was mistimed. Paradoxically, this mistake made the experience more real to them as they could appreciate their own efforts to master complex techniques. They left energised and inspired by the powerful display of passionate emotions played out before them on one of the greatest stages in the world and truly grateful for the unique opportunity offered.

Alison S.J Healy

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