



Science and  
Engineering  
Specialist College

PRIDE IN OUR SUCCESS



## Principal's Christmas Message

2010 has been an exciting year for The Skinners' Kent Academy. Significant progress has been made in so many different areas. The highlight for me would be the pride students have shown in their own achievements this year as their self-confidence and self-belief grows. There are many lovely memories from the past year, but perhaps most etched in my mind were the joyous faces of students both at our first Prize Giving Ceremony in July and then the Year 11 GCSE results day in August.

The Academy's core purpose is to raise expectations and aspirations in all our students. We will continue to work hard in

the coming year to ensure all Academy students achieve of their very best and aspire to be fine ambassadors for the Academy and good citizens for their community.

We cannot do this on our own and we are extremely grateful for your continued support. We look forward to achieving even greater things in 2011, including the start of the exciting new build programme (see inside for details). I wish you all and your families a very happy, restful and peaceful Christmas holiday break and every happiness and success in 2011.

*Sian Carr.*

## New Building Plans Revealed

We are delighted and excited to share these first drawings of the new Academy building with you.

The modern and flexible designs capture our ambition to provide a 21st century learning environment that will reflect and raise the aspirations of our students and the wider community.

Architects Studio E were asked to create a learning environment to:

- Reflect the Science and Engineering specialism
- Enable the delivery of high quality Sport, Music, Art and Drama
- Demonstrate a strong mix of traditional and 21st century values and ethos
- Make outdoor learning equal to 'classroom' learning
- Welcome and nurture community connections
- Be inspirational in such a way as to bring about generational change

The current plans include an open air theatre and indoor theatrical space, gallery area, break out work spaces, demonstration and

demonstration and lecture theatre, improved sports facilities and an all weather pitch. In addition there will be a strong focus on outdoor learning with allotments, science ponds and a fusion garden.



Academy New Build (additional Images inside)

The modern and flexible designs capture our ambition to provide a 21st century learning environment that will reflect and raise the aspirations of our students and the wider community.

The team working on the new build includes Studio E Architects, Willmott Dixon, KCC, and Academy senior leadership. Work is scheduled to begin in Spring 2011.

## Academy Students Meet LCO

We were given the opportunity to meet the London Chamber Orchestra on Wednesday 17th of November. We went to Tonbridge Grammar School, whereupon we were taken backstage to see all the musicians up close. We got to speak with the drummer, who claimed he had the most important role of all in the Orchestra, as he had to keep timings for the Orchestra and if he beat out of time, everyone would know! After the rehearsal, we had the chance to meet two of the double bass players; they even played their very own duet for us! The musician even played a jazz piece for us, to which we all sang a tune along to! We really enjoyed the experience of meeting the LCO, especially when we got to ask questions and join in with the jazz piece, we all walked out of the hall humming and clicking our fingers!

Aimee Webb, Year 9

## Attendance Figures Up

Despite some recent inclement weather, attendance remains a priority for the Academy and its students. Although attendance has dropped slightly since the beginning of term, it still remains above our target at 92.1% so far this academic year. The standings in the House Attendance Cup are very tight; Darwin are in second place, three wins behind Newton and Brunel who are tied together for top spot on 5 wins each.

The top five best attended tutor groups for this term are N5 (96.8%), N3 (95.8%), D1 (94.3%), B2 (93.7%) and B4 (93.2%). 159 (54%) students have an attendance above 95%.

The pride and expectations linked to all students wearing our Academy uniform has not altered.

## Christmas Card Competition



The Skinners' Kent Academy Christmas festivities got underway in November with a competition in which students from all years were invited to design the official Academy Christmas card.

There was a strong field of entries but the winning entrant was Year 11 student Thomas Banks. Thomas' design features traditional Christmas motifs rendered in pencil and watercolour.

The competition was judged by the respective Heads of House, all of whom were greatly impressed by the professional quality of Thomas' artwork.

## Published Poets

Twenty-four Key Stage 3 English students have had their poetry published in an anthology entitled, 'Future Voices – Visions of Youth'. Their published work now occupies some twenty pages of the book, additional copies of which have been purchased by the English Department for display in the foyer and the Academy library. A further two students have also had their work selected for publication in the anthology, 'Poetry Matters – Creative Voices'. The editorial team selected work on the basis of '...perception, imagination, expression and effective use of language'. The talents of our students are beginning to blossom and we are all enormously proud.

## New Build Plans and Designs



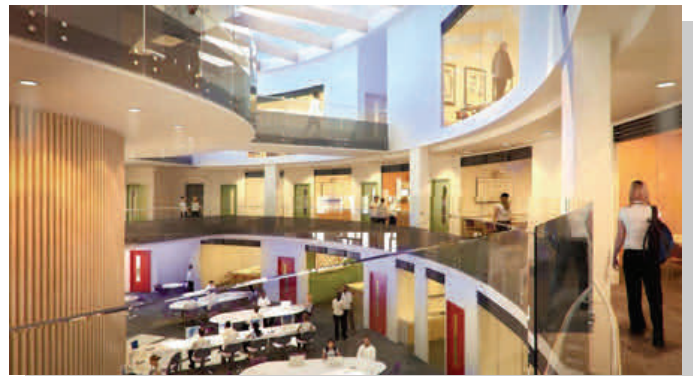
New Build: External Aerial View



New Build: Site Plan



New Build: Internal View 1



New Build: Internal View 2



New Build: North Elevation

Large views of the plans and designs are available on the Academy website:

[www.skinkerskentacademy.org.uk](http://www.skinkerskentacademy.org.uk)

A detailed model of the new build together with the original display boards can be viewed in the Academy foyer.



New Build: South Elevation

### What Happens Next...

- Planning Application Submitted – December
- 21 day Statutory Consultation period December 2010 - January 2011
- Planning Permission due February 2011
- Construction start April 2011
- Construction complete November 2012

## Academy Uniform: Notice of Price Increase

As advised by text to parents in November, our uniform suppliers have announced an increase in the price of Academy uniform. This is beyond our control and is as a result of the steep rise in cotton prices due to the devastating floods earlier in the year in the major cotton producing regions of China and Pakistan, combined with severe exchange rate fluctuations and the rise in fuel costs. Prices on average, will be increasing by around 50p per garment, but the Company is also simplifying the pricing structure for all garments, which will see a slight reduction in some larger sizes. Therefore, new prices, together with the new VAT regulations, will come into effect as from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2011.

## Parking at the Academy

We respectfully ask all parents and carers to show consideration to the neighbours of the Academy at 'drop-off' and 'pick-up' times of the day. Please ensure that you do not block entrances to individual drives and be extremely cautious when in the vicinity of the junction of Sandown Park and Blackhurst Lane. The roads are narrow and there are bends made even more dangerous by inconsiderate parking. We do appreciate that the current site does not allow for parents and carers to park, but please do be aware of the danger that is posed to our students and the general public by inconsiderate parking and also of the fragility of the 'conservation area' at the junction of Blackhurst Lane and Sandown Park.

## Pathways to Independence

Following the launch of our new, project based Independent Learning scheme in September, we were delighted to celebrate the successes for this term. The English Department offered students a wide variety of tasks to choose from, under broad headings: Year 9 – Shakespeare; Year 8 – short stories; Year 7 – London. The response from students was overwhelmingly positive. The projects received were a tribute to the imaginative, presentational and creative talents of our students, many of whom had clearly devoted hours of their time to completing their projects to a particularly high standard. Although competition was strong, the winning students were rewarded with a certificate, will be having tea with Mrs Carr, and will be visiting The Globe Theatre in London in December.

Students have just completed their Maths project and the 12 winners will enjoy their reward trip in the new year. The Science project begins in January.

## Extra-Curricular Clubs and Activities

The Skinners' Kent Academy provides opportunities and enrichment for all its students, whatever their interests and talents. This year we have been able to offer a diverse programme of clubs and activities with more than 50 different options to choose from. Be it sport, the arts or further academic study there is something for everyone. Students can choose from activities such as touch rugby, singing in the choir led by the Tunbridge Wells Choral Society or doing a cookery class in French. There are science clubs, gifted and talented maths extension groups as well as subject learning support groups. Students have the opportunity to sign up for clubs at the end of each term.



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

Talya.Roberson@skinkerskentacademy.org.uk

Alternately, articles may be submitted in writing to:

The Newsletter, The Skinners' Kent Academy, Blackhurst Lane, Tunbridge Wells, TN2 4PY