



Midhurst Rother College

The best in everyone™

A member of United Learning Trust

Newsletter

April

Spring 2009

Issue No 1

In Brief...



Since the establishment of the MRC in January, work has been ongoing with our partners **Winchester College** and **Chichester University**. The Head of Physics at Winchester, Jeremy Douglas has visited MRC's science departments on both our sites.

Working with **Chichester University** includes the "**Widening Participation**" programme which promotes accessibility to Higher Education promoting it as being open to all who have the ability and the potential to benefit. Through our partnership with **Winchester College**, we plan to work collaboratively on challenging and exciting projects. Two students recently paid them a visit for coaching prior to Oxbridge interviews.

6th Formers recent visit to The Higher Education Fair, Brighton was "...very informative..." with colleges providing information and Q&A sessions about the level of grades needed. There were several seminars addressing issues ranging from budgeting funds to the availability of bursaries.

Craig Hill (Y11) has been offered a highly thought of apprenticeship with Jaguar/Land Rover. This is an amazing achievement; he is the first of our M.V.E. Young Apprenticeship cohort.

I am...who I am!



Zac receiving his book token prize from guest speaker, Chief Rabbi Sir Jonathan Sacks at The British Library, London

Year 8 student, Zac Simmonds, was a prize-winner in a recent **UCST/ULT** sponsored

competition. Students were asked to write their own personal story starting with the words "I am..." and was open to Year 8 students across all schools in the United Church Schools Trust/United Learning Trust Group. It was designed to emphasise unities in our students as well as what make them unique as individuals. Zac travelled to The British Library in London to receive his prize, accompanied by Miss Weeks and joined by Mr Neville and Mr Collins at the venue. The students were able to enjoy lunch, a visit behind the scenes at the Library and a special workshop. When asked about his experience Zac gave it an "11 out of 10!"

Prize Giving Day



(l-r) Mr David Anderson (Chair, LGB), Mr Mark Phillips (Head of 6th Form), Mrs Chris Denne (Vice Principal), Mr Joe Vitagliano (Principal), Sophie Lane (Y11), Mr Stef Calcraft (Governor & Guest Speaker), Mr Jeff Smith (Assistant Headteacher), Kieran Rhodes-Wort (Y11), Ivan Gutowski-Smith (Y12), Jade Carter (Y12) Nathan Smith (Y12), Jayne Reason (Y11)

The first Prize Giving Day at Midhurst Rother College since opening its doors took place on Thursday 19th March. While paying tribute to traditions and commemorating the history of education in Midhurst, the event focused on the high achievements of current students and plans for the success of our new academy.

The day began with a church service held at Midhurst Church. Father Marcus Ronchetti, Vicar of Midhurst, performed the service along with guest, Father David Twinley, of Bury, Houghton and West Burton. Father David was presented with a pair of gloves by

Head Girl, Chloe Oram and Head Boy, Scott Ind in accordance with the bequest made in 1677 by Midhurst Grammar School Founder, Gilbert Hannam.

In the evening some 350 parents, staff, governors and guests gathered to honour students who have achieved high standards of work during the year. The event was introduced by Chair of Local Governing Body, Mr David Anderson. The guest speaker was Mr Stef Calcraft, Governor, former pupil and founder of high profile London advertising agency, *Mother*. He also presented prizes alongside former Chair of Governors and Trustee, Captain Mike O'Kelly.

In his Principal's speech, Dr Joe Vitagliano, spoke of student successes across the board and paid tribute to the excellent examples set by Chloe Oram and Scott Ind during their office, making reference to his own time in the same position when a student at Midhurst Grammar School. He spoke of his aims and ambitions for the development of Midhurst Rother College, expressing the hope "...that we can create a great school that will be the pride of West Sussex."

KAOS Reigns at MRC

The annual **Business and Enterprise Day** at Midhurst Rother College kept **Year 10** students fully engaged as they worked on a brief to develop a new, local music shop. Team and individual tasks covered all aspects of business set-up, including staffing, marketing, branding, finance, administration, premises and product management. Expert representatives from local companies gave freely of their time to support the project and carry out interviews with students to guide them through the project. The aim was to develop team work, communication skills and self-confidence, in addition to providing an insight into the world of business.

The day's work culminated in students displaying their newly created brand along with a presentation of their plans to the staff, organisers and judge appointed

to make a discretionary award at the end of the day.

The winning group branded their new enterprise **KAOS** and students, **Zara Turner, Lauren Till, Lucinda Denyer, Hannah Brayson** and **Barney White** clearly felt they had benefitted from the day. "It gave us the opportunity to see exactly what is involved," said one, "Putting a business together is not as easy as it looks, but we got really good guidance throughout the day and are sure that our new music shop would be a brilliant success!"

KAOS! The winning team – (l-r) Zara Turner, Lauren Till, Lucinda Denyer, Hannah Brayson and Barney White



Sean Butcher and Tori Beesley consult Mrs Rebecca Woodley on Finance and Administration from Alpha Financial Associates Ltd



NATIONAL
SCIENCE &
ENGINEERING
WEEK

Mission to Mars...

On the same day that Year 10 students were concentrating on more earthly matters, **Year 9** was launching a **Mission to Mars**. They explored rocket engineering, fuelling, life support systems and the different forces necessary for a successful launch. Students produced their

own rockets and when it came to blast off were amazed at the results. "I honestly didn't think they would go very high, but it was really cool seeing them shoot so far into the air," said one, "An amazing day – it showed rocket science in real life!"



Marking **Science and Engineering Week 2009** **Year 10** found themselves busy taking part in hands-on Science workshops. Main activities involved the study of forces required to ensure strength and resilience in building construction and how colour features in all areas of science.

Circuit Training at Science Fair



Sponsored by Midhurst Rother College Science Specialism, 220 pupils from the Rother Valley Primary Schools took part in a four day Science Fair for Year 5 pupils. This, the 4th Annual Year 5 Science Fair, was delivered by Gill Emerson from Stem Sussex along with two Science Ambassadors from the University Of Brighton. The objective was for students to become *Circuit Detectives*. Pupils were asked to identify faults in electrical circuits with which they were supplied, produce circuit diagrams to help in their investigations and predict the effect of changes to a circuit. Feedback from the pupils on the day... "It was really exciting; we always learn better when

we do hands-on stuff" and best bit of the day was "...*sorting out the circuit because you had to find out what had gone wrong*". Teachers found their main benefit was being able to observe pupils at Year 5 level using their thinking skills and a high level of teamwork. The pupils' enthusiasm for learning impressed teaching and support staff alike. We look forward to hosting the event again next year.

Stem Sussex is a non-for-profit enrichment and enhancement programme for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Maths on behalf of Brighton University.



Science



Beauty *not* just in the eye of the beholder!!!

Beauty Therapy Department achieved great success on Prize Giving Day, with four 6th Form students winning awards for consistent hard work in all subjects. Others from the Department, **Jade Carter, Gemma Mansbridge, Stacey Greenhough, Abby Castleman** also won a

travel award following their presentation of a detailed application of their proposed trip to Sicily where they plan to experience ancient methods of beauty therapy, such as mud baths.

Stage en Enterprise...

Two 6th Formers spent their February half term on work experience in Midhurst's French twin town, Nogent-le-Rotrou. **Rosie Shaw** (pictured right), who intends studying Chemistry at university, worked in a medical analysis laboratory. **Lucy Hatch** (pictured left), specialising in Art, helped pupils at the Lycée with painting in oils and spent time at a local art exhibition held in the town's 16th century castle.



6th Formers studying French and German at this school have been involved in this foreign work experience scheme for over fifteen years.

Nogent-le-Rotrou Exchange 2009



Mme Susanne Deslandes, Nogent-le-Rotrou Trip Co-Ordinator who retires this year after 30 years in the role celebrating with Sandy Monk, Leader of Learning-Modern Foreign Languages



The French Exchange students arrived on Sunday 22nd March for a two week visit.

During the day students attended lessons on our Easebourne site, dividing their time between sessions with MRC students and with their own teacher, Madame Deslandes. Various outings were planned including Portsmouth, Chichester, Brighton and Brinsbury College. A quiz night and special French Evening in the Easebourne Drama Hall were also held. Twelve **Year 8** MRC students will be visiting France for their exchange in June to develop their French speaking skills. It is a fantastic programme which has been running for 30 years.



The *Write* Stuff

Stretching our students' writing abilities involved 25 Gifted and Talented **Years 6, 7 and 8** students in mixed group workshops which looked at the history of African Americans from the slave trade to the election of the first African American president on the basis of.... "Millions lay, Harriet crept, Rosa sat, Martin Luther marched, then Barack ran so that we can fly." The students developed their own strands including Power Point presentations, a documentary, poetry and essays. Said one student, "It was a brilliant day and we even sent our work to the White House in Washington DC. Who knows, they might write back."

Year 7 students have also been busy composing stories as part of their studies of 'Just So' by Rudyard Kipling. With a focus on good story telling, every **Year 7** student has written their own original story which, without a script, they recited to their class. As with every good story teller, eye contact, gesture, pace and tone counted as much as the actual writing when two students were elected from each class to tell their story in front of the entire year group and a panel of judges. Congratulations to **Jen Welsman, Styn Oomen** and **Lucy Davies**, who came joint first and to runners up **Alison Collins** and **Ryan To**.

World Book Day '09

A short story competition was held for Easebourne site students on World Book Day. Students selected the first line of a story written specifically for the occasion by well known authors then had to follow on with their own version of the tale. There was a great range of entries but strangely the winners from all three years had chosen the same story, *Interception Point* by Mark Walden...

"Better start running," he said with an evil grin, patting the shrouded cage beside him. "You've got a thirty second head start and then I let it out."

Although our winning entries all began in the same way, the endings were completely different, ranging from dragons to 'Bookiads' to a journey to Hell itself. Well done to **Catriona Gibbon** (Year 8), **Jen Welsman** (Year 7) and **Peter Thomas** (Year 6).

Feeling the Burn



In February forty students and four teachers flew to Boston, USA armed with thermals and lip balm. **Ella, Abbie and Georgie** (Year 11) report. We stayed in amazing rooms at the Beacon Resort - with hot tubs! Divided into different ability groups we were able to enjoy the skiing in near perfect weather - sun during the day and snow at night. 'Off piste' activities included swimming in the state of the art pool and snow ball fights, all in the friendliest of spirits of course! Our instructors were really good and the ski runs fantastic. Over the last three days

we visited Cannon Mountain for a wider variety of slopes and jumps! Evening entertainment was great and on the last night we staged a cabaret to entertain the teachers. Acts included the Backstreet Boys, Spice Girls, Jackson 5, the Cadbury Eyebrow Advert, Cross Dressing and FLASH from Queen. Everyone agreed that the trip was amazing; we couldn't have asked to take more perfect teachers with us and would like to thank Mr T, Heidi Evans, Miss Eastwood and Tappers for being wicked!

Meanwhile...Sciare Fantastico!!



AWESOME – that was the word of the week during our ski trip to Italy, reports **Mrs Beesley**, School Administrator. We arrived in Verona airport with 27 children and 4 adults, then travelled to purpose built resort, Piancavallo. Amazing slopes, all leading to the centre and a fantastic, state of the art 'no queue' lift system. The best snow I have ever seen in Europe. Evening entertainment included quizzes, a talent show, pizza night, torch lit descent by ski instructors and a disco. The ski team particularly noted Mr Beal's moves on the dance floor - something not to be missed but definitely not to be repeated! All students and staff returned home with awards for achievement, smiling faces and many happy memories.

Spring Concerts

Student musicians and singers taken from all years at the Midhurst Site played to a full house on 25th March with a wide repertoire to cater for every possible taste. Big Band Superhits opened the evening and was followed by a show of ever-changing music throughout, treating the audience to such

far reaching sounds as Mozart, Leonard Cohen, Abba, Karl Jenkins, Beethoven, Borowski, The Killers and featuring our very own rock bands **Delirium** and **Aggressive Acoustic**. The next **not to be missed** concert will take place on **Wednesday 1 July** – mark your calendar now!



On the 12th February nearly 100 Easebourne Site pupils from **Years 6, 7 & 8** took part in our annual Spring Concert. The music covered a wide range of styles from Music Theatre to Rock Bands and Orchestral to African drumming and dancing! A big thank you goes to all of our peripatetic staff who came along and directed their group. Rehearsals are now underway for our Summer Concert on **Wednesday 15th July**.

Fun Maths? Fun Maths! Fun Maths!!

Year 9 students recently took part in a **Fun Maths Roadshow** on the Midhurst site. The aim of the session was to develop students' problem solving skills and gain confidence and enjoyment from using a range of known number facts. The River Site Hall was filled with a vast number of "puzzle stations" where the students were tasked with solving the problems they posed by

drawing on their maths skills. The day was a great success and amazingly popular with all participants who were happy to stretch themselves to achieve their goals. Community Partnership Coordinator, **Mrs Williams**, was impressed, "It's great to see the students get so excited about and involved in maths."

WORLD MATHS DAY 4 March 2009



Uniting the World in Numbers!

World Maths Day took place on 4th March 2009 online, but lasted some 48 hours because of time zones. Pupils from **Years 6, 7 and 8** helped to break the world record using the international language of numbers. The mathematical questions were based on addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Last year students from around the world set the record of 182,455,169 correct answers. Every class had access to PCs in Maths, at breaks and could continue online at home. The record was smashed as a new total of 452,682,682 correct answers was set! Congratulations to everyone at MRC who contributed, especially to **Damien Copeland (Year 6)** who answered 10,085 correctly and received the first ever Principal's award from Dr Vitagliano.



Gifted and Talented Forensic Science Day – Who dunnit??

Principal

At the end of every half term Midhurst Rother College will be sending home a newsletter which will keep parents informed about school life, celebrate MRC's many activities and successes, and also give important information.

My first term as Principal has not only been spent getting to know students and staff members but also planning for the future. Over the next few months a new team of individuals will emerge as the senior leaders who will take MRC to the heights of excellence we all want it to reach.

The changes that will take place will not only involve members of staff. We will also start to push forward on issues that are close to all parents' hearts. We want teaching to be excellent and all students' learning to be enjoyable and valuable. In addition to this, we want to get the core

things right: uniform and behaviour matter a great deal and we want to make sure these are first-rate. Finally, we will be preparing for the introduction of an extended school day from September 2010 when we hope to offer a wide range of after-school clubs.

I am delighted to be the new Principal of Midhurst Rother College and I look forward to the many changes and improvements that will make our school the best in West Sussex.



J.A. Vitagliano

Murder by design...

MRC **Year 10** experts were on hand to help when they got together with **Year 5** gifted and talented young scientists from Rother Valley Primary Schools for a Science and Collaborative Learning Day. The theme was **Forensic Science** for which students were introduced to a murder scene (mock-up!) to collect evidence, draw sketches and make notes.

Our able **Year 10** MRC scientists were trained in specific forensic experiments to enable them to lead the Year 5 pupils in their work. The tests included blood analysis, flame, sulphate, carbonate, chloride tests, chromatography, fingerprinting and hair and fibre analysis. Once the evidence was gathered it was used by the students to

identify the culprit. Everyone was successful in solving the murder. One pupil said "The best part was doing the tests to find out who did it". The most challenging thing for them all was to "...work as a team and work things out". A parent helper said, "The subject caught the children's interest immediately. The day's activities presented a wonderful way to learn and to give both MRC and Primary students confidence to work together as a team."

Big thank you for the Year 10 students; Tom Harrington, Selsie Davey, James Young, Elle Haidon, Hannah Hampton, Andrew Mier and Sam Holland. Great ambassadors for MRC.



Rebranding Places & Extreme Weather

Year 12 Geography students recently participated in a Rebranding Places & Extreme Weather course at Juniper Hall Field Centre, Surrey. A fantastic location situated on the top of Boxhill outside of the town of Dorking in Surrey. The course was structured into 2 parts; investigating rural and urban rebranding and extreme weather. To the ordinary person on the street, what does this all mean? In our changing world the countryside as well as the urban area has changed their purpose and focus. Fieldwork was carried out investigating rural rebranding strategies (commodification and diversification) in rural Surrey. There was an example of a commodified village and rural diversification in the

deployment of land use for Denbies vineyard. They continued their urban field work in Kingston upon Thames. The second half of the course was focused on extreme weather. Students were able to collect data, investigate land changes and produce a personalised flood risk map of Guildford as well as compare with Environment Agency flood risk maps for a 1 in 100 year flood in Uckfield. The students enjoyed the challenging topics and were please that the work connected strongly with their AS Course. *The FSC (Field Studies Council) is an environmental education charity committed to helping people understand and be inspired by the natural world.*

Sound Bites...

...6th Form v Staff football match was held on 26 March with proceeds donated to St Wilfred's Hospice in the name of John Barrott. Although it was a close call students emerged victorious with a 6/5 result.

...Students and staff rose to the occasion of **Red Nose Day** collecting some **£600** for **Comic Relief** on own clothes day.



MRC has achieved **Eco-Schools** status following external and self assessment. An international award that few senior schools achieve, it is an acknowledgement of the responsibility shown by students and staff for the environment and our impact on school, home and the wider community.

Next issue...full reports...Charity Week -30 March – 3 April ...Sporting Achievements...

Our Calendar

April

- 20 Start of the Summer Term
- 22 Celebration Event for Older People—Grange Centre
- 25 Sustainability Day 10am-2pm, Open to All - Midhurst site
- 30 Y7 reports sent home

May

- 4 **College closed for Bank Holiday**
- 5 & 7 Y7 Parents consultation evening 5–7pm
- 11-15 Y6 KS2 National Curriculum Tests
- 12 GCSEs begin
- 12 GCSE Geography trip Christchurch Bay
- 15 The CHOP Video Conferencing Project—MRC students working with Midhurst Senior Citizens Mountbatten Area Athletics – KS4
- 13 Hagbane's Doom Matinee Show for RV Primary Schools – 1 pm
- 18 Hagbane's Doom Evening Show – 7 pm – Easebourne site
- 19 – 21 Y10 Visit to Goodwood Racecourse
- 21 **College closes for half-term break**

June

- 1 **College re-opens**
- 3-4 Y6 British Museum Trip
- 4 Y8 Begin French Exchange to Nogent Le Routrou
- 10 Y7 Enquiry & Sustainability Day
- 11 **College closed for InSeT training**
- 13 Y8 Return French Exchange from Nogent Le Routrou
- 16 Mountbatten Area Athletics - KS2
- 17 Mountbatten Area Athletics - KS3
- 17 Y6-8 Additional Parent's Consultation Evening 5-7pm
- 19 **Y13 Dinner/Dance (please note date change)**
- 22 Y8 Exams
- 23 Y9 QCA exams begin
- 26-28 Y9 Trip to Paris
- 26 **Y11 Prom (please note date change)**
- 26 Y8 Blood Brothers theatre trip
- 29-30 Activities Week – Easebourne site (29 June-3 July)
- 30 Y12 Futures Day (provisional)

July

- 1 Summer Concert – Midhurst site
- 1-3 Activities Week – Easebourne site
- 3-7 Snowdonia Trip
- 6 **College closed for InSeT (please note date change)**
- 8 Sports Day – Midhurst site
- 11 Yrs 11 & 13 Himalaya Trip
- 13-17 Y9 Activities week, Y10&Y12 Work experience
- 15 Summer Concert – Easebourne site
- 16 Sports Day – Easebourne site
- 16 Y6, Y7, Y8 Presentation Evening (provisional)
- 17 Reserve Sports Day – Easebourne site
- 17 End of year levels, KS2 results, NFER, SWST, Y6 & Y8 reports
- 20 Y9 Commendation Evening
- 21 Y10 Commendation Evening
- 22 **College closes for the summer**

Smell of the grease paint...



6th Form visited Brighton Theatre to see Samuel Beckett's **Waiting for Godot**



Year 9 saw **Billy Elliot** at The Victoria Theatre, London



26 June—Year 8 will see **Blood Brothers** at The Phoenix Theatre, London

Congratulations!

...to all those students who have received **Duke of Edinburgh Physical Recreation Section Awards**... Corrine Altass-Hye, Laura Bloomfield, Tom Challen, Lucy Coombes Jamie Dunstan, Scarlett Foyster, Harry Harms, Henry Harris, Henrietta Hughes, Abbie Humphrey, Georgina Keeley, Ellie Moulding, Molly Nicholson, Amy Oram, Poppy Penson, Georgina Price, Grac Probyn, Lisa Prudente, Douglas Pulman, Jessica Quinnell-Spencer, James Scullion, Alex Sims, Nicola Skinner, Thomas Spriggs, Marcus Williams, Olivia Williams, Ella Wilson, Dean Woodward.

HouseKeeping

Y8 - Residential to Barton Hall, Torquay - June 2009

Just a reminder that payment should have been made in full by **Friday 3rd April**. Please make cheques payable to MRC with your child's name on the reverse and present with the payment card. If you are unsure of your remaining balance please telephone **Mrs Beesley** at our Easebourne Site.

Y10 - Work Experience – 13th-17th July – as we are working with students and parents towards an end of April deadline to secure placements it would be helpful if students could explore possibilities in the Easter Holidays, for discussion with **Mrs Vincent** on return to school.

Y6 Parents - Help for NCT tests. Access to NCT test revision guidance can be found on <http://learning.midhurst-int.w-sussex.sch.uk> - click on **School Office** where the different presentations for English, Maths and Science can be found.

Hush Salon - Our Beauty Therapy Department is open to the public offering a wide range of treatments. The salon's line for enquiries and appointments is **01730 819760**.

Special opening during the Easter Holidays— 8 & 9 April 10am-7pm

School Uniform - As everyone is aware, College policy is that all students up to 6th Form should wear full uniform. We feel that it encourages pride and creates a good image for our school inside and outside the building. Please note that the Student Conduct Cards of those incorrectly dressed will be marked.

Principal: Dr J. A. Vitagliano

Midhurst Rother College
Midhurst Site, North Street
Midhurst, West Sussex
GU29 9DT
t 01730 812451
f 01730 813524

Midhurst Rother College
Easebourne Site, Wheelbarrow Castle
Easebourne, Midhurst
West Sussex GU29 9AG
t 01730 812371
f 01730 815090

e enquiries@mrc-academy.org w www.mrc-academy.org

UIT Registered Office: 23 Chapel Street, Rithmarsh, Northamptonshire NN14 3DA. Registered in England No. 4439859 Registered Charity No. 1093277