



# Walton Hall School Spring Newsletter

Issue 3

April 2014

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<b>New Staff</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>New Students</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Tall Ship Appeal</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Aiming High</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Message from the</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Head teacher</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Congratulations</b>	<b>6</b>

## Pupils Congratulated for 100% Attendance

On 31st January 2014 Adrian Rawsthorne, Education Welfare Officer joined us for our assembly and presented pupils who had achieved 100% attendance during the Autumn 2013 term with a certificate



(pupils present in the assembly pictured above with Adrian).

Adrian then joined parents at the regular parent's coffee morn-

ing to give a brief update regarding changes to holiday leave which came into effect last term. This also gave parents the opportunity to ask questions regarding attendance.

Parents also had an opportunity to meet Claire Notman, our new KS3 teacher.

## Special points of interest:

- Students are having many opportunities to learn outside the classroom
- We have a new permanent Head of School
- The school as a whole is making good progress
- Residential Houses are near completion
- Aiming High has been very successful and has secured funding for the new financial year
- The new garden plots are beginning to bloom and are adding colour and interest to previously sad looking areas of the school.

## Congratulations to Lauren on a Successful Work Experience

I have been doing work experience every Friday with care for living at Stone Youth centre it has helped me to talk to elderly people giving me confidence in my own abilities. As well as talking to the elderly, I also help to prepare the dinner which

I really enjoy doing, I love going every week. I hope that the skills I have learnt will help me to get a job when I leave Walton Hall school.  
Written by  
Lauren Yates  
KS5



## Chocolate Magnet!

Morgan Blythe does it again!





## Welcome to New Staff

Hello, to everyone in the Walton Hall community. I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to you all and say thank you for the wonderful welcome that I have received.

My name is Fiona Stratford and I joined the school in January as a teacher. My specialism is French, however I am passionate about literacy and communication. I look forward to meeting and working with you in the future.

Claire Notman also joined us in January and would like to take this opportunity to thank all the staff at Walton for their help and support whilst settling in during the Spring term.



"After eight years teaching in a school for Autistic students in Cheshire, it was

timely for me to move to Walton Hall School."

I have a lovely class here in Key Stage Three. So far we have had a fun and educational trip to the Snow Dome and taken part in our whole school assembly. We are looking forward to the school's Art week and to learning outside next term.

*"The staff are a talented, caring team and I'm looking forward to an exciting future here."*

## Welcome to New Students

Hello to Aspen Honey Ridge and Jack Scott who have been joined in Y7 by Morgan Blythe.



We also welcome Kathryn Mycock into Year 8

All of these pupils have recently joined us from Christ Church Academy in Stone.

*Jack says, 'this is the best thing that has happened to me!'*

We are very impressed with how well they have settled in! We can already see the positive impact that the new students are having on the school.

## The Tall Ship Expedition 2014 Appeal

This year our expedition is taking place in May and we are hoping for fair winds and weather to complete a really challenging sail. As always, we need to raise funds and provide food for the week's expedition. One of our parents has kindly offered to put on a barn dance and details of this family

event will be sent out later. Please do come and support us if you can. If any parent has contact with a local shop or other food retailer/producer, we need donations suitable for the voyage e.g. a tin of biscuits, 10 tins of beans etc. If you can help in anyway please let me know. Many Thanks, A Cameron

## Drama News

There will be a new after school drama club beginning in the summer term. Students will have the opportunity to learn a variety of drama skills leading to a performance.

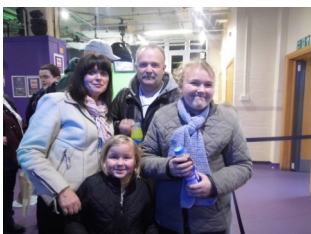
**It's Showtime Walton Hall** will be our summer production at the Gatehouse theatre on Thursday 19th June. It will involve a mixed group of students from the school as well as the choir. All very exciting!



## Aiming High

### January to April 2014

We have had another successful couple of months with Aiming High activities. Families had a fun filled day out at Cadbury World



with lots of free chocolate! A small group of students had the fantastic opportunity to go to London, see the sights and then watch Charlie and the Chocolate Factory at the West End- what a long day that was! Our Rock Club were able to spend a day recording and making a video for one of their songs. Family groups went to the Think Tank in Birmingham.

We have had an after school cultural games night, Parents have had the opportunity to go to a local football match with their child, whilst a group of students went to Harry Potter World to see the magic behind the movies. All Yr 7- 11 parents were invited to attend the first Walton Hall Spa day, where parents were treated to a day of rest and relaxation whilst students went out for the day to the cinema and lunch.

"...thank you for a fab day ... I felt so relaxed and it was really nice to meet other people knowing (my child) was safe and having a good time also." Parent comment.

This was a huge success as parents were able to meet each other whilst having time out relaxing. We hope to continue with future parent focused events. We are proud to announce that we have secured funding for the next financial year to provide more exciting activities for every student at the school. If you would like any information regarding Walton Hall's agenda under Aiming High for Disabled Children please contact Helen McCarthy at school or on:

[hmccarthy@waltonhallschool.net](mailto:hmccarthy@waltonhallschool.net)



### Visit to the National Arboretum

On Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> February, Mrs Chase's class and Mrs Dunn's class went to the National Arboretum at Alrewas.

A very interesting Day was had by all!



We had a fantastic lunch in the café and a few of us braved the elements of wind

and torrential rain and walked up to the Armed Forces Memorial.



### Watching the Garden Grow

KS3 are really proud of the way their garden plots are beginning to grow.



They are adding colour and interest to what was a very neglected little area.

The students are taking great pride in their work and have just planted new seeds which are sprouting in classrooms as we speak.

We will soon be able to add Sunflowers, Hollyhocks, Pop-

py's and Antirrhinum to the plots when the weather gets a little warmer.



## News from the Head of School: Pauline Carmichael

We are now two thirds of the way through the school year - and what a year so far! As from March 5<sup>th</sup> March I accepted the position as permanent Head of School of Walton Hall School. I hope to keep you up to date with what is happening within the school through our termly newsletter.

**Shaw Education Trust and Federation:** As you know we talked with you at the end of last year, about Walton Hall School joining with Blackfriars and Coppice Federation of schools. We have delayed this process whilst we explore the other option which I wrote to you about recently - developing a partnership with a Charity called the Shaw Trust. The Shaw Trust is a national organisation with the remit of supporting disadvantaged and vulnerable young people into employment, supported employment and supported living. They are keen to work with schools and support students like ours earlier in the process than they do at the moment. The support they could offer our children and young people is quite staggering. They are keen to work with Blackfriars Coppice and Walton to form a Multi-Academy Trust. We are at the very early stages in discussions, but governors and colleagues across all three schools are very excited about the possibilities this collaboration would bring for our young people. As part of a potential relationship the Shaw Trust want to make an agreement that would guarantee all of our students and their families individual, bespoke support into the next phase of our children and young people's lives after they leave school. This would be a unique arrangement that would secure a much greater level of certainty for our students when they leave us. As I have said, we are at very early stages in the negotiations and there is a proper process that we need to follow if this moves forward. The team from the Shaw Trust have visited all sites and are very keen to meet with parents and carers. So, it is a case of watch this space.

**Staffing:** We have had a few our last newsletter. Jane Dam-Headteacher and Ks3 teacher, to take up a post with Horton uary. Mr Dale, Science and Maths leader, left us early this year and beyond Walton Hall School after teaching with us. Adam Johns, a dental staff left in January to other care environment.

We have been able to welcome 2 new permanent staff onto our residential workers team, Sandra Yates and Les Gratton. Also, Leah Taylor who will cover for Helen Thompson who started her maternity leave in February. Helen had a healthy baby girl to add to her family. Chris Bagnall, one of our site staff also had an addition of a healthy baby boy in March.

**Students:** we have had a steady trickle of students joining us in Ks3 throughout the year. They have settled in well after planned transitions from their previous schools.

The Shaw Trust is a national organisation with the remit of supporting disadvantaged and vulnerable young people into employment, supported employment and supported living.

staff changes since bach, Assistant left us in December Lodge School in Jan-teacher and Ks4 is going to enjoy life 10 plus years of member of our resi-take up a post in an-

# News from the Head of School: continued.....

**Ofsted:** Our Spring term monitoring visit went very well, and we continue to make progress. The full report can be viewed on the school website. We will have, what will hopefully be our last monitoring visit, in the summer term. This is hoped to be an integrated inspection when both the education and residential provision will be inspected.

**Parents Questionnaire:** Many thanks to all of you who took the time to respond to this questionnaire. This has provided some very supportive and positive statements - thank you. I will keep you informed of the analysis of all the responses once all replies have been received. So far the comments range across the spectrum from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Some common themes which have been identified are 'Homework' and 'Information relating to child's progress' - we are currently in discussion as to how we are going to address this across the school. Once we have decided on a whole school policy I will keep you informed.

I was very surprised to see 'Bullying' identified as a concern by some parents. This is something we take very seriously and respond to on a daily basis to ensure any friendship issues are addressed promptly.

The incidence of bullying (persistent and targeted behaviour towards an individual) in school is extremely low. Bullying is an agenda item at our weekly Safeguarding meeting. This enables us to monitor any trends in behaviours. Our Behaviour Manager works closely with individuals, parents and small groups of students to resolve any friendship issues. I would encourage anyone having concerns to contact me and I will happily meet with you to explore and hopefully resolve your concerns.

Some common themes which have been identified are 'Homework' and 'Information relating to child's progress'

**Transport:** As you are aware the Local Authority implemented changes to the transport earlier this year. Whilst some of these changes have improved circumstances for many students, they have also caused great distress and disruption to a few students and their families. This has also had an impact on behaviour of these individuals in school. Although the travel arrangements are between families and the local authority, as a school we have been in constant communication with representatives in the transport department to address the many issues these changes have caused. When individual parents have contacted us directly we have supported their concerns by speaking with and corresponding with representatives in the transport department to effect change. Our concerns were also raised as an agenda item with the IEB. The Chair of IEB has also written to Andrew Marsden, Head of School Organisation, Admissions and Transport to outline the disruption these changes have caused. She has been assured that these concerns will be considered. Hopefully, greater consultation with parents will be taken before any future changes are made.

We have a full calendar planned for the summer term - please check school bags for letters / fliers and also our website.

Thank you for your continued support. I am excited to be working with you all and look forward to continue to move Walton Hall School 'onward and upward!'

Pauline A Carmichael  
Head of School





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## A SPECIALIST SCHOOL FOR PERFORMING ARTS

Executive Headteacher Jim Kane MA(Ed.)  
B.Ed Dip.Ed.Man  
Head of School Pauline A Carmichael Cert.Ed  
M.Ed Ad.Dip.Sp.Ed NPQH

We're on the Web:  
[www.waltonhallschool.net](http://www.waltonhallschool.net)

## Congratulations!

To Angela Sharratt who has been working as an Apprentice TA in KS3.

She was awarded her *QCF Level 2 Certificate Supporting Teaching and Learning in Schools* at the Kingston Centre on Monday 7th April.

She is currently working hard to gain her Level 3 Certificate which we know she will pass with flying colours as she is a very talented TA.



## WALTON HALL SCHOOL HOLIDAY LIST 2013/14

### SUMMER TERM 2014

School Opens	Monday 28th April 2014
Bank Holiday	Monday 5th May 2014
Half Term	Monday 26 <sup>th</sup> May 2014 to Friday 30 <sup>th</sup> May 2014
School Opens	Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2014
School Closes	Friday 18th July 2014

### In service Training Days for Staff

Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> June 2014
Monday 21 <sup>st</sup> July 2014 (to be taken during 3 x 2 hour twilight sessions)

## Open Day For Residence

We would like to invite parents to a coffee morning on May 1st. This will be an opportunity to meet the residential staff, take a tour of the brand new facilities in Shugborough House and Goldstone House.

Parents of prospective students will have the chance to have all of their questions answered and to find out about any current vacancies.

**IEB message:** We were delighted that the staff and students achieved such a positive response from Her Majesty's Inspectorate when they came to call earlier this year. This means that, although the path ahead will be a really tough one, the school remains on track for continued recovery. Well done to all.

**Sally Osborne-Town, Dave Humphries, Liz Pohl and Richard Redgate.**

## Project Linus

Many thanks to Heather Russell from Project Linus for bringing some new quilts. They are a Charity who provide Comfort Blankets to special Children from age 0 to 19 years. The quality and design of them is absolutely exquisite and the students really treasure them!



## Maths at the Cafe



Mrs Medway's class have been visiting the Oak Tree Farm Project Café this year to develop Maths and English skills. We use a photo-menu to choose our snack and drink then we take our orders to the counter and pay. If the weather is fine we also take a walk around the Sensory Garden.