
Grey Coat

NUMBER 133



THE PARENTS' NEWS LETTER OF THE GREY COAT HOSPITAL

JUNE 2007

Dear parents,

I am writing to you after a few days packed with special events which are typical of life at Grey Coat. Last week, on the 21st June, many of us enjoyed the summer concert. The first half was a 'Summer Serenade', an opportunity mainly for younger students to show what they can do, and they gave ample evidence that the Grey Coat musical tradition will live on as they go up the school. The second half of the concert was the farewell performance of the Senior Gospel choir. Their singing was truly wonderful, and it was a joy to be able to go on listening for a bit longer than usual. The concert was recorded and two CDs are available for sale to raise money for music trips. Each CD costs £3 and if you would like to buy one (or more!) please send a cheque to Ms McMellan at the school with a note detailing how many you would like to buy of each CD, your daughter's name and form and a cheque for the total amount. Proceeds from The Summer Serenade will go towards the cost of travel to musical events and the cheques should be made payable to 'The Grey Coat Hospital'. The gospel choir CD is sold in support of the trip to the Edinburgh Festival this summer and cheques should be made payable to 'Urban Exchange'.

On Monday 25th June Year 11 celebrated their time with us with the presentation of their national Record of Achievement folders. That same evening our partners in the Greek exchange arrived in London. This is our first experience of a Comenius project (subsidised by the EU). On Tuesday 26th June we held our annual Sports Day. The weather was cold and blustery, but all the races were run nonetheless, and the girls' enthusiasm when the trophies were given out in the afternoon showed how much they enjoyed it, and how keen they were to win. All these events will be more fully reported in the next issue, with photographs of the participants.

Later on Tuesday afternoon, a reception was held at St Andrew's for the unveiling of a Green Plaque in honour of David Thompson, who studied at Grey Coat 200 years ago, and then went off to join the Hudson Bay Company at the age of 14. The plaque was unveiled by Ray Mears, who has experienced life in the wilds of Canada, and who told us of his respect for Thompson's achievements. We were also delighted to welcome the Lord Mayor of Westminster, Councillor Carolyn Keen and the Deputy High Commissioner for Canada, Guy Saint Jacques.

In Canada Thompson went way beyond the usual activities expected of a member of a trading company. During a winter spent recovering from illness, he took the opportunity to learn surveying. He then went on to map a huge area of Canada stretching from Hudson Bay to the Pacific, producing the definitive map of the north western territories, which continued to be used until the time of the first world war. Thompson was a very principled man and an outstanding role model for us still. He respected the native peoples, and knew that the only way to survive in a very demanding wilderness was to learn from them. One of my favourite stories about him is told in his own words: 'I was obliged to take two kegs of alcohol, over-ruled by my partners, for I had made it a law to myself that no alcohol should pass the mountains in my company, and thus be clear of the sight of drunkenness and its many evils. But these gentlemen insisted upon the alcohol being the most profitable article that could be taken for the Indian trade...When we came to the defiles of the mountains I placed the two kegs of alcohol on a vicious horse, and by noon the kegs were empty and in pieces.... I wrote to my partners what I had done...and for the next six years I had charge of the fur trade on the west side of the mountains, no further attempt was made to introduce spirituous liquors.'

The plaque in Thompson's honour is on the boundary wall outside the front of St Andrew's. Do have a look at it next time you come through Greycoat Place.

Rachel Allard

Attendance & Punctuality

If your child is absent for any reason, please remember to phone the school between 8 and 9am to let us know. The phone number for reporting absences is 0207 969 1998. For years 7-9, please press option 1 and for years 10-13 please press Option 2.



Please make sure we are notified in writing as far in advance as possible of any medical appointments. Please make sure the letter clearly states the time the students need to leave and the time and type of appointment.

Your daughter's full name and Form should be on the note. Attendance and Punctuality is taken into account in all aspects of school life.



*Angela Trainor & Vivien Moore
Attendance and Punctuality Officers*

Attendance & Punctuality Years 7,8, & 9

Attendance has been very good in all three years. There are only six weeks to go with lots of great events and trips planned so keep up the good start.

The results of the league tables for the best attendance and punctuality by a form in each year will be announced in the first week of July so please make an extra effort for your form.

*Angela Trainor
Attendance & Punctuality Officer
St Andrew's Site*

Best Attendance & Punctuality

By the time you read this Form 10T will have enjoyed as their reward a special lunch at Pizza Express.

Well done to all of you this is a wonderful achievement. 10T's form tutor is Miss Dennis.

Congratulations!

Attendance & Punctuality Years 10 & 11

Attendance

Attendance is good although some students are taking off too many Mondays and Fridays, should this pattern continue a letter will be sent home.

Punctuality

Punctuality is good on the whole although there are some students coming late every day. Please ensure students allow extra time for travelling, allowing for transport delays or heavy traffic. Thus, enabling them to be in school before **8.30am**, it is very important to be on time so as not to cause disruption to their form and interrupt assemblies and miss vital information given out at morning registration.

Holidays

If you are booking holidays at half terms please ensure that you arrive back in time for **the start** of the school term allowing for delays at airports, jet lag etc., Permission for holidays in term time must be requested in writing in advance to the Head.

Medical and Other Appointments

Please note that we require as much notice as possible for medical appointments, and if possible for them to be made outside of term time.

Absences

Absences must be cleared by letter on the day your daughter returns to school following an absence.

Thank you for your co-operation with all the above.

*Vivien Moore
Attendance and Punctuality Officer*

Y10 Attendance and Punctuality League Table

4th September 2006-5th June 2007

1st 10T - 250 Points 2nd 10R - 233 Points 3rd 10G - 217 Points
4th 10H - 213 Points 5th 10Y - 175 Points 6th 10C - 156 Points

Year 7 Students Win Choir Competition

On Friday 18th May we went to a choir competition and we had to sing two songs: *Proud* and *Day by Day*. When we first got there we warmed up our voices and sang a song with Karen Gibson. After that we had lunch while the primary school pupils did the same thing. While they were singing *He's got the whole world in his hands* some of us got up and stood next to the door listening to them. They were loud and so cute when they were singing.

Next when the competition started I felt kind of excited but scared at the same time. Then a couple of minutes later it

was our turn. That's when I felt nervous. When we sat down in our seats I started to feel confident that Grey Coat was going to win and



Miss Platt conducting the Year 7 Choir during the competition

WE WON!

Simonette Carlton-Carew 7C

THANK YOU and well done to:
Vocal Soloists: *Eunice Raciwu 7C, Goldie Quaker-Dokubo 7G, Maia Reddy-Devlin 7T, Stephanie Black 7C, Claudine Bonsu 7C.*

Flute: *Lucy Kernick 7C*, Drums: *Ramona Oppong 7C*, Tambourine: *Nicole John 7C*, Piano accompanist: *Bethel Eskender 9R* (this was a difficult accompaniment played extremely well).

Thank you to Miss Kirkaldy, Miss Morrish, Miss McMellan and Miss O'Reilly for coming with us and helping make the day smooth-running and fun. And most of all thank you to everyone in Year 7 Choir for their excellent singing and presentation.

(We all said it was the taking part, not the winning, that counted, but what fun to win as well.)

Miss Platt.

Art Students Exhibit in Public Space

On Wednesday 13th June three year 9 students exhibited their work at the Prince's Drawing School in Shoreditch. Issy Muir, Aileen Brennan and KateThackery participated in a gifted and talented programme organised by the Prince's Drawing School and their art work was exhibited

in an exhibition opened by the minister for culture David Lammy. Students' work was highly praised and this was a great opportunity for young artist to exhibit in a public space.

Mr Mataya

Photo: Issy Muir who exhibited her work



Homework: Comments and Concerns

We would like to take this opportunity to thank parents and carers for completing the questionnaires distributed at the parents' evenings. Your comments have been positive, incisive and constructive. We are now in the process of researching homework practices in order to review the homework policy in place at The Grey Coat Hospital.

A number of questions which featured in the questionnaire were specific to this project and a summary of our findings is recorded on the next page and a full version of the report is available on our website. Further discussions will be taking place with pupils and teachers in response to your comments and recommendations.

Parents almost unanimously agreed on the value of homework, in that it contributes to overall academic achievement. The figures are as follows: in KS3 – 94%, KS4 – 93%, KS5 – 93%. As detailed in our current homework policy, 'over a five year period regular homework would be equivalent to an extra year's education with consequent benefits'.

For those who did not agree with the views held about the value of homework, points were raised about the importance of physical exercise and extra curricular activities and the time for social interaction which can be overlooked owing to homework obligations. 'I think that they have too much homework and not enough time for PE or exercise after school' and another parent wrote sensitively about excessive homework being 'detrimental to her [daughter's] learning and life'.

In terms of challenge provided in homework, both Year 11 and Year 12 concurred that homework is more demanding this year than last year. This could be owing to the fact that these year groups are working towards important public examinations, in which the demands of homework, course work, research and revision all come to the fore and intensify.

Inversely, all of the years in KS3 reported that homework was less demanding this year, compared to last year. This suggests that we need to consider ways of gauging and providing more challenge starting from primary school transition to secondary and through to Year 9. At this stage, it is unclear as to whether the homework is less demanding in terms of quantity or complexity. Further discussion with pupils may shed some light on this matter as it is our intention 'to challenge each individual student with appropriate homework' (GCH Homework Policy 2000).

As regards the volume of homework, almost a quarter of parents (23%) felt that their child was given too little homework. This concern was most audible amongst the parents of Year 9 pupils (40%). One parent concluded: 'Needs more homework'. Clearly, it needs to be determined as to whether the reality is that Year 9 pupils are not doing homework that is set or whether little homework is actually set. On the other hand, we found that 50% of all of those surveyed felt that just the right amount was set and 27% concluded that their daughters were given too much.

There are a plethora of issues and initiatives which have been raised from this project and we would like to thank you for your time and thought. Should you have any further comments or recommendations, please do share them with us in writing or by emailing admin@gch.org.uk entitling your message 'Homework Research Project'.

*'We are delighted with the school.
Our daughter has grown in confidence and self esteem
and is consistently encouraged by her teachers.'
(Year 10 Parent)*

THE GREY COAT HOSPITAL

Parent Questionnaires Results Years 7 & 8 - June 2007

Further to our communication with you about our Parent Questionnaires of Year groups 9, 10 and 11 in the March edition of the Parents' Newsletter, we have since collated results from the Parent Questionnaires of our Year 7 and Year 8. We received a total of 238 questionnaires from these two year groups so many thanks for taking the time to complete them.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No answer
My Child likes school.	56%	41%	3%	0%	0%
My child is making good progress.	60%	37%	1%	0%	2%
Children, pupils or students behave well.	25%	71%	1%	0%	3%
My child is not bullied or harassed at school.	60%	33%	3%	2%	2%
Staff expect my child to work hard and do her best.	76%	22%	0%	0%	2%
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45%	50%	4%	0%	1%
I feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem or complaint.	43%	53%	2%	2%	0%
My daughter is well organised with homework.	41%	51%	5%	2%	1%
My daughter finds homework more demanding this year than before.	24%	43%	25%	3%	5%
My daughter works well independently at home.	53%	43%	2%	1%	1%
My daughter is given too little homework.	3%	23%	59%	14%	1%
My daughter's homework is contributing towards her overall achievement.	35%	61%	3%	0%	1%
My daughter has developed good research skills.	29%	64%	5%	1%	1%
Good homework is recognised and rewarded.	42%	53%	4%	0%	1%
I often review pieces of homework my daughter completes.	28%	60%	10%	1%	1%

Old Grey Winifred Tastes Fame at Last

You may recall in last month's newsletter we told you about Old Grey Winifred Warburton, who attended GCH from 1917 until 1924 and is now 99 years old. It seems Winifred is getting something of a name for herself having appeared on BBC's Power to the People about the plight of elderly people and now, is part of a 40-strong group of senior citizens, The Zimmers, who have released a cover version of The Who's 'My Generation'. The single was recorded at the legendary Abbey Road studios and is their attempt to prove that elderly people still have what it takes to command respect. Often let down by society and forgotten

about or treated as stupid, the Zimmers' decision to make the recording was born out of the BBC programme which highlighted how elderly people are not given the respect they deserve. Documentary maker Tim Samuels brought together the group of people who had experienced life in pensioner homes and those suffering from social isolation within their own community for the record. The Zimmers are said to be the world's oldest rock band with a combined age of over 3,000.

Our very own Winifred, who now lives in a care home in Derbyshire, said that recording the single was "the best day of her life".

You can catch the video on You Tube or



Winifred, photographed during her recent visit to Grey Coat

the Zimmers' My Space profile. They also have their own website <http://www.thezimmersonline.com/>

Grey Coat Goes

This year's International Fair took place on Saturday 19th May 2007. It was decided that the format of the Fair would change this year, so that students from Year groups 7, 8 and 9 would work together in creating stalls - Year 7 would take ownership of the food and craft, Year 8 the music and dance, and Year 9 the language and games from their country. Here are some photos taken on the day...



International



Maths News

The following Year 8 girls must be congratulated on their performance in the UK mathematics Challenge. They participated in a logical reasoning and thinking skills challenge run by the University of Leeds. The questions were multiple choice and they were not easy!!! THERE WAS ALSO NEGATIVE MARKING.

The following girls in particular gained Silver (S) or Bronze (B) Certificates.

Well done to all the girls for their achievement. In particular, Bethany, Tsion, Rooney and Sophia gained the highest scores as Grey Coat representatives.

*Miss S. Solani
Head of Mathematics
and Gifted & Talented Coordinator*

Surname	Forename	Score	Medal
Hawke	Bethany	60	S
Girma	Tsion	59	S
Underwood	Rooney	59	S
Rodrigues	Sophie	55	S
Djazeb	Kiana	53	B
Macaulay	Anna	53	B
Blackmatharu	Shan	51	B
Dai	Nancy	51	B
Okere	Mary	50	B
Moxam	Akilah	48	B
Willims	Hannah	46	B
Gauriaucade	Zoe	45	B
Ajakaiye	Esther	45	B
Calder	Naomi	43	B
Afolabi	Halimat	43	B

French Play For Year 10

On the 24th of May the majority of year 10 watched a fantastic performance in French by David and Fanny. After studying French for three and a half years most of the language was familiar to us and even the words we didn't know were made clear to us by the acting. The play was hilarious and the audience's reactions were superb especially Lucia Ruggiero who played a significant part in the play and made it much funnier to watch. This came at the point in the play where the actors were pretending to be magicians and failing miserably. The play was about a counsellor helping a 15-year-old girl to choose a career for the future but she was having trouble finding out what she was good at. All in all the play was entertaining and made learning French a lot more interesting. We forgot to say Lucia almost got chopped in half but dived over Nadia just in time and we all got squirted with water. How much more interesting can French get? All year 10 French students say a big merci (thank you) to Miss Smith who kindly organised it for us.

Amelia 10H and Rachel 10C

LIBRARY CORNER

Not long to go now until the winner of the Carnegie Award is announced at the British Library on 21st June.

Year 7 Reading Club are busy reading all six books in order to qualify to vote. Comments so far have been very varied – so I think our discussion before we register our group vote will be a lively one!

Only once in the 5 years we have been an official shadowing school have the Carnegie Judges agreed with us and chosen our favourite book!

How many of the six books listed in last month's newsletter have you read?

Miss Raddon, Librarian



Denmark Students Visit Grey Coat

On Wednesday 9th May 2007, around twenty Year 10 students from a school in Denmark came to visit Grey Coat to experience a day in the life of an English student. Twenty Grey Coat students were selected to partner up with them for the day.

At 9 o'clock we were down in M36 waiting for our partners to arrive, we didn't know quite what to expect. We didn't even know what language they spoke! However, by the time we were introduced to our partners and started talking to them we found by speaking really slowly and using lots of 'sign language' we could communicate. All of them were amazed at how big our school was as theirs is really small and when they found out that our school is small compared to

others, they were shocked! They found it really funny that we had to wear school uniform, as most schools in Denmark don't have a uniform except for a few private schools.

Our first lesson was French and our partners told us that they had never learnt French, they didn't even know what 'bonjour' meant!! Our next lesson was English and they understood a lot more than we expected they would-they even helped us come up with topics for our persuasive speech! Our last lesson of the day was PE and it was really good seeing everyone work together as a team even though we couldn't speak Danish.

It was an amazing day and everyone had something good to say about it or

something they had learnt:

'It was so fun being with people from a different country and seeing the differences between schools'

'I loved the way we all got on with our partners'

'I learnt loads from the day about communication'

'It was great - I hope we get to do something like that, again!'

'I MADE LOTS OF NEW FRIENDS'

'They were so funny'

We all really enjoyed the day and learnt lots. We want to thank Miss Grose and Miss Stevenson for arranging the day and all we want to say is can we go to Denmark
PLEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!

Ruth Roberts and Celine Tinne 10C

Year 9 Art Students Exhibit their work in Central London

During February, Year 9 Art students designed hearts to express their perceptions of themselves - representing elements of their personality using different colours, shapes and symbols.

Based on the work of Jim Dine, an American artist who has used the symbol of the heart throughout his career, the HeART project was due for completion on Valentine's Day.

Some of the pieces were then selected for the London Institute 'Young at Art' exhibition, open to the public, and the group visited the University of Arts Gallery in central London on 14th May. The work will also feature in this year's Exhibition catalogue.



Year 9 Art students at the University of Arts Gallery

Cultural Awareness Prefect Reflects on her Role

When appointed to the role of Cultural Awareness Prefect, I felt privileged to be an ambassador for Grey Coat working in an area of the school community in which I was particularly interested. Being Cultural Awareness Prefect has given me the opportunity to understand and embrace other cultures in greater depth.

One of my ambitions was to enhance the already unified community of the Grey Coat Hospital. The art in cultural awareness lies in the fact that you are able to reach out to individuals through the understanding of culture.

During my term as Cultural Awareness Prefect I was able successfully to organise a Black History Month show with the help of teachers and peers and managed to raise **£1073.23**

The success of the show depended on a great deal of commitment, and dedication as students from different countries and backgrounds were able to work together to participate in what came to be a spectacular show. The Black History Month show changed from being 'just a show' to being a touching and emotional experience for all involved. It was uplifting to observe students change from being shy and quiet individuals to confident and outspoken young women. The show ranged from numerous acts from the Fashion Show to beautiful renditions from the amazing Gospel Choir. Students dedicated their personal time to participate in the Black History Month Show and their intensive work finally paid off when they were able to showcase their spectacular talents to an audience of over 300 people. The show was sold out to the disappointment of individuals who were unable to purchase tickets and this fact added to the confidence of the performers who began to feel like celebrities!

On the actual night of the performance excitement buzzed in the corridors and

classrooms of Grey Coat as students raced eagerly, preparing themselves for the huge task ahead of them. There were tears of happiness, shrieks of joy and finally relief at the end of the night when the audience warmly applauded those involved in the show. I was presented with a beautiful bouquet of flowers for being the co-ordinator of the show.

Being responsible for directing a team of over 60 students has taught me the importance of independence and organisation; it has also shown me how hard teachers work to ensure the success of the numerous events which take place at The Grey Coat Hospital annually. Mrs Allard, Ms Lecky, Ms Mc Mellan, Ms Stevenson and Ms Cambridge (to mention but a few) all contributed significantly to the organisation of the show and to them I am forever grateful. I am grateful for the unconditional support of my parents who gave me the confidence to co-ordinate such a big event. My greatest thanks go to God who guided and directed the performers, the audience, the individuals involved in helping and myself.

Being Cultural Awareness Prefect solidified my belief that nothing good comes easily but with dedication, motivation and God there is nothing that one cannot achieve.

I have decided to distribute the money raised from the Black History Month Show to the following charities:

£250 to SOS children

whose main role is 'helping children whose parents are not there for them: Aids orphans, street children, child soldiers and children orphaned by war or disasters, such as tsunami or earthquakes. In places where there is a high rate of child abandonment'

<http://www.soschildrensvillages.org.uk/children-charity.htm>

More information about SOS children

can be found out on the website above.

£250 to CAMFED

(The Campaign for Female Education) who are 'dedicated to fighting poverty in rural communities in Africa by educating girls. CAMFED began in 1993 by supporting 32 girls in rural Zimbabwe. In 2006, 300,900 children benefited from CAMFED's programme of educational support in some of the poorest regions of Zimbabwe, Zambia, Ghana and Tanzania.'

More information about CAMFED can be found on the website below
<http://www.camfed.org/>

£173.23 to Centrepoint,

'the national charity working to improve the lives of socially excluded, homeless young people'

<http://www.centrepont.org.uk>
More information about Centrepoint can be found at the above website.

£200 to YTF

(Youth for Technology Foundation) 'a foundation which aims to uplift rural communities in developing countries by providing the educational resources, technology resources and training to empower youth to improve their lives'.

£200 to Wateraid

Wateraid is an international charity whose mission is to 'overcome poverty by enabling the world's poorest people to gain access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene education'.

<http://www.wateraid.org/uk/>

More information about Wateraid is available from the above website.

Menen Hailu

THE GREY COAT HOSPITAL GUILD

AN ASSOCIATION FOR PARENTS AND STAFF



Dear Parents and Carers,

It is that time of the academic year again, when you find yourself thinking – where did all the time go? Well, it has gone and it has also been filled with some outstandingly successful Guild events.

For instance, the **May International Fair held on Saturday the 19th** proved to be another great achievement by the children and staff of GCH. Well done to all of those parents and guardians who contributed and assisted the children with producing goods, foods and wares which were peculiar to the region they were representing.

A forthcoming event is the **New Greys Admissions Day on June 29th**. Many of the New Greys and their parents will be filled with excitement, enthusiasm and a slight twinge of anticipation, no doubt, as my offspring and I were this time last year.

The Guild has therefore decided to hold a BBQ at the end of the induction session which will enable the new children, parents and teachers to socialise and get to know each other. The BBQ will start at 4.00pm and end at 6.00pm.

There will also be a **second hand uniform sale** held at this time – so please, if you have any uniform items which are in good condition, we would be very thankful for your donations.

The Guild comprises parents, guardians and teachers, who are volunteers and who want to help our great school create an environment which will support our children to achieve their potential.

We are keen to recruit volunteers to the Guild. If you would like to volunteer your help in any way towards our work, in support of the school, we would very much welcome this.

In order to do this you can either contact Sam Fores via info@gch.org.uk, or send a letter to the free post address, which is: "Freepost RRAK-AGBC-CGYZ, The Guild, The Grey Coat Hospital, Greycoat Place, London SW1P 2DY.



Year 11 Graduate & We Say Farewell To Year 13

Friday 11th May 2007 was the last day of school for the current Year 11, who are now in full swing of their GCSE exams. It was a glorious day, the sun was shining and the occasion was marked with a party on the roof garden, featuring a rather fabulous looking chocolate cake!

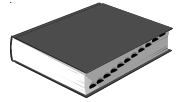


Above: Lamees Yousif cuts the graduation cake on behalf of Year 11 Students

Year 13 had their last lessons on Wednesday 23 May followed by a celebration event in the garden at St Andrews. The sun was shining and the strawberries and cream were delightful as was the cake!



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



JULY

3rd	Academic Tutorial Day
4th	Annual Service, Westminster Abbey 6.30pm
5th	Sixth Form RE Conference
6th	Year 10 exams end
9th	Year 10 Work Experience begins (ends 19th) Year 12 Work Shadowing begins
11th	Duke of Edinburgh Gold Expedition (returns 16th)
12th	Year 9 Greece Exchange (returns 26th)
20th	Year 10 Work Experience Debrief
22nd	Duke of Edinburgh Gold Expedition (returns 27th)
	END OF TERM SERVICE



Rachel Mullins cuts the cake



Year 13 students and staff enjoying strawberries and cream in the garden before saying goodbye