



DAVENANT FOUNDATION SCHOOL
Chester Road, Loughton, Essex IG10 2LD

www.davenantschool.co.uk

Newsletter No. 2

2nd October 2009

It is now a few years since the law was changed so that school governing bodies were no longer required to hold an annual meeting with parents. However, governors at Davenant decided they wished to maintain a yearly meeting with the parents who attend our **Home School Links Group**. That meeting took place on 22nd September.

The Chair of Governors, Sally Fairweather, explained how communication with parents remained an important part of governors' work and representatives of the governing body are usually present at the half termly meeting of Home School Links. I was then able to explain the school's main priorities for the coming year (see September Newsletter) and indicate some longer term challenges for the school. Among these are preparing for the inevitability of budget cuts from 2011 (even 2010) and the huge piece of work that awaits all schools as we introduce the new vetting and barring procedures that have been publicised and come into operation between 2010 and 2015. The latter will involve much bureaucracy and but will eventually lead to a system that should be easier to manage and will make it extremely difficult for inappropriate adults to work with young people.

Parents responded to an invitation to ask questions by raising points regarding how we monitor the quality of lessons, how we organise our school council and other student voice activities and how we come to construct our A Level options. From time to time, governors have matters that they request to have discussed by Home School Links. Other matters also will need to be discussed and the forum provides the opportunity for parents to raise issues important to them. I do encourage parents to join the meetings which are chaired by our Assistant Head, Debbie Lake. **The next meeting is on Tuesday 24th November** - do try to get along!

Meanwhile, the same evening in September saw the Annual General Meeting of the **Parents Association**. The past year has been very successful and I would like to thank Pam Bollen and her committee for all their efforts. It goes without saying that the P.A. needs active support and, once again, I would encourage parents to volunteer their support. Contact details are: pam.bollen@talk21.com
Mob: 0771 410 1131

Chris Seward
Headteacher

WHOLE SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPH

Do you still have your old school photographs? If not, do you wish that you had bought and kept them? We have just had a splendid whole school picture that included every one of our 1100 students (excluding, of course, anyone who unfortunately was absent) and many of our teaching and support staff.

This will soon be available with prices as follows:

Unmounted (supplied in a tube)	£20
Photographic Mount	£25
Frame and Mount	£75

We are sure that they will be very popular. Final details of how to order will be sent to parents before half term - don't miss out!

SOUTH AFRICA LINKS

Davenant has been building some important connections with South Africa. In November Mr Doherty and Mr Taylor will be taking a group of sixth form students to our link school in the Free State, **Kgorathuto High School**, in order to refurbish classrooms, install an internet connection and provide support in student leadership projects. A fund-raising Quiz Night is being organised for 16th October in the School Hall-tickets from Mr Doherty.

Meanwhile, Mr Parker has just despatched a very large number of books to the **Hillcrest Project** near Durban. This is a project that works with children who have lost their parents to the ravages of HIV/AIDS. Many of these books have come from the school and from the staff but thanks also to those parents who sent in many good quality texts that will now provide learning and enjoyment to the children who use them. For more information, look at www.hillcrestaids.org.uk.

Finally, during this week's assemblies, we have heard about **Slum Survivor 2010**. This involves a small group of students sleeping out in the school grounds in order to bring attention to the plight of the homeless in South Africa but also in other developing countries. For more information about the national programme you may look at www.soulsurvivor.com and follow the links. The "sleep out" will happen in the week before half term.

WORLD DEVELOPMENT A/S LEVEL

For the first time a group of Year 12 students are taking the A.S.Level course in World Development. This has been offered to a group of students as part of our core Religious Studies programme that requires Year 12 students to take the extra A.S. Level .

Much time was spent researching and consulting with staff and students over this change. We were attracted to the course because of its strong emphasis on important moral and ethical issues relating to world development. Students have to study topics on poverty and inequality with particular emphasis on how the world should respond in order to create solutions that are sustainable. The original World Development syllabus was written with the input of Oxfam and allows for links with charities and Non Government Organisations (NGO's).

FOCUS DAYS

Last year saw the introduction of Focus Days. These are occasional days when the timetable is suspended and students spend the whole day working on especially planned programmes run by departments. The first Focus Day of this year is on 16th October when year groups will be working as follows:

- **Year 7-English and Modern Languages on the use of grammar**
- **Year 8-P.E./Science on healthy lifestyles**
- **Year 9-Humanities/Business and ICT on the area of Waltham Abbey**
- **Year 10-R.E./Creative Studies on art and the spiritual life**
- **Year 11-P.C. day on Sex and Relationships**

Meanwhile, Year 12 students will be involved either with a Maths Day or in supporting activities in younger year groups while Year 13 will have a Retreat at Gillwell Park.

The objective of these days is to develop the Personalised Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS) and Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning Skills (SEAL). To do this we work in a cross curricular way and use the dimensions from the National Curriculum e.g. diversity and enterprise.

After feedback from parents, students and staff, this year all students will be given a personalised Focus Day booklet to record their learning activities. A copy will be on the website.

STUDENT VOICE

The role of students in helping organise and improve the school is really important. This year we are making extra efforts to give the students a high profile and we know their work will make a real difference.

Future Newsletters will have reports on what different groups are doing. This Newsletter features the work of the Senior Prefect Team.

HEAD BOY and HEAD GIRL 2009-2010

We were appointed to our roles of Head Prefects at the end of last term. We lead a team of Senior Prefects and other School Prefects and we make sure that teachers are given support whenever there are busy times or important occasions. This term we have already attended Graduation Evening and Open Evening, assisted with the induction of new Year 12 students and played an important part in the welcome of the Year 7's.

Senior Prefects have just attended a meeting with the school governors to discuss how students can play a part in the work of the governing body. As a result we hope that a system of student representation will be established for the Spring Term.

Also this year we plan to continue to raise awareness of what we do as prefects and to provide a link between Sixth Form Council and the School Council. In the Sixth Form Council we are talking about the introduction of Fairtrade products to the sixth form area and some of the prefect team are also involved with leading the other year councils.



Tyler Lawrence and Laura Hull

In November we will feature the work of the School Council.

Dates for your Diary

October

14th : Year 10 Coursework Evening

16th : FOCUS DAY

Year 8 Quiz Night

22nd : Year 7 Parents Evening

HALF TERM: Monday 26th – Friday 30th October

November

4th : **School closes at 2.30pm for 6th Form Open Evening preparations**
Open Evening for Prospective Year 12 intake

5th : School Starts 9.40am
Year 12 Cork Street Galleries Trip

6th : HPV Vaccinations