



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

www.davenantschool.co.uk

Newsletter No. 3

6th November 2009

Last year, I attended a meeting of the Home School Links Group where we had a discussion over the amount of information that parents wish to have about their child's progress in school. This topic was discussed because of the potential for schools to provide very up to date information about all aspects of children's progress through the medium of a Virtual Learning Environment (i.e. an electronic platform that can be accessed by all interested parties at any time).

At Davenant we are planning to launch the V.L.E. to parents in the Summer Term 2010. It will involve issuing each parent with a username and password that will then enable them to view data on their individual child. You will receive much more information when we are ready for the launch.

The outcome of the Home School Links discussion was that parents did not want to have too much information. They looked for regular updating on their child's progress (probably termly) and wanted also to know if there were significant issues that seemed to be preventing their child making good progress i.e. poor behaviour, emotional upset etc. Examples of the latter probably remain best communicated in the traditional manner via subject teacher, form tutor etc but the use of the V.L.E. to provide grades and assessment levels will be convenient for both the school and for most parents.

There are some schools that are well advanced in piloting this work. In some cases they have been funded to trial certain systems and they have been finding many advantages as well as a few pitfalls (I understand that one school has been asked by parents not to include every single detention that their children have been given-maybe it becomes a bit too depressing!).

For the rest of this academic year we will remain with the well used system of sending grades home on a piece of paper. The system for collating the information within the school is now much easier for staff and we expect an efficient distribution of grades to parents for all students during the next month. Once issued, we expect a dialogue with some parents which will be initiated either by ourselves (when our monitoring shows cause for concern that targets are not going to be reached) or by parents who may have their own concerns. **When and if that is the case, please address your concerns to subject teachers and Heads of Department-only approach the Head of Year or Form Tutor when there is concern across a number of subjects.**

Meanwhile, **on Thursday 12th November and Thursday 3rd December we have Parent Consultation Evenings for Years 12 and 13 respectively.** We know these will be very busy evenings and will provide an opportunity for detailed dialogue on progress during the first part of what are, of course, extremely important years. I look forward to meeting many of you on these occasions.

Chris Seward
Headteacher

STUDENT COUNCIL



Alana Ahmet

In the second of our reports on the work of key student groups, we focus on the work of the Student Council. Here is a report by Chairperson Alana Ahmet (Year 13).

I have been on the School Council for seven years. Sometimes it has not been very exciting and we have felt that we have had little to do. However, in the past year we have really been able to work on some important projects and have made some good decisions.

During 2009 we worked with the Parents Association to stage our very own Davenant's Got Talent. This was a really enjoyable evening and gave a lot of students a chance to show off the talents that nobody knew they had! In addition we raised approximately £2K which the P.A. wanted us to spend on something we felt would really improve the experience of the students at Davenant. In the end, the Council agreed to spend the money on new sports equipment.

Also in 2009 we discussed the important issue of whether boys should be allowed to have the same rules for wearing jewellery as girls. The Council wanted to keep the traditions of the school. However, in the end we realised that equality legislation meant that the rules needed to be the same for boys and girls and so we agreed on the new rules that are now in place.

Another project in 2009 was an inter faith meeting between some of our students and a group from Ilford County High School. This happened because we wanted to link with a school where students have a very different cultural and religious background from those of us at Davenant. Miss Perry helped us arrange the event and we hope to arrange another meeting soon.

At the moment we are about to organise the election of Student Representatives to the Governing Body. This is a really important change and should ensure that the student voice is heard by the governors.

I have really enjoyed being Chair of the Council. It has been a real challenge and one that I will be sad to leave behind.

Alana Ahmet (Chair of Student Council)

YEAR 7 PARENT TUTOR CONSULTATION EVENING

Thank you to all parents who came into school before half term to discuss their child's progress at the end of their first half term at Davenant. It was a very successful evening and we have compiled the results from the evaluation surveys that many parents completed (86 responses were received). We were very pleased with the number of positive replies and helpful comments. Clearly parents are very happy with transition arrangements between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3.

The most commonly mentioned concerns were regarding homework-some families finding there too much homework while others finding that it was not consistently set over the week. Also there were requests for better communication about sports fixtures and for more frequent access to the lost property store. We will look to see if anything can be done about these issues.

ASSEMBLIES

During October, there were excellent assemblies on the following themes: Black History Month, Beat the Bully and One World Week. The November themes are Africa (we hope to have a live link with our South African Partner School on Friday 6th November), Armistice and Remembrance, Entrepreneurs and Pilgrims.

CYPRUS SWIMMING TOUR 2009



A group of 15 top, Davenant swimmers have just returned from a successful Training Camp in Paphos, Cyprus, led by Mrs Hayman and their Coach, Gary Inch (Assistant Head Coach from London Borough of Redbridge Swimming Club).

The swimmers were training in the outdoor 50m Olympic pool which was built for the GB Team prior to the 2004 Olympic Games and set uniquely in the beautiful grounds of the Coral Beach Hotel where the squad were staying.

Sessions were challenging, pushing the swimmers to their limits and most completed 2 x 2hours training every day with a positive attitude. There was a total of 11 swimming sessions during the whole week.

The main aims of the trip were to improve and enhance stroke technique using video analysis and individual feedback sessions, to have the experience of an intensive week of long course training in warm weather and to improve fitness levels. This rigorous swimming programme achieved all of these objectives and proved the importance of adequate nutrition and hydration intake -critical for top performance. For some it was the opportunity to work with a different coach and to gain some different competition tips.

Despite being a tough and exhausting week all the Davenant swimmers thoroughly enjoyed themselves and are eagerly waiting to get on the starting blocks at their next gala! They can be reassured that their continued commitment to swimming will produce excellent results.

TEACHER RECRUITMENT INFORMATION EVENING

We are hosting, with Essex Local Authority, a Teacher Recruitment Information Evening on Wednesday 18th November 2009.

If you are seeking a new career in teaching, and would like to find out more about what is involved and what training opportunities are available, please come along between 6.30 p.m. and 9.00 p.m. There is no need to book and there will be someone available to speak to you about what is involved, what qualifications are required, and presentations on the different routes into the teaching profession, both primary and secondary.

There will be a welcome talk at 7.00 pm, please see the school website www.davenantschool.co.uk for the full evening programme.

DEBDEN LANE AND TRAFFIC AROUND THE SCHOOL

The governors continue to press for measures that will make the area of Debden Lane into a safer area. After an accident that occurred in the road at 3.25p.m. on Wednesday 21st October, Mr Seward wrote to both Eleanor Laing and to County Councillor Knapman asking for their support. A further meeting with Essex Highways is scheduled for November and parents will be kept informed through future newsletters.

Meanwhile, parents are reminded that they have the essential responsibility to drive safely and with acute awareness of both other vehicles and of our students whenever they are close to the school. AGGRESSIVE DRIVING AND POOR PARKING MUST NOT OCCUR ANYWHERE IN THE VICINITY OF THE SCHOOL.

Required Immediately
Administration Support to Sixth Form

30 hours per week + 2 days holiday working
9.30 a.m. – 3.30 p.m.
(Job-share considered)

Salary pro-rata £17,628
(Local Government Pay Band 3, Scale Point 17, including Inner Fringe)

We are looking for a person to provide administration support to our Head of Sixth Form. The person appointed must be well organised and able to work independently. Word Processing skills and a good telephone manner are essential. Knowledge of SIMS would be helpful although training will be provided.

Required for January 2010
Administration Support/Reprographics and Resources

30 hours per week (8.30 a.m. – 3.00 p.m.)

Salary pro-rata £15,531
(Local Government Pay Band 2, Scale Point 14, including Inner Fringe)

We are looking for a person to ensure an efficient service for producing in-house booklets, copies and other publications. The person appointed must be well organised and able to work independently. IT skills are essential (i.e. Word, Excel, Publisher etc.).

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Those appointed will have CRB checks and be expected to share this commitment.

Closing date for both positions is Wednesday, 18th November. For further details of the posts please contact Marylyn Greengrass, Headteacher's P.A.

Dates for your Diary

November

- 12th : Year 12 Parents Evening
- 17th : Year 11 Awards Evening (Year 12 Students)
- 18th : Teacher Recruitment Information Evening
- 19th : Government & Politics Question Time

December

- 2nd : Carol Service
Senior Citizens Christmas Party
- 3rd : Year 13 Parents Evening