

the avenue

autumn 2014

From the Head

Welcome to another issue of the Avenue. In looking back through the issues from the last academic year, I am struck by the huge variety of events and activities reported. Last autumn we reported on the first Bonfire Bash organised by the PTA. This was a great success and has now become a regular calendar fixture. Throughout the year the PTA has worked tirelessly on our behalf, organising some wonderful events including a big Christmas Fair and the lovely old-fashioned style Summer fête. They also helped our Peru team raise money for their Outlook Challenge Expedition in the summer and the extra funds they have raised for the school have gone towards some popular improvements, such as the outdoor tables and benches and the basketball court, which is always in use. The support given so generously by the PTA emphasises the engagement of the wider community of the school. Friends' is supported by its staff, its parents, its governors and its Old Scholars, all working for the positive development of the school, so that we can continue to provide the best education for all our pupils.

This year we have welcomed some new staff into the Senior School: Adrian Lockwood joins the English Department following the retirement of Sue Lock, who had worked here for many years. Mark Munson has taken up the post of Economics teacher and Christine Proudfoot joins the Science Department as a teacher of Chemistry.

She takes over from Will Mullen who, even after his retirement, has provided such excellent support to the school for which we are very grateful. Robert Pepper is our new Drama Assistant in Residence and Grant Ward has joined the staff team in a different capacity, that of trainee PE teacher. He will do most of his training with us, under the guidance of Nick Batcheler and will complete his second placement at Saffron Walden County High School. It is good to be collaborating with the County High in this way.

The school renews itself year by year, with each new intake and we are now engaging in the process of Admissions for September 2015. In an increasingly competitive educational setting, both locally and nationally, it is important that we remember the special things which Friends' has to offer. The warm family environment, the peaceful and friendly atmosphere, the dedication of the staff and their willingness to do that bit extra for all the pupils in their care, sets Friends' apart. It is a lively place, driven by hard work, a sense of fun and it provides a wonderful space in which young people can develop their talents and personalities, their knowledge and learning and their sense of value.

I hope that you will join us during the year at our events and continue to give us your strong support. In this way our school will continue to go from strength to strength.

Anna Chaudhri

From the Junior School Head

This term has been another packed full of activities, events, trips and of course lots of new learning experiences. We have welcomed 27 new children to the Junior School across all year groups and it has been lovely to watch them settle into life at Friends'. We trust they will be a very happy here and it will be a positive start to their life-long learning journeys.

The children have been working very hard this term both inside and outside the classroom. A very big thank you goes to Terry and Simon from Essex Outdoors who have truly inspired the children during Forest School. We look forward to welcoming a new member of the staff team who will take over this role in January. The Harvest celebrations were beautifully presented and the children sang and read with real depth of feeling. During Quaker Week this year the children once again showed how well they can work together when they created fantastic clay scenes of children at play. They and the staff were so involved it was difficult to tear people away in order to go back to classes.

The children have participated in many sporting events this term with a good success rate. We have even reached the dodgeball finals on our first time of entering!

We are looking forward to the performance of 'Angel Express' in a couple of weeks time and, if the rehearsals are anything to go by, it should be a superb event.

A busy, but highly successful term and I am looking forward to seeing all that the children do next term.

Ruth Darvill



Year 11 and Sixth Form expedition to Peru

Year 3 Travel back in Time

Year 3 travelled back to the Iron Age, spending a wonderful day with the Catuvellauni tribe at the Celtic Harmony Camp at Brickendon. Keeping with the rule of the time, the group had to work for their lunch, and work they did! Grinding spelt, making bread, weaving and dying wool all helped bring their Iron Age topic to life.



Tony Mitton Brings Poetry Alive in the Junior School

Tony Mitton delighted pupils and raised the poetic temperature on two occasions during the term when he visited Friends' Junior School pupils at their 'Poetry by Heart' Celebration in October.

Poetry fever gripped the school when the award-winning poet and children's author first visited. Drawing upon his extensive repertoire, Tony entertained and stretched the imaginations of the youngest in Nursery to the eldest in Year 6. Rhyme and rhythm as well as raps and ballads filled the air as he took the children on a poetry adventure.

Leading up to his second visit, pupils spent time learning a poem of their choice and one fortunate pupil per class was given the opportunity to recite their piece in front of him. The visiting poet also presented a selection of his books to three lucky pupils at the school assembly.

Both visits were an inspiring celebration of spoken poetry and it was a privilege for our pupils to perform in front of such an accomplished poet.



Ashdon Windmill welcomes Year 1

Some of our youngest learners have been studying 'Food and Farming' this term. To find out more about their topic Year 1 ventured to Ashdon to see the windmill among the farmland. Equipped with drawing materials, iPods and iPads the children observed and recorded the different features around them as they walked among the recently ploughed fields and got closer and closer to the windmill. A simple but fascinating trip, which saw the children work as a team, ask inquisitive questions and experience their topic up close and personal.



Duke of Edinburgh

Congratulations to those pupils who completed their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh assessed expedition in Rendlesham Forest this term. Twenty-five students took on the challenge of walking for six hours each day, camping overnight and cooking their meals on a trangia. It was brilliant to see them all pass and impress the assessor with their efforts!



An Epic Adventure in Snowdonia!

Wales provided both warm weather and beautiful scenery for Year 5 and 6 as they set about measuring rivers, exploring the glacial features of Cwm Idwal, and experiencing first-hand what it is like to climb to the summit of Mount Snowdon. The group met a series of challenges head on and together overcame them all allowing each pupil to learn and grow among friends. Well done to all on reaching the summit of Mount Snowdon, a magnificent achievement and a lifelong memory for all involved. As quoted by the children, "it was an epic adventure".



Year 11 and Sixth Form Students' Expedition to Peru

Eleven students from Friends' seized a rare opportunity to take part in a three week-long summer expedition to Peru.

Managing on a food budget of \$6 a day and sticking to strict transport and accommodation budgets, the students had to book hotels, transport and arrange communications once they landed in Cusco. From the outset they had to think ahead, work together and problem solve all at the same time. They had not counted on one of the team becoming ill during the trekking phase of the trip, but the group improvised and adjusted the plan to fit.

The group also had a leader from Outlook Expeditions who helped provide guidance while keeping the students in the driving seat of the trip.

The group travelled to the Sacred Valley for the project phase of the expedition and the task of laying a new floor for the community building in the remote village of Rumira Sondormayo. At 3900m above sea level and no local people who could speak English, the project certainly provided a challenge for the group. Sign language, a phrase book and enthusiasm by the bucketful proved a group of students from Saffron Walden could get the job done, work together and help a small community in Peru.

A visit to Machu Picchu was undoubtedly the climax of the trip and allowed the group to see the 15th-century Inca site and one of the most famous archaeological sites in the world today.

Hannah Sargent, Head of Geography said, "We climbed the 450m vertical ascent to the site in time for sunrise and were rewarded with a most spectacular scene. Ancient ruins appeared in the sun, beautifully preserved to highlight how the Inca royalty lived their lives. A beautiful way to round off what was a truly amazing and inspiring trip for all of us."



Sixth Form at Bowles' Rock

A weekend at Bowles' Rock provided two days for 6i students to get to know each other and their tutors and also to develop teamwork and leadership skills. The group took part in carefully designed tasks where the solution is only possible with a high level of co-operation and teamwork. Students were also encouraged to face and overcome a number of personal challenges through activities such as rock-climbing, bouldering, high level team work on ropes, the leap of faith, dry slope skiing, a night walk, a variety of problem solving tasks and challenges such as getting your whole team over a high wall or through a series of tunnels. Our vibrant and mutually supportive group of young adults were a credit to both Friends' School and themselves.



UN Quiz Winners



This term it was Friends' turn to host the annual Strachan Trophy Quiz, run by the local United Nations Organisation. The aim of the event is to encourage young people to think about the United Nations and its aims and principles, as well as raising awareness of the ways in which the United Nations is currently operating across the world. Four local schools take part in the quiz every year; The County High School, Helena Romanes School, the Dame Joyce Frankland Academy and Friends' School. James Strachan, in whose honour the quiz was originally established, was a local Quaker, hence an additional link for Friends' School to the event. This event always presents a challenge but Kamal, Sophia, Charlotte and Miles excelled themselves to take home the highly-prized trophy this year!

Exhibition of Students' Art Work

Friends' hosted an art exhibition in Thaxted during November for 14 schools from across the country. Ten students from Friends' School displayed their work alongside other Society of Heads Schools at the Thaxted Guildhall for a week following the exhibition opening on Friday 14th November.

This was a wonderful opportunity to showcase the talent of students' work from across England, and provided a real snapshot of where art is in schools today. Thanks to Serena O'Connor, Head of Art at Friends' for organising such a successful and wonderful exhibition. Thanks also to Mike Collins for his help with the event.

Pictured: Serena O'Connor with the Mayor, Sandra Eden and Mike Collins, Chairman of the Guildhall Management Committee.



Wishing all our pupils, parents and staff a very happy Christmas and New Year. We look forward to seeing you again on Tuesday 6th January for the beginning of the Spring Term.

National Quaker Week

The Junior School celebrated National Quaker Week by getting creative with clay. In the spirit of friendship and co-operation pupils designed clay people and created a playground scene. It was a delightful thing to see all year groups mix and work together as they discussed what their figures might be saying or doing.

In the Senior School Year 7 went on their annual visit to Woodbrooke, the Quaker Education Centre in Birmingham, and those Sixth Formers who attended the Quaker Pilgrimage in the Lake District ('Foxtrot') spoke in assembly about how much they had learned about the origins of Quaker faith and how they had enjoyed sharing this with the staff and pupils from other Quaker schools. The week culminated in an extended and symbolic Meeting for Worship, held at the same time as all the other Quaker schools in the UK. Every year we greatly value this week of celebration and affirmation of the strong Quaker foundation of our school.



Sports Highlights Senior School

The U13 rugby team completed their season with a victorious 40-31 win over Stoke College. The team improved dramatically during the term thanks to the coaching of Matt Kiely. Stand out players were James Goodwin, Tade Adeniji, Barnaby Knight and Will Barnett.

The U15 rugby team showed commitment and flare from the start of the season. Thomas Mutali, Zac Omeh and Rufus Davies were the main try scorers but were well supported by Fergus Davies, Nathan Gibbs and James Morris. Thanks to Mark Kimberly and Chris Clayton-Smith for their coaching expertise.

The U13 basketball team have started the season well with two wins against Forest Hall and Birchwood. Congratulations to the Year 10 basketball team, who eventually played and won the final of the Year 9 basketball league after it was postponed from last season. It was worth the wait as they convincingly beat SWCHS 38-10 to be league champions. The Senior basketball team have been very successful so far this season winning against Long Road, Hills Road and only narrowly losing to the Perse. They were all very close and exciting games. In the league they have come away with wins against Hockerill and Leventhorpe, the latter proving an intense and nail-biting match finishing on 49-47. Zac Charlton and Jimmy Roberts have lead the team well with great support from Felix Hannam and Graydon Thorpe.



There were a number of great performances by Senior School students at the North West Essex Cross Country Championships. Kate Tillotson finished 8th and George Clarke 6th in their intermediate races while Byron Dean was 4th in the senior boys race. Hannah Irwin and Annie Abrahams ran superbly to come 1st and 2nd respectively in the senior girls race. All these pupils have been selected to run for the North West Essex teams in the Essex Championships in January. Well done to the junior girls team who finished 4th overall.

Congratulations to the U13 girls' hockey team who played in the Bishop's Stortford and District Plate Competition this term. Proving themselves a strong squad and a resilient and hard working team they drew with Birchwood, beat HRS 6-0 and then Edwinstree 11-0 to win the competition on goal difference.



Sports Highlights

Netball and Hockey Tour to Valkenburg

Intensive coaching, fixtures and masterclass tournaments kept the netball and hockey teams incredibly busy during their tour to Holland.

The hockey girls worked extremely hard during their training sessions which set the team up well for their night matches. On the final playing day they came a very respectable 2nd place in the tournament for those teams on

tour. The A and B netball teams received two days specialist coaching before also participating in a masterclass tournament. Playing brilliantly as a team, the A team won five matches in a row and only narrowly lost in the final.

It was not all hard work and training as the girls also participated in a range of fun activities including bowling, tobogganing, swimming and a visit to a theme park. A successful and highly enjoyable tour for all involved, congratulations to the girls on their exemplary behaviour throughout their time away.



Old Scholars Return to Take on the 1st XI

This term we saw the re-introduction of the First XI v Old Scholars' football fixture. Eighteen Old Scholars who attended the school from 2001- 2013 turned out to play against their younger counterparts. Both teams played flowing football, but it is fair to say the Old Scholars made the most of their seven subs, some of them not having played eleven-a-side football since they left school! James Hutton opened the scoring for the Old Scholars with a wonderful free kick from 25 yards but Felix Hannam followed up a Jake Ogilvie strike to make it 1 -1 soon afterwards. James Taylor slotted one home for the Old Scholar's team, finishing off a great passing move from the more experienced players but Alex Van Enis scored the goal of the game from open play with a 30 yard strike into the top corner to level things up. With the match destined for penalties, a defensive error from the now flagging older lads, had Jake Ogilvie tap in from five yards to seal the victory for the First XI with a final score of 3 - 2. David Vant was comfortable in goal whilst Jimmy Roberts and Zak Charlton were solid at the back. Captain Alex Van Enis and Felix Hannam ran the midfield well, backed up with some good attacking play from Andrew Chong.

The spine of the Old Scholars' team were Ben Brown, Danny Bennett, Kevin Philemon, Matt Simper, James Taylor and Fergus Walsh to name a few. It was a pleasure to welcome them back – we hope they return again next year!



Junior School

The Junior School has been engaged in a range of sporting fixtures and events this term, with some real highlights and wonderful achievements. The U9 and U11 boys' football teams both reached the final of the Thorpe House Langley Prep tournament, not to mention the U11 B teams' thrilling 7-5 win against Bishop's Stortford College. Rugby has been a new addition to our programme this term and has seen tag fixtures against Fairstead House, Bishop's Stortford College and Felsted.

The girls' (and some boys) have had an excellent term of netball playing against Dame Bradbury's, Fairstead House and St Mary's Cambridge winning the majority of their fixtures playing some skilful netball.

Cross country has been a great success with pupils from Year 3 to 6 taking part in several events held here at Friends'. We had several teams qualify for the USSP finals with Lily Godfrey and Cecily Hannam qualifying to represent Uttlesford in the county finals in March. The school also continued its tradition of performing well at the Gosfield cross country, and in the wettest conditions ever experienced, the Year 5/6 boys' and girls' cross country teams both came 3rd. The school came 2nd overall with Lily Godfrey gaining an individual 2nd place.

Following on from the sporting success of the Junior School, pupils attended a session with two sports therapists from the Sports Injury Clinic. The workshop focused on injury prevention, stretching, the importance of warm ups and cool downs, and injury rehabilitation. The visit gave pupils an insight into the more physiological side of PE and how different muscles and bones help us play sport.



Friends' School
Saffron Walden
01799 525351
admin@friends.org.uk

Friends' Junior School
01799 525351
adminjs@friends.org.uk

