



VOLUME 18  
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# Highdown Link

Aspire Achieve

## CROWNE PLAZA COMPETITION

We were asked by the Crowne Plaza in Caversham to help them produce paintings from The Louvre for their Parisian Christmas party theme. All of Year 8 created a piece of work and Year 12 Art students also took part by recreating the famous Mona Lisa. Students responded really well, producing work in lessons, at lunchtimes, as homework and as extra challenges.

Around 50 paintings were selected for the final exhibition and they will be displayed and for sale at the Crowne Plaza during their Christmas Party season. Students and their families will be invited to view the work once it is framed and displayed. We are planning to use the money we make from the sales for two different projects. The first one is TourAid which we are supporting as a school. For the second project, we would like to use some of the money to buy materials and get an artist in to work with us to transform an area of our school grounds. The winners were:

<b>Year 8</b>	<b>Year 12</b>
Natasha Dye	Lucy Penton
Jemma Nicholson	Sophie Underwood
	Becky Stone
	Emma Wright

## TOUR AID

Highdown School are currently involved in a rugby based charity called Touraid. The charity provides children, in deprived countries, the opportunity to tour the UK whilst staying with host families. To help raise money there are a number of events that have taken place or are still running: Highdown Hurricanes- Staff Touch Rugby Team; Staff Room Refreshments; Rugby World Cup Sweepstake; Bake-off hits Highdown and; Year 7 and 8 Disco.

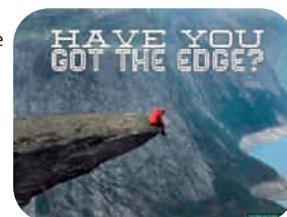
I am sure you will agree, the charity sounds like a fantastic opportunity to help those less fortunate. An event that we really want parents to support is a quiz night with an auction (lots of items required). I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone that has donated and helped raise money. If you would like to ask any questions about anything listed or help with the charity, please contact [daburnell@highdown.reading.sch.uk](mailto:daburnell@highdown.reading.sch.uk). Have a great Christmas break.



## YEAR 7 HAVE THE EDGE

Year 7 students are the first at Highdown School to participate in 'The Edge' programme. This is an exciting opportunity for students to develop personal and employability skills through the completion of challenge activities. Each activity is designed to help students foster the skills of Leadership, Organisation, Resilience, Initiative and Communication. The Edge programme is designed so that students can safely make progress in each attribute. Students in Year 7 are working towards the 'Apprentice' level of the Edge. The aim is that by the time the students reach Year 8/9 they have completed the 'Apprentice' and have moved onto the 'Graduate' level. In the sixth form students will be able to become 'Masters'. The students that complete the programme to this level will have truly given themselves the edge when looking to employment, training or further education at top universities.

All Year 7 have a logon and password for the Edge website. Please visit the website at [www.theedge.pixl.org.uk](http://www.theedge.pixl.org.uk)



## HIGHDOWN CAREERS FAIR

Thanks to 20 "willing" volunteers giving up a 2 hours of their time to talk to over 200 students about their career paths and daily working lives, Year 10 got a unique chance to get a personal perspective on a wide range of occupations. Yes, another very successful round of Careers Speed Dating took place on 10 November.

The second Highdown Careers Fair was attended by contributors from far and near. Students were interested to talk to Hugh Clack from the University of Kymenlaakso, about studying in Finland, especially when they found out about the lack of tuition fees there.



There was also a wealth of information about opportunities do apprenticeships, post 16 and as an alternative to university. The apprentices from Cisco and Jacobs were great examples of this and were fantastic ambassadors for their companies. A big thank you to all who attended the careers fair as exhibitors or visitors for making the second Careers Fair such a great success.

## OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

Highdown School and Sixth Form Centre are always looking for ways in which we can help the wider world and communities. As part of the school's PSHE Programme, Operation Christmas Child was launched at both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4.

Tutors across all Year groups worked with their tutees to prepare and raise funds to fill shoeboxes for Samaritan's Purse, ensuring that children in the developing world will receive a present at Christmas time. 227 shoeboxes were donated from the school and 99 of these came from Year 10! A big thank you to all who participated in providing gifts and funds for these shoeboxes and a special thanks to Katie Upton, Emily Kitchingham, Ayana Campbell, Sharlys Blake, Rebecca Gill, Hannah Biddle, Natty Onofrio, Leila Aljabar, Jade Livingstone, Jasmine McCallum, Alia Champion, Phoebe Gannon, Erin Hoadley, Lauren Baker and Frances Patrick who took over the Year 10 office over a week to ensure that all the boxes were ready to go.



## YEAR 12 & 13 CHRISTMAS PARTY WITH BROOKFIELDS SCHOOL IN THE BARN

On Thursday 3 December 2015, children and staff from Brookfields Specialist SEN School came to Highdown for the annual Christmas Party. As always, the Party was very popular with Sixth Formers and Brookfields students alike, and it was a very rewarding experience for all involved. A visit from Father Christmas made the party suitably festive, and the children loved the overall atmosphere and the opportunity to meet new people (and sing along to some of their favourite Christmas songs!). Thanks to the hard work of the Sixth Formers and the support of Highdown staff,



the barn was transformed into a winter wonderland for a wonderful day filled with fun and activities. It is always such a great and rewarding thing to be involved in, and opportunities will be available next Year for any Sixth Formers who wish to take part.

## THE NEW TRAVEL AND TOURISM DEPARTMENT AT HIGHDOWN SIXTH FORM

The new Travel and Tourism department at Highdown 6<sup>th</sup> Form has got off to a flying start with a group of 12 students. So far this term they have spent the day at British Airways participating in SEP training, which included; descending the inflatable slide, putting out fires and entering smoke filled cabins, they have also had visits from Iain at Latitude Global Volunteering to share his experiences of working abroad and now as a recruitment manager within the company's head office based in Reading. The class have just had a visit from ex-students of the Travel & Tourism teacher Mrs Staines, who are now working within the Travel industry having taken the same BTEC level 3 Diploma in Travel & Tourism qualification, William who joined British Airways via their Engineering apprenticeship scheme and Sophie who studied this course and now works on mixed fleet cabin crew. Both agree that studying Travel & Tourism was 'the best thing they ever did'. This course can be combined with other subjects as it is available as a 1 or 2 A level equivalent. If you are interested in finding out more, please email the course leader, Mrs R. Staines at [rastaines@highdown.reading.sch.uk](mailto:rastaines@highdown.reading.sch.uk)



## WORLD CHALLENGE MADAGASCAR

Year 12 and 13 students are getting ready for their World Challenge expedition to Madagascar this summer. This term they attended a training expedition in Ashdown forest. They learned valuable teamwork and camping skills which they will use in the summer, as well as having lots of fun. Look out for fundraising projects coming soon!



## SPEAKER4SCHOOLS AT HIGHDOWN SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM CENTRE

On 20 November 2015, Year 12 Business Studies and Travel and Tourism students were lucky enough to work with a guest speaker, Mrs Rachel Short. Rachel works with Speaker4Schools, a charity which offer speakers to schools regarding a number of different issues. Rachel attended Highdown School and Sixth Form Centre to provide students with a greater insight into Organizational Psychology and Gender Equality in the workplace. Rachel is an experienced business woman, who supports a range of FTSE 250 clients to build individual and organizational capability. She recently attracted wider public attention through appearing on 'Woman's Hour' to talk about the psychology of game-changers, and most recently covered the launch and publication of research into why women succeed at work. She spoke informatively to students on a variety of issues, and left them questioning the wider world and their roles within it. The only problem was that a 50 minute session was just too short! A huge thanks to Rachel for taking time out of her busy schedule to work with Highdown School and Sixth Form Centre so that students could be provided with a greater insight into the workplace. Should you be interested in coming into the school to deliver a talk about a subject which you are passionate about, please contact Sarah Stevens through [hsst@highdown.reading.sch.uk](mailto:hsst@highdown.reading.sch.uk).

## CISCO TECHNOLOGY CHALLENGE

Last term a selection of Highdown's finest computer scientists had the opportunity to spend a week's work experience with CISCO. On the first day they were grouped with students from other schools as part of the programs aims of helping to develop the soft skills and teamwork required by industry, then immediately tasked with a dragons den style pitch for the technology solutions they would develop during that week.

In addition to the technology challenge they were introduced the wide range of careers offered by a company like Cisco and given the opportunity to learn from experts in the fields of Engineering, Communications, Cybercrime(hacking), Software Development (Programming), Smart Car technologies... and a talk on the human networking aspects of the role. The emphasis being that addition to being intelligent and creative they would need to be able to interact and work with a wide range of people. While they enjoyed all the sessions those on hacking were the most popular with most of our students.

The feedback from Cisco clearly stated that Highdown students were a credit to their school and were one of the best to have taken part. Students of note include Claire Boorman, Callum Flanagan and Felix Masters for their outstanding presentation skills and Marine Gabriadze, Oliver Atwal, Matthew Wynn, Jake Ireland and Jake Wilkinson for winning the technology challenge.

All participants have been asked to consider a second placement with CISCO once their exams are out of the way, which I think speaks volumes of the impression they have made.

## VIROLOGIST VISIT

A virologist from the University of Reading came to visit Highdown on Monday 7 December to deliver a presentation and question and answer session to more able students across the school. The presentation focused on dangerous viruses, such as Ebola. Students were thoroughly engaged in the talk, and came up with some excellent questions. Benjamin Neuman, the virologist, was impressed with the student's knowledge and attitude. The students (and some science staff!) are now more clued-up with viruses, the Ebola vaccine and bats carrying similar viruses in the UK!



### GIRLS RUGBY TAKES OFF AT HIGHDOWN

Following on from the England Women's teams success of winning the Rugby World Cup in 2014, Highdown School now has its first Girls Rugby Club. The club began after October half term and has been open to Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 girls. So far it has been excellently received with 38 girls coming along in all kinds of weather to enjoy a sport that is experiencing rapid growth. It has currently been mostly Year 10 and 8 students that have attended but the club will be continuing in the New Year and is open to all girls in Years 7, 8, 9 and 10. The girls that have been attending regularly have shown vast improvement, and in the New Year we hope to have our first competitive matches against other schools.

### MANY THANKS TO ALL FEMALE FOOTBALL PLAYERS

This season has seen some great performances by our female football players and I would like to say thank you to all that have given up their time to train and play. I would also like to thank Lauren Prentice for her help with the U12 team this season. Most recently the U12's have been enjoying home fixtures for their competition. We saw some great performances and commitment from the players we have, but hope to improve on the numbers next Year. They finished 8/12 with W2 D2 L4.

The U16's also had a good season with W5 and L3. They came 8/12 in their league and sadly did not have the opportunity to play the teams that finished 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>. They are still involved in action as they face The Holt in the county cup early in the new Year.

Finally the U14's had the best season of all! They were impressive in all their games, quite often sneaking victories in the dying minutes and even coming back from deficits. They were league WINNERS!!! Winning all 8 of their games and ending the season with a goal difference of 17. If these great performances continue Chelsea may look to sign me up as their new manager! Miss Turner.

### PHYSICAL EDUCATION PRIMARY LINK

This term has seen a number of Primary School competitions being organised and hosted here at Highdown. Over the course of 2 weeks in October saw the Year 3 & 4 and Year 5 & 6 Primary Cross Country competitions took place around the school grounds. It was fantastic to see nearly 100 students in each Year group coming and competing against each other in some very close finishing races. With the top 4 finishers from each school making up the team scores, the results were as follows;

Yr 3 & 4 Girls Results = 1<sup>st</sup> **Caversham Primary**, 2<sup>nd</sup> **The Hill**, 3<sup>rd</sup> **St Martins**

Yr 3 & 4 Boys Results = 1<sup>st</sup> **The Hill**, 2<sup>nd</sup> **Caversham Primary**, 3<sup>rd</sup> **St Martins**

Yr 5 & 6 Girls Results = 1<sup>st</sup> **Caversham Primary**, 2<sup>nd</sup> **The Hill**, 3<sup>rd</sup> **St Martins**

Yr 5 & 6 Boys Results = 1<sup>st</sup> **Caversham Primary**, 2<sup>nd</sup> **The Hill**, 3<sup>rd</sup> **The Palmer Academy**

November saw Highdown host the Primary Girls Football Tournament, kindly organised by **Mr Daniel Mander**. The overall winners were **Caversham Primary** who are pictured celebrating their success.

November also saw 10 teams battling it out in the Reading Schools Primary Hockey Tournament. It was fantastic to see so many teams coming and taking part in the tournament, despite the very cold weather!

A massive thank you needs to go to the following Year 10s, **Hannah Butcher**, **Pheobe Gannon**, **Jasmine McCallum**, **Molly Vaugen** and **Chante Bynoe-Gittens** for all their hard work in umpiring all the matches and to **Summer Tackley**, Year 8, for all her help in running the score table. After some very close games, with lots of goals being scored, the top 2 teams going through to represent Reading at the Berkshire Games where **Churchend** and **St Annes**. Miss V Clark



### ABBEY TOURNAMENT WINNERS



### READING LEAGUE WINNERS



AN INCREDIBLE TREBLE!!!

### COUNTY CUP WINNER



### YEAR 7 BOYS RUGBY

This Year the boys rugby team were entered into 3 competitions. The Reading Schools League, the first ever Abbey Rugby Club School Tournament and the Berkshire County Cup. Playing something like 20 matches in all it is nothing short of outstanding that the team remained undefeated all season winning all three competitions and only conceding around 6 trys! This remarkable record did not happen by luck. Dedication - Just over a quarter off all boys in Year 7 attended rugby training. The vast majority making every session. Team spirit - The most experienced players lead by example, supporting players new to rugby when things went wrong. Teamwork - Every player worked hard for the team by doing their job within the team superbly. There are too many names too list and everybody who came to training contributed to the team's success. However, Reuben Muston, Fin Hoadley, Solomon Arbuthnot-Whittaker and Michael Duda all captained the team in matches and contributed hugely to the relentless drive of the team. Next Year is a new challenge.... No trys conceded??

## WRIGLEY'S ASSESSMENT DAY

On Wednesday 21 October 2015, the Business Department transformed into an Assessment Centre, providing our A Level and BTEC Business students a valuable insight into the expectations of the wider world and career development.

6 members of staff from Wrigley's kindly gave up their valuable time to produce a rigorous and informative day for our students. Activities which took place included a CV Workshop, Practice Interviews and Group 'Desert Island' tasks. Each student participated fully throughout the day and individual feedback was given as to how they could improve for their future applications. We would like to thank Wrigley's for their generosity in working with Highdown School and Sixth Form Centre, and look forward to further developing our



links with the school and department to provide mentoring for students who wish to pursue apprenticeships or careers in sales and retail.

## MICROSOFT DIGIGIRLZ

On Friday, 27 November, eight girls participated in a MicroSoft DigiGirlz event at the Microsoft European Headquarters in Reading. During the event, the Year 8 girls interacted with Microsoft employees and managers and gained exposure to careers in business and technology and to get an inside look at what it's like to work at Microsoft. This exciting event gave the girls a Challenge Activity where they had an opportunity to work as a team, planning and working with technology with the help of some Microsoft employees. We were introduced to the **Internet of Things** and **Spencer the Sphero** - just two of the new Microsoft products. The girls were given another product demonstration which included the entire auditorium dancing to the Xbox Dance Central. By the end of the day the girls were excited and enthusiastic about careers in technology.

The girls who attended: Laura Pasmore, Amy Jones, Tara Edwards, Flora Rozgonyi, Katie Hill, Faith Davis-Wall, Nadine Ryan, Eleanor Cussons

## NEWS

### BULLETIN

#### MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING

On Friday 25 September 2015, 11H participated in the annual Macmillan Coffee Morning and successfully raised £40.80 for Macmillan Cancer Support. Students learned about the over 200 different types of cancers the charity helps raise money to combat and how sufferers and their families are effectively supported by the charity.

#### HIGHDOWN PARENTS LINK

##### QUIZ NIGHT

The Highdown Parents' Link (PTFA) hosted a successful quiz night on Friday 27th November. With 15 teams of parents, teachers and sixth formers, the evening was a lively affair. Mr Franks made an excellent quizmaster and a team of volunteers ensured the evening passed smoothly. The winning team held on to their title from the last quiz but kindly donated their prize to Touraid. Last place was jointly held but there was only 1 wooden spoon - we hope the 6th formers put it to good use! The final overall profit was £598. Thank you to all for coming and supporting the fundraising. We hope to host another quiz in February. Keep an eye out for an announcement of the date.

We also have The Gig and Jig in the barn on the 4 March 2016 so save the date!

## BIG LEARNING DAY – SCIENCE RESEARCH PROJECT

Several able Year 9 students spent Big Learning Day this term completing a science research project. This involved researching, practical work and presenting their findings at the end of the day. Ms Cave and Miss Turner were blown away by each group's work. The students had a great day, pushing themselves to learn A-level science, whilst having fun along the way.



**POPPY APPEAL**  
**STUDENTS AND STAFF RAISED**

**£93.90**

**MANY THANKS TO ALL**

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Tuesday 5 January 2016	Start of Term 3
Thursday 14 January 2016	Year 10 Consultation Evening
Thursday 21 January 2016	Year 7 Consultation Evening
Thursday 28 January 2016	Year 9 Subject Evening
Thursday 4 February 2016	Year 11 Intervention Evening
Thursday 11 February 2016	KS4 Concert
Friday 12 February 2016	End of Term 3

**Report student illness to the Attendance Officer on 0118 9015823 before 9.30a.m.**

**Are you a student feeling anxious? Find support at [worried@highdown.reading.sch.uk](mailto:worried@highdown.reading.sch.uk)**

School Reception: 0118 9015800 | [office@highdown.reading.sch.uk](mailto:office@highdown.reading.sch.uk) | [www.highdown.reading.sch.uk](http://www.highdown.reading.sch.uk)



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