



Reflections

A REFLECTIVE LOOK AT THE DAY TO DAY LIFE OF THE STUDENTS AT ST HELENA SCHOOL

Welcome Back...



Welcome to the new academic year, we hope you had a good summer break. So much has taken place in the

short time since our last edition of 'Reflections' was published in July, that this newsletter promises an exciting read.

September has seen us start the switch to our new uniform and we are delighted to see so many students opting for the new smarter look. We have also given parts of our school site a fresh look as we continue to work hard to improve our learning environment.

In particular we have refurbished the languages block and the PE changing rooms and started to build an amphitheatre. *Why an amphitheatre? ...* Read our feature article to find out more.

This all follows on from another year of improved examination results for St Helena School, which has resulted from hard work, quality first teaching and parental support and guidance. Well done and thank you to all involved.

We have an exciting term ahead, starting with our community open evening on Thursday 29th September which takes place from 6.00pm – 8.00pm, which we would like to invite you to attend.

We look forward to seeing you soon.

Zoë King - Executive Headteacher

Celebrating Our Heritage

Thanks to the Heritage Lottery Fund, during the summer holiday work on the Amphitheatre began and is now nearing completion. This will be a unique resource for the students and staff to use both educationally and recreationally and for the wider community to share.

The amphitheatre will form an important part of our courtyard and celebrates the rich history we have beneath us on the school site.

Because the amphitheatre was so closely located to the Roman Temple remains, a great deal of work was undertaken between Colchester Archaeological Trust, the contractor (Abacus Build UK), design consultants (Ingleton Wood LLP) and Historic England, to ensure the design was robust, but did not damage the archaeological remains below ground.

Archaeological test pits were excavated and revealed that in these areas some of the Temple remains had been removed during the construction of the original school building in the 1930s, but there was enough evidence for Colchester Archaeological Trust to plot with more accuracy the footprint of the Temple.

We hope that the amphitheatre will be completed by mid-September and that further works to the courtyard will be completed in time for our Community Open Evening on the 29th September. Some of our students will be performing in the amphitheatre and there will be more information on show about the project and the history under our school. The students are also working towards publishing a children's book that explores the history of St Helena. Finally, mosaic plaques will form part of the amphitheatre and will represent the history of the site.

We hope to see you on the 29th September at the School's Open Evening.



Mrs Caven-Atack - Director of Finance and Administration

OUR NEXT ISSUE:
December 2016

If you would like to contribute towards the next edition of 'Reflections', please email us at: contact@st-helena.essex.sch.uk



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Deliciously Chinese!

During the summer term Carrie Lee from the Lee Kum Kee company came into school to give our Year 9 GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition students a masterclass in Chinese cooking.

Carrie started the two hour session with a presentation which explained what her company does. This included a description of the different types of Chinese food eaten in different areas of China.

The Lee Kum Kee company's aim is to promote Chinese cuisine worldwide. The presentation allowed every student to get involved with questions and win lots of fantastic prizes such as USB sticks and recipe books, which we all enjoyed.

Carrie then demonstrated how to cook Hoisin Chicken the traditional Chinese way, allowing students to get involved with questions throughout the demonstration.

We learnt that the secret of Chinese cooking is in fact the sauce! Marinating, cooking, dipping!

After a quick break, we were back in the kitchen but this time it was for us to show off our cooking skills and recreate the Hoisin Chicken that we'd seen demonstrated earlier. With the eyes of Carrie carefully watching over us we got to work, following the instructions carefully.

After cooking and tasting our chicken dish, everyone unanimously agreed that they really liked the taste and would quite happily cook and eat it again. To end the masterclass, we were all given badges from the company and the recipe so we'd be able to carry on cooking it again.

We would like to say a massive thank you to Carrie and the Lee Kum Kee company, we were grateful that we had this amazing opportunity to cook with a Chinese chef.

Eleanor Boddice (Year 9)



Don't Forget!!!

• Don't forget to follow us on Facebook and Twitter



Year 10 Fundraising



During one lunchtime in July the Year 10 students took to the field to raise money for charities such as Cancer Research, Ray's of Sunshine Children's Charity, Little Princess Trust and other amazing charities.

As well as the weather being great so were the stalls. We had cake sales, sweet sales, hook-a-duck, guess the teacher and many more. Although the fair only took place during lunchtime we still managed to raise money for the charities each class/stall chose.

Thank you to all our PSE teachers who helped us run everything smoothly, overall it was a great event and a huge success.

Lauren Davis, Year 10

Term Dates

AUTUMN TERM

5 September 2016 - 21 December 2016

Half Term

24 October 2016 - 28 October 2016

SPRING TERM

9 January 2017 - 31 March 2017

Half Term

13 February 2017 - 17 February 2017

Easter Holidays

3 April 2017 - 14 April 2017

STEM Club reaches new heights



The St Helena School Science STEM club celebrated the end of term with a bang, with the completion of the rocket project. Students had been designing and building their rockets in STEM club sessions and, on the last week of term, these were launched on Hilly Fields next to the school. While we managed to recover most of the rockets, some reached such a height that they were lost as the wind blew the returning parachutes quite a distance (if you happen to see a rocket with a St Helena School return label up a tree we would love to have it back!). Take a look at the school website where we have uploaded a clip from an on board camera giving some amazing footage.

The next stage is to see if we are able to get a rocket into space and the STEM club will be closely working with the authorities regarding a suitable launch site.

STEM club is open to all students and will be tackling a range of Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths Challenges. We meet on Mondays and Wednesdays after school.

Mr Jordan, Head of Faculty, Science

Inter-house Open Art Competition

A massive well done to all those students who entered the Inter-House Art competition. We had some amazing and talented entries and were very impressed with everything we viewed.

The 1st, 2nd and 3rd winners from each year group were all awarded prizes. All the Artwork is currently on display in the Art corridor for the school to view.

The winners of the open Art Competition were:

Year 7 - 1st Harmonie Lawrence, 2nd Tayler Da Silva, 3rd Evie Chaplin

Year 8 - 1st Ella Findlay, 2nd Alice Martin, 3rd Ola Berent,

Year 9 - 1st Harry Youngman, 2nd, Greta Bagackaite, 3rd Suhaarshana Anandkrishnan

Year 10 Winner - Elisha Buchanan

Year 11 Winner - Katy Oliver



Youth Health Champions

St Helena School has a new Team of Youth Health Champions and they launched their work with a 'Stay Safe In The Sun' Campaign. The Youth Health Champions explained to the other students the importance of using high factor sun cream, wearing hats and sun glasses and staying out of the midday sun, there were also free ice lollies on offer during the campaign.

Mrs Wild, Health and Welfare Officer



Don't Forget!!!

• Year 11 Parents' Evening 6th October 3



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Kew Gardens

Year 9 photography students were given the exciting opportunity to visit the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew, to take photographs of the spectacular plants and beautiful gardens.

The trip was generously funded by Colchester Decorative & Fine Arts Society who paid for the coach and entrance fee.

We were delighted to visit and are extremely grateful to Colchester DFAS for giving our students this opportunity. Students thought the gardens were amazing and found it very inspirational for photography.

The greenhouses were huge, with so many interesting and exotic plants from around the world to photograph. There were so many different gardens to view which included the scented rose garden and the very formal and geometric walled garden.

Students also visited the new attraction at Kew called the 'Hive'. This is a human sized beehive made out of an aluminium structure measuring 17 metres tall and weighing 40 tonnes. There were 1,000 LED lights dotted around its core which glow and fade, while a unique soundtrack hums in response to the activity of real bees in a beehive behind the scenes at Kew. Students could walk in and around this structure as if a bee themselves!

Students did not stop taking photographs throughout the day! There were so many beautiful plants and flowers to look at and enjoy. Photographs were taken on both traditional black and white film cameras as well as digital cameras. The photographs look fantastic and students all said they had a brilliant day and thoroughly enjoyed the trip.

All the photographs will be included in their sketchbook and go towards their Year 9 coursework portfolio. The trip has supported these students with a wonderful cultural experience that they all very much appreciated and will definitely not forget.



Miss Mayne, Subject Leader Art



Don't Forget!!!

• Non-Uniform Day – Stand up for Cancer 21st October

Hair~RAISING



My name is Elisha Buchanan, and I'm currently in Year 11.

In the summer, I shaved off 12" of my hair and donated it to an amazing charity called 'The Little Princess Trust' who make wigs for children who have lost their hair due to cancer treatment and other hair loss conditions.

Not only did I donate my long hair, but I also managed to raise £660 for them, which is enough to make two wigs, as well as creating publicity for the Little Princess Trust to make others aware of the charity.

I'm glad that I made the decision to do this because, luckily my hair will grow back - however long it takes - but other young girls and boys may not have that chance. Many of us take simple things like hair for granted, but we should all learn to appreciate everything we have because someone in the world is wishing they have what we do.

Elisha Buchanan, Year 11

A Special Invitation

Tate Modern Trip - The Opening of the New-building

The Art department were extremely delighted to receive an invitation from the Firstsite Gallery in Colchester to attend the grand opening of the new Tate Modern building in London. We were lucky enough to be chosen out of all the Essex schools to be part of this exciting event in London.

The Tate Modern is the most visited Art Gallery in the world and is home to some of the most exciting International Modern and Contemporary Art. The new building is an impressive 10 storeys tall and has doubled the size of the original Tate gallery! There was so much art to view, touch, feel and engage with and students were thoroughly inspired by what they saw. The galleries included live performance, video installation, sculptures, photography and mixed media artwork.

Our students were very privileged to be part of this special preview event day as the building did not open to the public until the next day. The day was also being documented by the media, press photographers and camera crew. Students from St Helena School were invited to be interviewed and filmed by the BBC about the day and even appeared on the BBC documentary about Modern Art and the Tate.

We were very proud to see our students being such great ambassadors for our school. They saw and gathered lots of inspiration and research for their own arts coursework projects.

'Pink Tons' was my favourite artwork at the gallery. I felt it was the most interesting because of its size and media. Being so big and in glass made it compelling to look at in my opinion. Also even though it was all one media it appeared as if it was two, giving a magnifying effect of the top side of the cube. When remembering this trip *'Pink Tons'* is the first thing to come to mind, this to me shows the effect it had.

Isobel Croft

A piece of artwork I saw at the Tate captured the artist's daily life through Polaroid's and drawings. She collected photos and drawings and then reassembled what she had found. The drawings and the way it was presented really interested me.

Charlie Scurlock

Miss Mayne, Subject Leader Arts

Prom Royalty

Meet our Prom Kings and Queens

Towards the end of the summer term our Year 11 students had the opportunity to celebrate the end of their exams and their time at St Helena School at the annual Prom held at Weston Homes Community Stadium.

As always our students looked amazing and were excellent ambassadors for the School. We wish them all the very best for the future. Thanks go to all the staff that helped to make this a fantastic event.

From left to right:

*Angel Plumb, Christopher Allsopp, Owen Cornwell,
Daisy Harrison-Patel, Max Hayden-Case*

Don't Forget!!!

• Sports Presentation Evening 20th October



Reflections

Perfect Prefect CAMP

In July we had an excellent time at Prefect camp in Danbury. Prefect camp was not only a great chance to have a break from the rigours of school but it was also a brilliant opportunity to team build and make new friends.

What I really appreciated about camp personally was the relaxation of it all amidst the sometimes daunting activities. The independence to socialise around camp and explore the woods with people who you wouldn't normally spend time with was brilliant and I know others appreciated this as well. One prefect attending the camp said, *"The activities were brilliant fun and the time around the camp was just as fun too."*

The camp was a brilliant success with many students keen to try out new activities like archery, aerial trekking, mountain biking and the intense obstacle course. *"Prefect camp was a lovely weekend. I really enjoyed aerial trekking,"* said Simi Johal. *"Most of all I enjoyed the social aspect!"* Katie Hazelden said. Piper-Rose Tatum commented, *"It was a great experience and I thoroughly enjoyed it."* Our Deputy Head Girl, Amber Inman, said, *"Even though some of the activities were terrifying (aerial trekking), it was such a brilliant weekend."*

Our Prefect camp photos are now proudly on display on the board in our main building as a reminder of a brilliant weekend along with a few published here in Reflections.

Lastly on behalf of the prefect team I would love to say a massive thank you to the staff who attended the camp as we couldn't have had such an enjoyable time without the hard work they put in.

Thomas Scott, Head Boy



Don't Forget!!!

• Half term – w/c 24th October

Room with a View



In the jam-packed start to the new school term, it is safe to say there has been a lot going on: new uniforms, new timetables and new extra-curricular clubs – and also a brand new prefect common room situated in the drama block! This new space provides the prefects with an area to relax and socialise in. The much sought after room, organised by Ms. Metcalfe, gives an excellent opportunity for prefects to catch up over break and lunch and recently, we've even had four new computers installed by Jedd Watson, so that prefects can also catch up on any work in a quiet area without being disturbed.

Over the forthcoming year, there are many plans for the common room area, from little ideas such as a biscuit and milk rota, to bigger projects such as new furniture and vegetable patches, all for the prefects' added enjoyment and relaxation as they begin the stresses of Year 11 and exams. It is even equipped with its own outdoor area, perfect for relaxing in the September sunshine.

Prefect Co-ordinator, Ms Metcalfe, commented, *"I'm delighted that we have secured this space for our prefects. They work very hard for St Helena School and this is a great way to reward them for their efforts. I've been very impressed with the way they've kept it tidy too. We are very lucky to have such brilliant role models in our school."*
Isabel Liddamore, Prefect, Year 11

‘Sharing Your Voice’



Students from the NEEEP secondary schools celebrate a successful day at Essex University

Essex University is no stranger to working with highly committed young people who are passionate about what they do and give of their absolute best.

Wednesday, 29th June, saw the university playing host to a group of highly committed, hardworking and absolutely focused secondary school students who are preparing to take on a really significant personal challenge – that of gaining a top grade in their English GCSE.

Over one hundred Year 9 students from the NEEEP partner schools and their English teachers took part in a challenge to develop their communication and teamwork skills. Using the university lecture theatres, each of these aspiring English super- stars attended a series of workshops on speech writing, debating, analysis and performance skills.

At the end of the day these Grade 9 hopefuls presented their views on topics ranging from university fees to single-sex schools and cheating in sport. Along the way they got to grips with the concepts and skills needed to gain the highest English GCSE grades.

Students were extremely positive about the day and hope it can be repeated for other year groups in the future.

Down on Hollowtrees Farm

During the summer term we were lucky enough to visit Hollowtrees Farm. It is a trip for secondary school students to take a journey from “farm to fork”.

The day involved finding out about many food manufacturers and meeting farmers in person, as students toured the farm fields to learn about the agricultural techniques of farming food and getting it to our supermarkets and homes.

Throughout the day we got to visit the traditional farm animals such as sheep, ducks, pigs, cows, etc. We also got to experience how much preparation and hard work goes into some of our daily food.

Whilst there, there were interactive activities such as tasting oils and shaping meat. A young female farmer told us about how her and her family have not just advertised their farm for food products but have used their farm for wedding ceremonies and glamping.

We were supplied with an information leaflet containing facts about the animals and the different stations we visited. The experience made us realise that we need to be more grateful for the food we eat and how much effort goes into the production of food for all of us.

A great day overall and I’d highly recommend to Year 8 students for next year.

Fay Singleton, Year 9 Student



Don't Forget!!!

• Year 8 Parents' Evening 10th November 7



Reflections

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Meet the Senior Prefects



During the summer term, the selection process for the Senior Prefect team of 2016/2017 took place. Nominees performed fantastic speeches and were voted in by fellow prefects and members of staff. It came down to the final twelve that now make up the senior team.

We have five team leaders whose job it is to keep the duty rota running smoothly and be responsible for their team of prefects each day of the week. Dominik Niciejewski, Isabel Liddamore, Jedd Watson, George Fulcher and Alaa Aljdaei, all work as team leaders to ensure that our team is performing at the highest standard possible. Isabel explains, *"I often have to check uniform, sort out any issues and also try to encourage and support the prefects in my team, making sure that everyone has the best experience possible. Overall, I've not only gained vital leadership and teamwork skills, but also some great friends within the prefect group."*

In addition to the team leaders, Jessica Martin takes the role of Events Coordinator: a senior prefect entrusted with the organisation and planning of prefect events eg. charity fundraisers, prefect socials. Jess says, *"As Events Coordinator I will work with Ms Metcalfe and other teachers to set up events within the prefect team whether this be fundraising or prefect gatherings. I'm excited to see what we can do to bond as a team and help within our community."*

There are two Deputy Head Girls and Deputy Head Boys, Clíodha Long, Amber Inman, Ryan Norfolk and Seth Dunt who all play a part in helping to run the prefect team. They have their fair share of assemblies and meetings to be involved in that ultimately help improve the team and shape students' awareness of prefect roles. Amber says, *"I feel honoured to be on this year's senior team, it's an achievement to be proud of. I enjoy my role because I love having the responsibility and being able to get more involved with the school outside of lessons."* Seth agrees and also says, *"Being part of the senior team is an important role for me as I wish to help develop our school to be the best that it can be."*

Finally, we have Tom Scott and me, Mia Singleton, as Head Boy and Head Girl. We are incredibly honoured and proud to hold such a title and to be working with such a wonderful prefect team. Our roles are much like our fellow deputies and we have been able to grow into them and become more rounded individuals. Being part of a team gives you a chance to learn vital skills such as communication and compromise that help you in life.

Tom comments, *"It's great to be recognised around the school and therefore have the opportunity to confidently help the younger students."* We are very much looking forward to working towards securing a great academic year ahead.

Mia Singleton, Head Girl

Don't Forget!!!

• Mock exams begin w/c 21st November

Exam Success



We are celebrating some truly exceptional exam successes this year at St Helena School.

Top achievers include Ellie Lane with seven A* grades and three As, Stefan Marin with six A* grades and five As, Ruby Lloyd-Smith with five A* and three As, Marley Theobald with six A* and two As and also Navinderjit Rye with four A*'s and seven As.

Zoe Maudsley, Ishwah Khaliq, Alice Baldwin, Nicole Barnes and Molly Pettitt all leave with seven or more A/A* grades and a further ten students leave us with five or more A/A* grades. Overall, two in three students take away a clutch of qualifications that includes at least one of these top grades.

Overall figures include 73% of students achieving five C-grade passes or better – up from 52% – and 85% of students leaving with a crucial C+ pass in English; the school's best ever results in this subject.

The proportion of students with passes in both English and Maths rises to 48% – an improvement of 8%. Early indications suggest that, based on the new Progress 8 measure, students in 2016 will have made the best overall progress seen in the school's history; a testament to their hard work, the support of their parents and the guidance of our staff.