



Reflections

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

Crucial Choices



2nd March was National Offer Day, where students up and down the country

found out which secondary school they will be joining in September - I would like to start by welcoming our new students and their parents/carers to St Helena School. Though we will keep in touch between now and the start of term (7th September 2015), we would like to welcome all our new students to our Year 6 induction day on 2nd July 2015 and parents/carers to our induction evening on the same day, starting at 5pm.

We hope all members of our school and wider community will enjoy reading some of the highlights from our busy term. Trips, sporting fixtures, various competitions and further exciting developments in our building works have again featured strongly alongside our students' lessons, all adding to the rich educational provision offered at St Helena School.

Wishing you all a wonderful Easter break and thank you for your continued support.

Zoë King - Executive Headteacher

Help us preserve OUR HERITAGE!



You may or may not be aware that St Helena School sits on an important Roman temple site. The remains are right under what will be our new science block.

To make more of this amazing heritage, we are applying for a "Young Roots" grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. These grants are for projects led by young people to involve them in exploring and showcasing aspects of their heritage.

Working with our students, and former students from the Institute and the Sixth Form College, we would like to come up with a design for the new courtyard which will be created close to the science block so that it reflects the hidden temple. We would like to encourage the creation of IT packages, films, art work, leaflets etc to make this history better known to the wider community.

We are going to need help with landscape and garden design, with visits to carry out research at Colchester Archaeological Trust (our partners in the bid) and with a whole range of activities we are confident the students will dream up.

If you are able to get involved or know anyone who could help please contact us on the School's main number or via our website.

Miss Kavanagh - Teacher of Humanities

Fund-Raising Success!!

Non-Uniform Day – November 2014

St Helena School are pleased to report that the final total raised was **£867.45**.

A special mention to Annabelle-Jo Martin who also helped to raise money with a cake sale. Our students asked for the money to be donated to the charity 'Street Children' and this money helps to care for orphans of the Ebola Crisis.

OUR NEXT ISSUE:
June 2015

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



Reflections

JOEY ESSEX is a 'REEM' Role Model!

Reality television and Joey Essex are good things. This was the outcome of the final debate of the second annual NEEEP debating competition held at The Stanway School on Wednesday 21st January. Students from seven of the NEEEP secondary schools tested their wits and their debating skills, arguing for and against a range of topics.

Passionate speakers explored and debated: whether a university education should be free; the pros and cons of abolishing marriage; and whether or not reality TV does more harm than good. 30 students, supported by their parents and their teachers took part in the competition and were on fine argumentative form throughout the evening. The debates followed the British Parliamentary style but were far more civilised than those we see in the Houses of Parliament today.

Debating teams from St Helena School, Thomas Lord Audley School, Thurstable School, The Harwich and Dovercourt School, The Stanway School, Manningtree High School and Clacton County High School all took part in two debates on the evening. Four teams from Manningtree, Thomas Lord Audley and Clacton County High School progressed to a final debate which took place in front of fellow competitors, teachers and parents. All students excelled themselves on the evening and received positive feedback from the judges. In a close run final debate the NEEEP debating cup was awarded to George Wass and Harry McCarthy from Clacton County High School.

(Article taken from a recent NEEEP Press Release)



Debating teams from NEEEP schools celebrate a successful competition.

November! We thought you would like to know that once the money collected from the school pot is added to our total, 'Team St Helena School' have raised a grand total of **£195!**



Thank you for all those who donated and supported the cause. All proceeds go to charities such as Prostate Cancer. We are glad to report the school is now a 'tash' free zone (apart from Mr Roberts of course).

Mr MacKenzie - Teacher of Maths

Don't Forget!!!

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



STEM Club



The St Helena School STEM club runs on Wednesdays (3:20 till 5:00). We would love it if any keen scientists would like to join our club.

In January a group of KS3 students went to Thomas Lord Audley School in Monkwick to compete in the Essex regional VEX Skyrise competition. The VEX competition is worldwide. It is intended to inspire young people to build and use their engineering skills. Each year there is a different task. This was our first year and it was daunting as when we arrived all of the other robots were so much more advanced than ours however, this gives us more of an idea on how we can expand our robot. There were 3 awards. Our team won the judges award. They chose us because they liked our enthusiasm towards the competition. We are currently getting ready for the next competition in March.

*Harry Youngman
Year 8 Student*

Calendar Dates 2015

Easter Holidays

30 March – 10 April 2015

Summer Term

13 April – 17 July 2015

May Bank Holiday

04 May 2015

Half Term

25 May – 29 May 2015

The remaining non-student days are 20-21 July 2015

Sporting Success!



Athletics Superstars

Year 9 student Callum McKay and Year 10 student Rebecca Jeggo recently achieved huge success at the Eastern Indoor Athletics Championships held at the Lee Valley Athletics Centre. After suffering a serious injury last year, former St Georges' Junior school student, Rebecca was back on form and won a Silver Medal in the Under 17 girls 200 m final, and achieved a personal best of 26.35 seconds in the semi-final.

Callum, a former St John's Green Primary school student, claimed the gold in both the 60m and the 200m in the boys U15 age group. Callum broke the championship record in the 60m with a outstanding time of 7.30s and is currently top of the UK rankings for this distance.

Many congratulations to both Rebecca and Callum.

Mrs Taylor - Teacher of PE

Boys Basketball Success!

The following boys represented the school in the Year 7 3 v 3 Basketball Tournament. The tournament was very competitive with some high quality basketball played.

The boys stayed focused after the disappointment of not reaching the final and secured a comfortable 6-0 win over Thomas Lord Audley School in the 3rd v 4th play-off, to take bronze. A special mention goes to Jack De'Ath for scoring some excellent baskets on the night. Well done boys!

- Ado Mirimo • Jack De'Ath
- Tyler Sharp • Harvey Cannon
- Jamie Phipps • Jamie Jones

Mr Staiano, Teacher of PE

Science and Food Technology Block . . . UPDATE!

The construction of the Science and Food Technology block is in full swing!

Horizon Construction completed the first phase of the building, laying the foundations with the concrete piling (20 x 4 metre concrete posts in the ground) to support the reinforced suspended floor slab. The construction of the foundations and concrete floor is a bespoke design in consultation with English Heritage and Colchester Archaeological Trust to minimise disruption to the ground. This is to preserve the Roman artefacts that may remain underground as the new extension is just 10 metres from a Roman Temple. Early February will see the drainage infrastructure being constructed and the reinforced suspended floor slab installed.

Disruption to the school has been minimal and further planning work is in hand to devise a construction schedule that does not impact upon the exams. Safety of the site and safeguarding of students has been managed effectively with the support of Horizon Construction. This will be an ongoing process as the dynamic of the construction of the building changes over the projects' lifespan.

There is still a great deal to achieve between now and August 2015, but it is exciting to see the months and years of planning start to become a reality.



PlayFootball

PlayFootball and St Helena School are working hard to ensure all the requirements of the local authority are met to make this facility a reality. It will be a unique facility not only for the School but for the whole community.

A revised layout of the pitches has been agreed in order that the planning application can proceed. The planning application is subject to PlayFootball being able to satisfy Colchester Borough Council that the facility will meet all necessary building requirements and resolve the flooding that occurs on the playing field. In addition, Playfootball are working closely with English Heritage to ensure the construction of the pitches and pavilion do not damage any Roman artefacts that currently lay undiscovered underground.

Mrs Caven-Atack

Director of Finance and Administration



Don't Forget!!!

• Easter Holidays Start 30th March 3



Reflections

An Artistic Visit

Last term, a well known artist and photographer, Guy Catling, generously gave up his time to show our photography class, 10G, and 10C how he creates his work and gave us some tips on how we could make our work unique.

Mr Catling gave us an insight into the courses he had taken and what post-16 options are available, explaining how to get any work we are proud of noticed through social media.

We found this experience very beneficial as it helped us to improve both our coursework and our understanding of his work.



Katie Murray and Zoe Maudsley 10C/Ph1



Shakespeare's Globe

During the Autumn term, Year 7 were set the challenge to create a 3D model of Shakespeare's Globe Theatre using whatever materials they wanted. The results were spectacular and the models ranged from intricate designs using cardboard to delicious designs made from cake!

1st place was awarded to Bel Talbot, 2nd place to Nathaniel Porteous-Butler and 3rd place Elyas Binothman.
Well done Year 7.



*Miss Iliffe -
Teacher of English*



Don't Forget!!!

• Community Quiz Night - Friday 13th March at 7.00pm

Speak Out!



On the 21st and 28th of January, two teams competed in the inter-school Youth Speaks competition organised by the Rotary Club and held at the Town Hall in Colchester.

The intermediate team consisted of Amber Inman, Bowie Bartlett and Joel Barnett. and they delivered a truly thought provoking speech titled 'Technology: Friend or Foe?'. Unfortunately they did not win, but they were excellent representatives for St Helena School and all the judges were extremely impressed with their speech.

One week later, the Senior team, comprising of Rebecca Roper, Gregory Hayman and Ruby Bowd competed at the Town Hall.

The standard of speaking was extremely high and although the team did not win, the judges were so impressed by Gregory Hayman's confidence that they awarded him with a runner-up award for Best Speaker.

Well done to everyone who took part and a special well done to Gregory.

Miss Iliffe - Teacher of English



VEX Robotics Competition Success

Yesterday our STEM club made their first visit to a VEX Robotics Competition. Harry Youngman, Chloe Gregory, Madeleine Spurgin, Chloe Upson and Freya Smith represented the school with great pride.

We finished in the quarter-finals and will have another chance to compete during the half-term holidays.

Our entrants showed team work, St Helena School's 6Rs as well as community spirit at every opportunity. I'm glad to say they came through and we brought back the Judges award. The VEX judges were impressed with our approach, such as the decision to bring our simpler design, our enthusiasm, our willingness to share resources with more experienced teams; our scientific approach to record-keeping also got a special mention.

I hope to use this excitement to create two teams with greater design skills. It would be very easy to take over the design process but Student Voice is also a commitment of the STEM club so the next goal would be to win a Design Award.

Mr Rose and Miss Lewis joined us after school which greatly boosted the team who enjoyed sharing their experience with two fantastic members of the STEM team.

I wanted to share this success with you because the students represented our school so brilliantly.

Miss Cox, Teacher of Science

Local pupils' robot in a class of its own



A robot developed by Colchester students, with the help of National Grid, has beaten entries from 18 other schools to be highly commended by judges at the VEX Robotics regional finals last week.

The team from St Helena School was the youngest group in the tournament and they had only been working together for three months. The competition run by Rapid and VEX Robotics brought together teams from schools and colleges across East Anglia to pitch their robots against each other in a series of matches.

Each team was able to score points by remotely controlling their robots to stack cubes in a variety of ways and through building strategic alliances with competing schools. St Helena School is one of four schools in the region which has been given the robotics kit by National Grid as part of the energy company's initiative to promote science, engineering and technology in schools.

Bob Jones, a National Grid engineer said: *"The robots developed by the students were tremendous and it was apparent just how much engineering talent is out there."*

"We have been really delighted by the enthusiasm of the schools and we hope the VEX Robotics programme will encourage some of the youngsters to consider engineering when making their career choices."

Mrs James, a science teacher from the school said: *"It was a really fantastic day for the school. The students have really worked hard over the past three months to develop their robot and the judges' award meant a lot to them."*

"We are really grateful to National Grid for providing the kit. VEX Robotics has given the students a chance to really demonstrate their own individual skills lie; whether it is in the precise building of the robots, programming or even using an interest in videoing and editing to create a video of the event. Our students were really proud to have competed against older students and to have received recognition for that."

St Helena School is now looking at ways to improve on its performance and is planning to upgrade its robot ready for the next competition.

Press release kindly supplied by the National Grid

Don't Forget!!!



Red Nose Day - Friday 13th March 2015



Reflections

St Helena School Young Volunteer honoured with Diana Award

young people who **inspire** the lives of others

St Helena School is delighted to announce that Natesha Riddiough, Year 9, has been honoured with the Diana Award, following a nomination by Mrs Shepherd, Year 9 Pastoral Manager.

THE DIANA AWARD



The Diana Award, set up in memory of Princess Diana's belief that young people have the power to change the world for the better, has Prime Minister David Cameron as Patron and the support of the HRH Duke of Cambridge and HRH Prince Harry.

Natesha received the Diana Award for being a Champion Volunteer in her local community and was presented with the award by local MP Sir Bob Russell (former St Helena School student) at a recent House assembly.



Natesha volunteers at the Colchester Phoenix Amateur Swimming Club, and has been doing for the last 5 years. Her continued voluntary support shows that Natesha regards her work as a great responsibility and a service to the community. The understanding Natesha has of disabilities and how to successfully support the children she works with is extraordinary. She has developed an approach which enables her to help them with the challenges they are facing.

Reports from her club secretary/trainer state that Natesha has had a huge impact on the performance, behaviour and lives of the children she works with.

St Helena School Food Bank

Students and staff at St Helena School have been donating to our own food bank.

The food bank was set up by Mr Benham (*Director of Learning, Year 11*) and Mrs Tidmarsh (*Pastoral Manager, Year 10*) and students and staff were encouraged to donate tins of food for the Colchester soup kitchen, which provides hot food for 30 or more homeless people in Colchester.

We have been blown away by the kindness and generosity of our staff and students - **thank you!**

Mr Benham, Director of Learning, Year 11

Don't Forget!!!

• May Bank Holiday - 4th May 2015

Jack Petchey Award

Winners ~ Term 1



Mohammed Abdul Basit and Niamh Manning

September - Mohammed Abdul Basit for being a very helpful member of St Helena School, being thoughtful and caring towards others. He is extremely conscientious and hard working. Mohammed is dedicated to his chosen sport, basketball, and competes on the school team.

October - Niamh Manning who is a Young Carer and works very hard to support her mum who is unwell. Niamh finds this quite challenging, but shows great resilience and determination in her role, even when it impacts on her own leisure time. Niamh is a keen sailor and works hard at this sport. She is also a member of the school rugby team which has never been beaten! Niamh is a good team player.

November - Molly Pettitt dedicated to extra curricular Drama and helping plan for the Aids festival at the Mercury Theatre. Molly is also a conscientious hard working student who is an exceptional role model to her peers.

The Jack Petchey presentation evening is set to take place at The Mercury Theatre on Monday 16th March at 7.30pm.

Mrs Tidmarsh - Pastoral Manager, Year 10

Woman in Black



At the start of term a group of Year 9, 10 and 11 Creative Arts students travelled up to Southend with three members of staff to see *The Woman in Black*; a play filled with adrenalin and terror.

After being on stage for a number of years the show is sadly coming to a close. Due to the show being a play within a play, you need to concentrate to see the difference in time periods – but the lighting helps the audience to understand.

Not only is this a gripping play because of the horror element, but there are only three actors throughout the whole play – adding extra tension.

Regardless of seeing the play once before in London, there was never a dull moment.

The actors kept everyone gripped to their seats, begging to know what was going to happen next. A fantastic time was had by all if a little scared!

*Jade Patrick - Year 11 GCSE
Drama student*

Prefects make a Positive Impact

The Prefects at St Helena School recently hosted an annual Christmas dinner for thirty senior citizens from Myland Mothers Union.

The Prefects take part in various events throughout the year to raise funds to enable them to create a three course Christmas dinner for over sixty people. Many staff and Prefects also donate a Christmas gift for each of the guests.

With the help of staff, some of the students cooked the meal and some served and then they all enjoyed Christmas dinner together. The Prefects, although nervous to start with, had a wonderful evening chatting to their guests. They enjoyed hearing about all the rich and wonderful lives the senior members of our community have lead.

During the evening there were a couple of quizzes, and Tyler, one of the Prefects, played the keyboard throughout the meal. The Prefects ended the evening with their rendition of Last Christmas and followed that with a demonstration of the Cha Cha Slide. **The whole evening was a great success!**

Mrs Wilks - Prefect Co-ordinator



Prefect Selection

This year 103 students applied to be Prefects for the next academic year. St Helena School has a strict process for choosing the right students to gain such a prestigious role within the school.

Students wishing to be a Prefect have to complete an application form which asks them questions such as what qualities they have that they could bring to the role of Prefect.

The school collates their attendance, lates and how many debits they have on the Behaviour management system and then all staff are asked to vote for their top 10 candidates.

From all this information the Leadership team choose the students to represent the school. This year 76 students have been selected to be a St Helena School Prefect. Congratulations to them all.

Mrs Wilks - Cover Manager and Prefect Co-ordinator

Don't Forget!!!

• Half Term starts 25th May 2015



Reflections

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Executive Headteacher: Zoë King BSc (Hons), PGCE, MBA, NPQH

Primary Partnerships

We are developing our partnerships with our local primary schools, with a view to improving the transition experience for students.

We are working on a range of primary liaison projects such as our partnership with Boxted St Peter's Primary School. Our Head of Science, Miss Connell, has assisted them to create their amazing Science Week. Miss Connell worked with our primary colleagues to support the planning of this ambitious week and ran several workshops using St Helena School equipment.

One of the most spectacular workshops involved using gas to shoot students' individually designed space rockets into the sky! In the celebration assembly involving all of the Boxted St Peter's Primary School students (and attended by many parents/carers) staff and students thanked Miss Connell for her contribution.

Similar collaborative projects are taking place over the next few weeks, including many sports, technology and Maths events. St Helena School recently hosted the Key Stage 1 Gymnastics Festival involving several KS1 classes from our feeder primary schools. They had been working very hard in their PE lessons to master some key gymnastics skills and also performed a class routine. Miss Taylor worked hard to organise the event, it was a great morning enjoyed by all.

If you are interested in primary liaison or transition, you are welcome to join our Primary Partnerships 'Task Team'. This is a think tank that has been established to evaluate the current opportunities for cross-phase working and to take a creative approach to improving our transition arrangements. Email: c.booth@sthsch.com to get involved!



Mrs Booth-Rylett - Assistant Headteacher

Calling all Parents...

Would you like to take part in a quiz on Friday 13th March??

We will be holding a Quiz night at school on Friday 13th March at 7.00pm. This is a community event in which we are inviting parents to come along in a Staff Vs Parents event!

Teams of 6(ish), £2 per person. The money will go to the Rob George Foundation. Rob was the brother of Sam George, a former Music teacher at St Helena School who sadly passed away last year from Leukemia. The Foundation supports young people in engaging with sporting activities. *Please bring your own drinks and nibbles.*

If you would like to take part, please contact us via the school email contact@st-helena.essex.sch.uk or the 'contact us' section on our website.

Mr Jordan - Director of Learning, Year 10

Don't Forget!!!

• Parent Voice meeting 23rd April at 6.00 pm

Parent Voice Going for Great Together

At the December Parent Forum meeting, parents and staff discussed reasons why we may be finding it difficult to interest parents in joining the Parent Forum. As a group we agreed that the name of the group should suggest the intended outcome; for parents to have an opportunity to be involved in school development and help drive improvements. We felt that parents must be given a voice and an opportunity to be heard. So in February we held the meeting with the new name '*Parent Voice*'.

It is the school's ambition to improve the reading ages of our students. Much work is already taking place in school to make this happen. At the last Parent Voice meeting we recruited our first 3 parent reader volunteers who came into school during February to listen to children read once or twice a week. Please look out for the next edition of the newsletter for photographs. Would you be interested to come and help out as a parent reader? Your support is much needed and would be greatly appreciated.

On INSET day in February we had a whole school development day in which we looked at how we could improve all areas of the school. We were pleased to welcome parents from the Parent Voice group who joined us and were very much involved in planning a vision for our 3 year development plan.

Please e-mail the school if you would be keen to get involved in any of the following activities:

- *Joining our Parents' Voice group*
- *Helping out at school and community social events*
- *Lending your expertise in enterprise and work experience*
- *Sharing your vision for the school*
- *Dads and lads groups to help raise boys achievement*
- *Parent reader volunteers*

Our next Parent Voice meeting will be held on 23rd April 2015 at 6.00 pm.