



## Kew Gardens Trip

On Wednesday 23 October 2013, Highdown School and Sixth Form Centre took a group of Year 10 Art students on a trip to Kew Gardens in London. The aim was to expand their artistic palette. The students were split into smaller groups and explored the gardens, taking many photographs. A booklet with



various tasks to complete and draw were handed out, such as:- the exotic greenhouse, fish in the aquarium, the tree-top walkway and lots of exotic plants and flowers. They visited a gallery that had paintings by artists who had worked from the same plants at Kew Gardens many years ago. Students felt that the trip really improved their skills at capturing images and making it look real on the page. They worked on shading by using different materials and focusing on light and dark. The overall trip was a really good experience.

## The Poet's Return

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On Friday 25 October 2013, poet Roger Stevens made another very successful visit to Highdown. He celebrated the end of the Year 7's first term at Highdown with an energetic and inspiring poetry filled talk to the whole of the year group. During the day he held several workshops in which the students produced poems in different styles and he showed them how to produce their own mini books. Roger left two of his own poetry books to be given as prizes for the best mini books produced over half term and the winners were:- Annabel Pemberton and Rebecca Harvey. Well done girls.





## Scientists in Training!



Year 11 scientists, Mrs Bonnett and Dr Love inspired Year 1 students from The Hill Primary School on Friday 22 November 2013, with an afternoon of Science. Year 1 investigated whether strawberries were stronger than cola and why do fishermen who put maggots in their mouth catch more fish? Year 11 led a series of workshops where the young primary scientists tested the strength of strawberry and cola laces using different masses to find their fracture point. Charlie Cooper from Year 11 said, "It was great to take an idea that we had been studying in Physics of Hooke's law and finding the elastic limit of springs and applying it to a similar idea with the Year 1 students. You can see how Science can be linked into all ages." One of the parent helpers from The Hill Primary School commented on how the Year 1's working with the Year 11's generated so much mutual respect, admiration and enthusiasm. The second investigation was taking maggots and changing their temperature with different water temperatures to measure the effect it had on the number of wiggles made in one minute. The greater the temperature, the greater the number of wiggles made. The Year 1's concluded it was the wiggles that attracted the fish. They finished the afternoon looking at adaptations of various animals from Reptile Club from the bearded dragons large feet to the Geckos dropping tails to the forked tongues of the corn snakes. Brilliant Science! Fantastic interaction! Inspiring afternoon. A huge thanks to all the Year 11 students that helped.

## Junior Tennis Team

The Highdown School and Sixth Form Centre Junior Tennis Team proudly set off to Bath University for the quarter-finals of the Aegon National Schools Tennis Competition. On arriving at Bath University all four players: Seb Tong 9H, Oliver Elsen 9D, Giaan Juttla 8K and Jamie Bedlow 9D were hugely impressed by the world class facilities. The tennis that followed matched the surroundings as every player from every school played to such a high standard. Highdown were to play the number one ranked school, Bournemouth Collegiate School, in their first match. This would be the squads biggest challenge of the season so far. The singles matches began and despite Highdown's best efforts Bournemouth were comfortable winners in all four matches. A special mention must go to Oliver Elsen, who fought for every single point and simply refused to be beaten easily. Bournemouth dominated the doubles matches as well, rarely allowing Highdown a chance to break into their stride. Despite this heavy loss, all four players came off court recognising the talent of their opponents and highlighting areas for focus in the third and fourth place play-off match against Millfield School. Millfield were champions of the whole tournament in 2010, 2011 and runners up in 2012, so they knew they had another tough challenge ahead. The matches began and Highdown were playing with more confidence, particularly Jamie Bedlow and Giaan Juttla, who were picking up points and making their opponents work hard. Oliver Elsen again fought for every point and looked exhausted when he left the court. Attention turned to our number one seed Seb Tong, who after a long battle finally got the better of his opponent and won Highdown's first points. This was a fantastic way to finish such a good day, where all four players showed such an incredible commitment to their sport and perseverance in challenging matches. Reaching the last sixteen of this national tournament really is an outstanding achievement. Highdown are delighted that their success has been recognised at the Reading Sports Personality of the Year Awards, where they received the School Team Award.

## British Talent

Lauren Church in Year 11 was selected to represent Berkshire Schools at the Talent Identification Programme in Sheffield from 12 to 14 September 2013. Lauren met several Olympians who inspired her to become more focused and set goals to enable her to reach her full potential and have the confidence to believe she can do it. We wish her all the best.



Reading Sports Personality of the Year Awards were held at the Hilton Hotel on Sunday 8 December 2013. Tilly Nash won Female School Sports Personality of the Year and our Tennis Team won School Team of the Year.



## PE Department Awards

Most Improved Cross Country Runners:- Samuel Rodda 9C, Ella Wright 9F, Willow Brown 9C and Martha Bryant 9K. Most Improved Rugby Players:- Raymond Collis 7H, Alex Aldrich 8G, Frankie Taylor 9H, Tom Willis 10F, Robert Cooke 10E and Alex Cheng 11D. Inter Tutor Cross Country Winners:- 7D and 8E. Inter Tutor Rugby Winners:- 7D and 8G. Inter Tutor Girls Hockey Winners:- 7D, 7E and 8J.


## Amazing Athletes

Tilly Nash came tenth at the World Age Games for tumbling in Gymnastics which was held in Sofia, Bulgaria. Tilly has also made the British Team for tumbling. Niamh Ridge qualified for the World Championships for Irish Dance. Lili Smith achieved second place at the National Championships for Synchronised Swimming. Abigail Lewis achieved gold and silver medals at the National Championships for Karate.

## 5-a-side Football

**Junior Football at the Goals Centre.** Highdown had two tournaments - Friday 22 November 2013 and Thursday 5 December 2013. Both teams had lots of practice and played lots of games. The B team had a friendly tournament in the afternoon and they came third. The A team won in the quarter finals but lost narrowly in the semi finals. The A team then played a play-off for third or fourth, which they won, finishing the tournament in third place with over eighteen teams involved is a great achievement. The second tournament was played as a round robin with sixteen teams involved. Highdown started slowly with a couple of draws and a couple of losses but then gained confidence and started scoring lots of goals. Chante Bynoe-Gittens scored 9, Freya Jenkins 10 and Kyra Hannibal 4 goals during the tournament. Well done to all involved. **Senior Football Tournament at the Goals Centre.** Highdown had an unbelievable time at the Goals Centre on Thursday 5 December 2013, winning every game bar one. Hollie McGreevy (GK) only conceded 8 goals in fourteen games and the team scored a massive 68 goals in the tournament. Frankie Aspell scored 17, Ella Kirton 15, Izzy Morrin 8, Sophie Wicks 12, Ruby Cruse 5 and Jodie Hayden 9 goals. The team finished the tournament in second place, which although they were disappointed, I could not be prouder of how they played with such enthusiasm and determination. It was a long, very tiring day but they were amazing. Well done for yet another great tournament ladies.

## Twitter@HighdownPE

Follow us on  for information on all the amazing things that happen in PE.

## Author Visit

On Tuesday 12 November 2013, students in Year 8 and Year 9 visited Leighton Park School to see the award winning author of Noughts and Crosses, Malorie Blackman. Malorie has written over fifty books for children and young people and has won numerous awards including the Fantastic Fiction Award and the Red House Children's Book Award. In addition, Malorie has also been short-listed for the Carnegie Medal. Currently the children's laureate for 2013-2015, students from Highdown School and Sixth Form Centre, as well as other secondary schools in Reading, had the privilege of listening to Malorie tell us about her personal story, including how and why she became a writer; what she wanted to be before becoming a writer (an English teacher of course, the best job ever!) and information about her latest work. One striking fact about her first book is that she was actually rejected over eighty times before she got it published! Malorie told an inspiring story of how perseverance and dedication pays off. Students listened attentively to this lively and audacious women who shared her highlights, challenges and top tips on becoming a successful writer. The session ended with students getting their new books signed by Malorie and some photographs were taken to capture the wonderful moment.



## Noticeboard

Mobile phones are NOT to be used during the school day, including break and lunchtime. If a student is found to be in breach of this rule, the phone will be confiscated and remain secure in the Headteacher's PA's office until the end of the school day, when it can then be collected. The sanction will be to serve an afterschool detention on the following Thursday. Parents will be notified.

### ABSENCE LINE

If your child is ill please contact the School Office on 0118 9015823 before 9.30 a.m.

### DATA CHECK

Do we hold the correct information on your student? Please complete a data form and return it to Highdown.

### TERM 3

Starts: Monday 6 January 2014  
Ends: Thursday 13 February 2014

### LOST PROPERTY

Please ensure that your student's belongings are named. Lost property handed to the School Office, if named, can be returned to the student. Any unnamed items will be displayed for students at regular intervals.

### SPARE SCHOOL UNIFORM

If you have any outgrown uniform in good condition that is no longer needed, please bring it to the school office where it can be utilised.

School Reception 0118 9015800  
Email [office@highdown.reading.sch.uk](mailto:office@highdown.reading.sch.uk)



HighdownSchool



[www.highdown.reading.sch.uk](http://www.highdown.reading.sch.uk)