



# THE SKINNERS' Kent Academy Newsletter

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Science and  
Engineering  
Specialist College

Pride in Our Success

## New Build Granted Planning Permission

The £20million redevelopment of the Skinners' Kent Academy, Tunbridge Wells, took a major step forward following approval of the Kent County Council planning application at a Planning Applications Committee on 15 March 2011. The Academy will now be rebuilt with state-of-the-art buildings, and feature unrivalled facilities fully equipped to take advantage of the latest Information and communication technologies. The building will have the Academy's core specialisms of science and engineering at its heart, whilst meeting the wider aspiration to provide a variety of

multi-functional learning spaces.

KCC Cabinet Member for Education, Learning & Skills Sarah Hohler said: *'This is excellent news for both the Academy and the wider community of Tunbridge Wells. These new facilities are designed to match the Academy's vision to offer a truly 21st Century education to inspire and engage pupils and connect the local community with educational opportunities.'*

*The development will also deliver employment opportunities for the local community and support local regeneration.'*



## Academy Welcomes Class of 2011

On Monday 14th March, 160 guests arrived at the Skinners' Kent Academy in a state of excitement and expectation. These visitors were the students and parents of the Academy Class of 2011.

After a cream tea reception attendees were welcomed by the Principal Sian Carr, after which students took part in an Academy Learning Experience in either Science or Maths. The Science lesson explored construction and launch of rockets, culminating in the students launching rockets they had built. The Maths lesson used statistical analysis to answer questions and present findings developing students own thoughts on pollution in the UK. During this time, parents were given a presentation outlining the experience their children will have as Academy students and recent achievements including the Ofsted report.



The Class of 2011 receives instruction from Mrs Fennell

Sharon and Sam Wheeler gave affirmative accounts of their experiences as a parent and student at the Academy and these were greeted with enthusiastic applause. As a finale to the afternoon, the new students were given a glimpse of the future through a computer-aided design DVD of the new building and its facilities – leaving everyone in a buoyant mood.



## Here Come the Girls!

The Skinners' Kent Academy is calling all female students and staff to join together for the Cancer Research *Race for Life* in Dunorlan Park this summer. We are hoping for at least a hundred students and staff of all ages and ability to run, walk, skip or crawl five kilometres (about 3 miles).

Entrants will be given special custom-made T-shirts to celebrate the Academy's participation in the event and will be able to personalise their T-shirts in memory or support of loved ones. The *Race for Life* is only open to women, but male students and staff can get involved by sponsoring their friends and supporting the event on the day. We are also planning to enter a male only sponsored run later in the year.

The *Race for Life* is Sunday June 12<sup>th</sup> at 2pm in Dunorlan Park, Tunbridge Wells. Assistant Head of Darwin House Mrs Hill, who is one of the organisers of the Academy's grand plan, said: *'This is a great way for the whole Academy to come together and raise money for a very worthwhile cause, it should be a great afternoon.'*

## National Science and Engineering Week

The Academy celebrated National Science and Engineering Week in March with an exciting programme of activities. There was a trip to the Nemo Science Centre in Holland, a gifted and talented day in Winchester and a workshop at St Peter's Primary School.

### The Trip to Amsterdam

Thirty students from Years 7 to 10 had a brilliant weekend in Amsterdam. They spent the first day at the Nemo Centre, a massive four floor science centre. Students had the chance to smell, hear, feel and see how the world works in a truly interactive afternoon which was designed to incorporate the science curriculum and improve SATS grades. No trip to Amsterdam would be complete without a bit of sightseeing. Students had a tour of the capital via canal boat and on Sunday they visited Anne Frank's house. It was a profound moment for many students as they realised that living in hiding from the brutal Nazi regime must have been a truly terrifying an experience for a 14 year old girl.

### INtech trip

The Academy has an exciting outreach programme as part of its science and engineering specialism accreditation. To celebrate National Science and Engineering Week the Academy took fifty gifted and talented scientists from local primary schools to the INtech centre in Winchester. With nearly 100 exhibits to choose from the students had a wonderful time pushing, pulling, trying, watching and turning in a day of hands-on science.

### St Peter's Primary

Nine Year 9 students and three staff visited St Peter's Primary in Tunbridge Wells to run a sound and communication workshop. Everyone really enjoyed making musical instruments and string telephones yet we were all pleased to return to the altogether less rudimentary technology of our mobile phones!

All these activities are part of a wider programme designed to ensure students reach their full potential in science exams and are able to understand and appreciate the impact of science and technology in everyday life.

## Parent Information Evening

Bidborough Primary School kindly agreed to host an information evening on secondary school provision in the area for parents of Year 5 children currently attending local primary schools. The event was attended by representatives from The Skinners' Kent Academy as well as The Judd School and Hillview School for Girls.

Academy Principal Sian Carr and Vice-Principal Matt Tompkins were accompanied by two Year 7 students represented and related the Academy's recent achievements, plans for the future as well as details of daily life in the Academy.

The presentations were very well received and there was much interest from the assembled parents. The event was a useful to parents and an event of a similar format will be held at the Pembury School in February.

## Pathways to Independence



P2I art project by  
?

Academy students are continuing to contribute work of outstanding quality to the Pathways to Independence (P2I) programme. Term 3 yielded some excellent geography project work while in Term 4 students have produced some truly creative work for art. P2I award winners for Terms 3 and 4 are listed below:

### Outstanding Achievement

**Geography:** Harriet Smith-Fellowes; Holly Freeman; Charlie Brooker; Kairra Padoran; Macauley Cooper; Olivia Crossley

**Art:** Chantelle Streeter; Chloe Walkinton; Pauline Westhuizen; Fruzanne Weller; Henrique Fonseca; Rhys Morling-Chamberlain

### Outstanding Effort

**Geography:** Nicky Hoppe; Charlotte Chappell; Fern Palfey; Geminii Parker; Charlotte Taylor; Hamish Vanns

**Art:** Jack Murdoch; Katie Woodrooffe; Jack Attwater; Summer Woodcraft; Toni Ashbrook; Sam Towner

## Interview With the Principal

*The newsletter has a new feature. Each term our team of Academy Student Writers will have the chance to put a person of their choice in the hot seat. To launch the series Year 8 students Francesca Drewett and Katie Gough interviewed Academy Principal Sian Carr.*

### What were you like when you were at school?

I was very good when I was at school. Mainly, I think, because my father was a head teacher. He knew my own head teacher in my first secondary school and then I went to his school for the second half of my secondary education. So I was very good while at school.

### Have you changed since then?

Well, I always organised people at school. I remember when I was around seven I wrote and directed a play at school. The teacher allowed me to take half the class into a different room to practise. So I suppose the head teacher in me is in my blood. I believe that's because my parents gave me lots of chances. Making sure that all students get the chances they deserve is why I do this job.

### Do you think the Academy is progressing?

I think that the Ofsted report proves we are progressing. There were a number of great things in the report, for example it says that all the Academy students are making good progress and some are making outstanding progress. Also, the students' exam results show real improvement. When the students achieve, the Academy achieves.

### Were you scared on your first day at the Academy?

I wasn't scared; the students have never let me down. I believe that children never let you down. We return that commitment by teaching them and giving them chances.

### In a recent article in the Tunbridge Wells Courier you were named as one of the most powerful people in Tunbridge Wells. How do you feel about that?

You just have to push on. What the students achieve is more important to me. The sky is the limit.

### What's your favourite book?

I really love my books, but if I had to pick one it would definitely be *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen.

## Academy Dance Club Success

There are many extra-curricular clubs at Skinners Kent Academy and since joining the school as a mentor Miss Hannah Drew has been running Academy Dance Club.

On Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> April, five talented students from Years 7,8 and 9 performed in the annual Tunbridge Wells School Sports Partnership Dance Competition at the Trinity Theatre in Tunbridge Wells. Academy participants competed against dancers from other local schools and performed a swing style dance which they had been developing since December. The girls should be very proud of their achievements as part of the dance was choreographed by them. Miss Drew would like to say a huge thank you to all the students involved in the competition for all their hard work. Well done girls!

## Academy Hosts Tag Rugby Tournament

A grey Thursday afternoon was brightened up by the arrival of over 100 children from eight of our local Tunbridge Wells primary schools for an Academy Tag Rugby Tournament.

Under the watchful eye of several of our Sports BTEC students, teams competed for a cup and shield. At the end of the afternoon, Brenchley and Matfield swept the board with their A and B teams winning both trophies.

Participants had a great time and Claremont Rugby Coach Miss Green said: *'The children from Claremont Primary school had a really wonderful time at the Skinners' Kent Academy tag rugby tournament. It was great to see so many children having lots of fun in what proved to be an exciting afternoon and we hope the Academy will consider running this event again next year. One of our lads who will be attending the Academy from September was very proud to be taking part in the event at what will be his new school!'*

The Skinners' Kent Academy Vice-Principal Matt Topliss, said: *'I was very impressed by all the teams and the quality of play was very strong across the whole tournament. Rugby is becoming a focus sport for the Academy and it's great to see so much skill coming up from the primary schools.'*

## Academy Extra-Curricular Sports Summary

*Year 7 student Sam Wheeler is the newsletter's new sports correspondent. This term, Sam has written a summary of the extra-curricular sports activities available at the Academy.*

At the start of the school year there was an after-school football club called *Futsal* which ran on a Monday. This club was run by the Brazilian Kicker's Trainers and really helped with football skills as you had to use a small ball that did not bounce very much and also you had to look up before you passed the ball to your team member. This way of training is used in Brazil and Portugal and it really pays off because those countries have very skilful players.

On Tuesdays after school there is a football club which is run by Charlton Athletic coach Ben Hogan. The students that attend the club really enjoy it and learn lots of new skills. On Wednesdays there is an after school club for Touch Rugby. The coach is Mr Sayers. Because of the recent bad weather we have played inside the sports hall, but now we are playing outside on the sports field which is far more enjoyable and beneficial to our game. On Thursdays Mr Low runs the Duke of Edinburgh Circuit Training Club (DOE), but he also invites students who are not currently involved in the DOE Awards Scheme so they can get a taster of the scheme for later years. The Academy also runs an after school golf club and a dance club.

Anybody who wants more information on these clubs should contact the organiser or speak to their House Group tutor.

The Skinners' Kent Academy Newsletter welcomes contributions from students, parents and carers. Articles may be submitted electronically to:

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Alternately, articles may be submitted in writing to:

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