

Dame Alice Owen's School



Newsletter – October 2015



Letter from the Head, Dr Alan Davison

Dear Parents

I am pleased to report that the new year has started very successfully. All of the new staff have made an excellent contribution to the learning of the students, and the cognitive ability tests have highlighted a very high percentage of very able students in the current Year 7!

Parents may be aware that, after many years of using the same set of entrance exam papers, the Governors believed it was necessary to bring our bank of tests up to date. As a result of this, a number of new tests were commissioned through CEM the market leader in assessment. The new tests were administered for the first time this year, and as well as losing some of the outdated terminology, it also more accurately differentiated between the applicants. The impact of this was, however, a reduction in the top marks secured as a result of the greater rigour brought to this process.

We will continue to use these more rigorous tests in the future to ensure that our selective places are appropriately allocated to the most able students applying. I am sure parents may be pleased to hear that an increasing percentage of the most able students taking the test, who get offered places at all selective schools, have been choosing Owen's for all of the past five years.

Duke of Edinburgh expeditions Sept and Oct

This half term has seen 3 expeditions taking place. Two qualifying expeditions to Tring and Wendover allowed a further 70 students to complete the expedition section of their award successfully. It is hoped that by December all of these students will now be able to collect their certificates for the Bronze award.

In October a further 15 Gold participants are venturing to the Lake District to do their assessed expedition. This will be a tough challenge where the students will be wild camping and battling against some inclement weather. It is hoped however that they will all successfully complete the expedition adding to a previous 12 that successfully completed in July. It is hoped that by the summer all 27 students will have completed the award and be able to collect their certificates from the Palace. My thanks to Mr Titley, Mr Davies, Mrs English and Miss Lord for giving so freely of their time to enable these wonderful opportunities.



Politics trip

Y12 Politics students had the exciting opportunity to visit Parliament on 5th October. They undertook a full tour of both Houses of Parliaments and were able to see the workings of the Westminster village in action as well as taking part in a Question and Answer session in one of the committee rooms in Portcullis House with Oliver Dowden's PA, Heather. She spoke about representation in Parliament, MPs' roles and the ever so controversial topic of 'safe seats'. My thanks to Mr Latham and Miss Cornejo for organising the visit.

Physics

As I am sure parents remember, the School was awarded Teaching School status back in 2013. As a result of this status, we were successful in bidding to offer Physics enhancement training to colleagues who are non-specialists in other schools to support them in teaching GCSE and A level Physics. I am pleased to say that the School has always been fully staffed with Physics graduates teaching our students; however, many schools struggle to appoint Physicists. This new training started in September under the leadership of Mr Poliakoff and was extremely well attended. Our prowess as a centre of excellence for Physics has extended, and as a result I am pleased to inform you that we recruited a young female trainee Physics teacher who will join us in January to further strengthen our Physics team. My thanks to Mr Poliakoff and Mr Holden in particular for running the training sessions for the colleagues in local schools.

Marchants Hill

I had the good fortune to join our current Year 7 on their trip to Marchants Hill in September. All took part in the activities with gusto and very much seemed to enjoy the experience. This is a wonderful opportunity for them to get to know each other and their form tutors whilst undertaking team and confidence-building activities as well as challenge themselves. I would like to thank Ms Blaskett, all the Year 7 form tutors and Dr Mitchell for organising this wonderful opportunity for the Year 7 students.

Orienteering adventure

A group of Year 9 students led by Mr Payne undertook a challenging orienteering exercise in Whippendell Wood early in October. I am pleased to say all found their way to the end point without any mishaps, which was a great relief to the Geography Department! My thanks to Mr Payne and Dr Davies for giving so freely of their time to organise.

Changes to GCSE and A level courses

Many parents will be aware of the changes to GCSE and A level courses introduced by the current government. Staff at the School have been preparing for these changes throughout the past year, and as a result, all have started very smoothly.



Rowing and hockey success: Jasper den Dulk and Emma McIntyre

Congratulations to Jasper den Dulk for securing a bronze medal in the British Junior Rowing Championships, which took place in Glasgow over the summer holidays. Jasper and his partner were in second place until the latter part of the race, where they were narrowly pushed into third place by 0.2 of a second. Well done to Jasper! Also congratulations to Emma McIntyre for being selected to represent England at hockey in the National School Games in Manchester.

Owenian introduces new Labour leader

All at the School were very proud when Rohi Malik, from the class of 2015, was selected to introduce Jeremy Corbyn for his first Labour Party Conference as Leader. If you haven't seen her powerful speech, please do click on the link below to view it:

<http://www.c-span.org/video/?c4553267/rohi-malik-introduces-jeremy-corbyn-labour-party-conference>

Irish Dancing

Also congratulations to Indigo Sagoo who qualified for the Irish Dancing Great Britain Championships in Bognor Regis on October 19th.

European Day of Languages - 26th September 2015

“If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart.”

Nelson Mandela

At the end of September the school celebrated the European Day of Languages with Year assemblies which indicated how rich and diverse our world is in languages. Students learnt that between 6,000 and 7,000 languages are spoken in the world and 225 different languages in Europe alone. It was also a surprise to learn that 75% of the world's population do not speak English. Many English speakers assume wrongly that English is spoken almost everywhere and students became aware of the importance of learning other languages. During the week students learnt a variety of things connected with languages in their language lessons. For example, some classes tried to guess which scripts were used by a variety of different cultures, others learnt about dialects and slang. A few classes even learnt how to greet each other in Mandinka, one of four official languages spoken in the Gambia. Students also had the opportunity to answer quizzes on European languages in lessons and in form time. My thanks to Mrs Davies, Mr Godfrey and all the Languages dept. for arranging our involvement.

Alan Davison
Headteacher

News from the Science Department

HIV by Dr Rita Browne

Dr Rita Browne (a HIV specialist) came to speak to us on Tuesday lunchtime as part of the science society's lecture series. She started the lecture with an introduction to HIV, briefly detailing what it was- an RNA virus with two strains- before moving onto dispelling some of the myths that surround the virus. There is a lot of stigma surrounding the illness and how it is transmitted, and she pointed out that one of her patients had preferred to tell her family and friends that she was receiving treatment for cancer instead of HIV because she was afraid of how they would react. Dr Browne pointed out that it cannot be transmitted through kissing or any physical contact which doesn't involve the mixing of bodily fluids. There is also a lack of awareness of the symptoms; 24% of people in the UK with HIV do not know that they are HIV positive, and 400-500 people die of AIDS in the UK every year, mostly due to late diagnosis. She also outlined both the clinical course and the treatment of the virus, and how it is managed (her patients require lifelong monitoring and care, and now have a life expectancy of over 35 years due to advances in medicine). She also added that her treatment focuses not only on the patients' physical health, but also involves taking care of their mental health- the nature of the virus means that it can be a very isolating disease- and helping patients to prevent transmission to others is also a key part of her work. Overall, she stressed that the best method for prevention of the virus is education, and with the right resources, the risk of a pregnant woman passing HIV onto her child can fall to under 1%.



Avni Bhatt

Year 13

Radiology: Evolving Imaging in Medicine by Dr Fraser Ingham

On Wednesday 30th September, Dr Fraser Ingham from Barnet General Hospital came to speak to interested Sixth Formers about the science behind his role as a radiologist, and just what this job involves on a daily basis. Covering aspects such as the use of contrasting agents to assist with diagnosis from x-ray scans; the pros and cons of using various radioactive isotopes in nuclear medicine; and the specific scientific parameters of the intricate machines with which he works, Dr Ingham's lecture was enjoyed and appreciated by Physics, Biology and Chemistry students alike. The attendees were shown scans of real patients and were encouraged to have a go at identifying the client's health issue; this proved to be a challenge but ultimately a valuable piece of learning, especially for those intending to go into medicine-related fields in the future.

The Science Department and attending students would like to thank Dr Ingham for having taken the time to give such a fascinating and educational lecture.

Olivia Goodwin

Year 13

News from the PE Department

Netball

In matches against Queenswood School the under 12A side drew 6-6 with Maisie Taylor player of the match, the under 12B side lost 10-4 with Mei-Rose Laleye player of the game and the under 12C side lost 12-7 with Anya King player of the game. Against Belmont School the A team lost 20-10 with Maisie Taylor again player of the game and the B side lost 12-7 with Izzy Forrester awarded player of the match.

The under 13A side drew 8-8 with Haberdashers' Aske's School, Layya Salim and Megan Boulton were players of the match. The same team narrowly lost 13-11 to Hitchin Girls' School with Megan Boulton player of the game whilst the B side won 10-9 with Sienna White player of the match. Against the same opposition the under 15A side won 22-16 with Lauren Aherne named as player of the match.

In the District League competition the under 14B side beat Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School 9-2 with Jess Brown player of the match, the under 15A side won 15-4 with Yasmin Crowe player of the match and the under 15B team won 9-4 with Georgina Brown player of the game.

Also in the District League competition, the under 15A side lost to Queenswood School 25-15 with Yasmin Crowe and Emily Prior joint players of the match and the under 15B side won 15-8 with Sally Gunsaya receiving the player of the game award.

In the County League competition the under 14A side lost in the final quarter 19-13 to the Royal Masonic School for Girls with Alya Haque and Stephanie Tanner chosen as players of the match. The B side fought back in the final quarter against the same opposition but lost 16-10 with Tami Akinyemi and Uma Ramanathan players of the game.

The under 19 team defeated John Warner School 14-13 with Claudia Abdallah named player of the match.

Hockey

In their first ever hockey matches the under 12 A and B sides both defeated Hitchin Girls' School 1-0. Maisie Taylor and Katie Lloyd were the players of the game for the A and B teams respectively. Against the same opposition the under 14 squad won 6-0 with Martha Cheek contributing four goals and being named player of the match.

The under 12s played in the Queenswood School Invitational 7-a-side tournament. The A side drew all of their games whilst the B side drew one and lost three. Alisa Hassan was player of the day for the A side and Emma Ingham received the award for the B side.

In a friendly match the under 12A side drew 2-2 with a strong Forest School side, whilst the B team lost 5-1. Maisie Taylor and Alisa Hassan were named players of the match for the A side and Alannah Daly received the accolade for the B side.

The under 13 A and B teams both competed in the St. Edmund's College tournament. The A side won three games and drew the other two, conceding no goals throughout the tournament and finished as winners, whilst the B team won three games, drew one and

lost one, only conceding one goal all tournament and finishing as runners up to the A side. Player of the tournament for the A side went to Honor Hewitt and for the B team Freya Stapleton and Sienna White shared the award. In their first 11-a-side game the under 13 squad drew 1-1 with Belmont School courtesy of a goal and further player of the match performance from Honor Hewitt.

In their County tournament the under 14 hockey squad won three of their four group matches to qualify for the semi-finals where they lost 2-0 to a very strong Haileybury College side. The player of the tournament award went to Lucy Georgiou.

Playing against a side from Argentina a mixed under 15 / under 16 side won 1-0 with Issy Boffey named player of the match.

The under 16 team defeated Forest School 2-0 with goals from Lucy Bird and Cara Leonard and a player of the match performance by Rebecca Slevin.

The under 18 squad reached the semi-finals of their County tournament where they lost to Bishop's Stortford College. Nandini Patel and Caitlin Creeley were joint players of the day.

Swimming

On Friday 9th October we entered 4 teams into the regional round of the English Schools Swimming Championships.

Teams were Junior, Inter and Senior Girls and Inter Boys. All students swam well and did Owens Proud.

The Senior Girls team consisted of Katie Conyers, Lauren Andrew, Rachel Connery and Phoebe Love and came 2nd on the evening with a time of 1.55.38 and hopefully this will be quick enough to qualify for the National Championships in November.

Football

The under 13 side have carried on their good form from last year in all competitions, with some outstanding performances in both the ESFA National Cup and County Cup respectively beating Rydens Enterprise school of Woking in the second round 6-3.

So far the season for the year 9 football team has started positively progressing in the County and national cup into the next round and winning all district games so far. Three boys have been chosen for the Mid Herts District side.

Online shopping with Amazon? Help raise funds for the library.

You can find the catalogue link on the new Life VLE homepage, or by clicking <http://daos.koha-ptfs.eu> and choosing the Amazon link on the right hand side.

New from Social Sciences Department

Trading the Financial Markets Club launched this term

In this several week series of lunchtime seminars, Mr Mahajan will share with the sixth formers his knowledge on trading the financial markets, which he has developed over the last 15 years. Students will learn about intraday stock trading, index derivatives systems trading and currency trading. The basics of a trading business plan will be explained, as will examples of trades, numerical calculations and psychological considerations.

This fast-paced, no-nonsense seminar series is rare at secondary school level. It is designed for highly attentive, logically-minded sixth formers, and is pitched at a similar level that investment banks pitch their spiel to their trainees joining from university.



Mr R Mahajan
Economics

CHESS NEWS

Inter-Form Chess

We've had a fantastic start to the new chess season with the completion of the Year 7 Inter-Form competition. It was a great event, superbly organised by the school's team that saw 7OP beat 7EF in the final. Here are the happy winners – Sean Huang, Ashta Barbot and Rakesh Bhaskaran:

We're hoping to have more inter-form chess events throughout the year.



DAOS Chess Team

The Dame Alice Owen's Chess Team has had a strong start to the year and were unlucky not to qualify for the National Schools Chess Championship in the Eton Rapid Play event. They finished 20th out of 40 teams on a score of 15 points. Sadly they needed 15.5 points to progress. However, they had another opportunity at a qualifying event at Mill Hill County High School and I have the pleasure to say that they scored 14 out of 18 points and have qualified for the next round. The team this year consists of (in board order): Kyle Kean, Adam Ashling, Alistair Yap, Ed Dutton, Tommy Gloyne and the returning Matt Rose. Here is a photo of them below:



We wish them all the best in the next round. **Happy chess playing everyone!!!**

Mr Simpson
Director of Chess

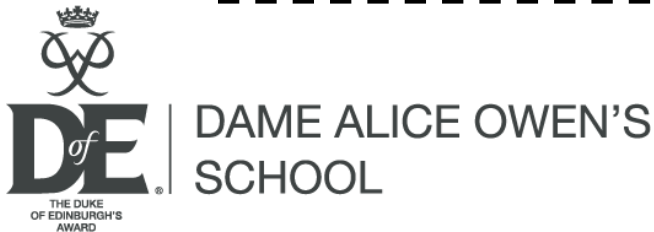
David Dein evening a huge success!

Thanks to all those who attended the sold-out Evening with David Dein on Thursday 1 October at our Old Owen's Sports Ground to launch the Old Owen's Charity which aims to support student's interest in football and cricket after they leave School. It was also a great opportunity for guests to view the excellent grounds and clubhouse facilities!

The slick event was managed by parent and staff member, Mrs L Linwood, our Advanced Learning Alliance Manager, and her son, Ben, who runs the crucial Owen's Tech Crew. Visitors were delighted with the talk from David Dein (left with Ben), who explained how the Premier League was set up over 20 years ago, how teams are managed and even demonstrated the latest technological innovation of invisible paint which is used on pitches to indicate to players where to take a free kick!



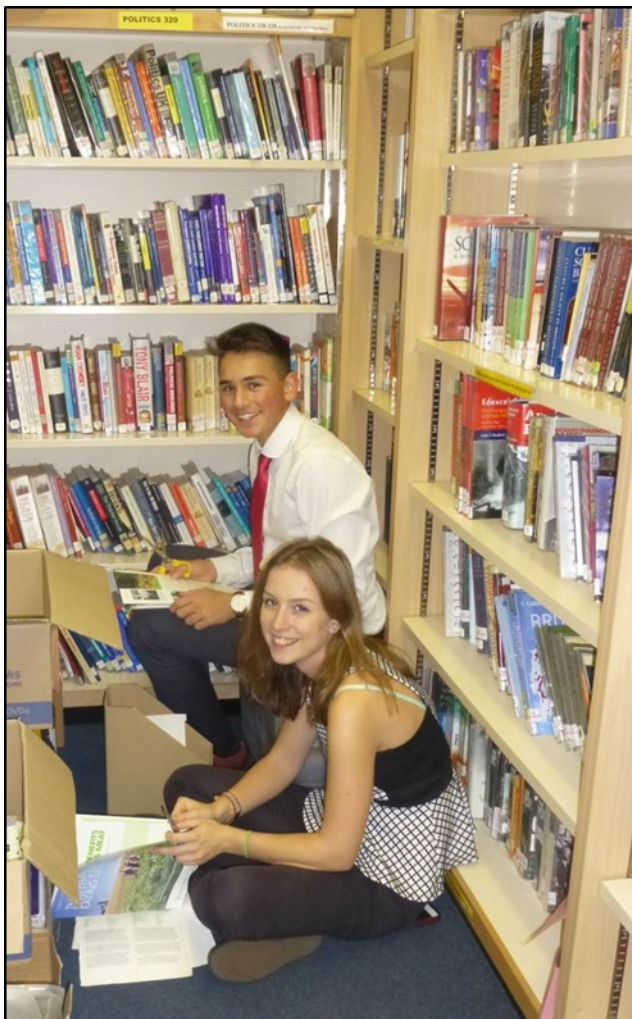
Many thanks to all the organisers involved including Head of Sixth Form, Mr M Ewins and Old Owen's Sports Ground managers, John and Lynn Clark. Head, Dr Alan Davison introduced David Dein to the excited audience!



Expeditions this October!

Forty students participated in the Bronze and Silver expeditions to Wendover in the Chilterns at the beginning of October, supported by Miss Lord and Mr Titley. They were fortunate with mild and dry conditions! Our Gold DofE participants, who are taking their Assessment Expedition in the Lake District, completing the 5 day trip on the first weekend in October half term may not be as lucky with the weather – full report in our next Newsletter!

Gold Duke of Edinburgh's Award - Volunteering!



Students often focus on the Expedition side of the award which is only a fifth of the overall challenge at Gold Level – the other parts include volunteering, physical and skill sections and a residential trip.

At DAOS, our Year 12/13 students can count supporting students weekly in lower school lessons with teacher's guidance, for their Gold volunteering activity. A couple of sixth formers (left) have also been helping out each week in our School library to improve access for students!

The 12 month or 18 month volunteering activity demonstrates significant commitment to any employer and can be included on students UCAS personal statements where appropriate.

If students are considering any Level of the award, further information can be found on the Duke of Edinburgh section of Life VLE, along with the enrolment form – simply complete and hand into Miss A Lord (DofE Coordinator) or Mrs M English (Gold DofE Support) with payment.

Duke of Edinburgh Lunchtime Support Sessions are held on Mondays and Fridays (Bronze and Silver) and on Wednesdays (Gold) in the Edinburgh Centre in K5 at 12.45pm. Students are welcome to pop in and ask any questions or bounce ideas, including if they've forgotten their eDofE Username... A Programmes Pack of ideas for each of the sections is available at these sessions and in the School Library to inspire! We look forward to hearing from you! **If you use Twitter, please follow @DAOSdofe as we post tweets for information:** <https://twitter.com/DAOSdofe> !

Miss A Lord and Mrs M English

- - - - -

Old Owenians!

Our alumni continue to support our school in many ways – if you've not read their latest Old Owenians Newsletter, you can read the end of June edition on our website at: http://www.damealiceowens.herts.sch.uk/about_us/old_owenians_newsletters.html. We now have around 3,750 Old Owenians who've joined our Old Owenians In Touch database and our alumni can use it to find old friends and privately message them! We welcome all those who left in 2015 and wish them good luck for their university courses/new career roles.

A mailing was sent to alumni in September reminding them of their next event – the annual **Old Owenians Reunion Luncheon** (Harold Moore) – **to be** held once again at the Imperial Hotel, Russell Square, London on **Monday 26th October** at 1pm, where Fred Groom, our previous Head of History from both Islington and Potters Bar schools, will be our guest speaker. Many thanks go to our volunteer organiser, Sandyann Cannon (Class of 1981) who took over running this event very successfully last year – details at: http://www.damealiceowens.herts.sch.uk/about_us/oldowenians_events_current_year.html

We're also delighted to be holding our 6th Old Owenians Careers Talks Week next Spring, during National Careers Week 7th-11th March 2016 and look forward to hearing from more of our alumni in January, who generously volunteer their time to inspire our current students with their careers and life experiences. If you know any Old Owenians who've not heard about Old Owenians In Touch, please "spread the word" and ask them to register to keep in touch at: <http://damealiceowens.web-intouch.com/>.

Finally, as a way of sharing best practice with other state secondary schools in Hertfordshire, a free workshop on "Building Alumni Relations #theowensway", was organised by Alan Davison and myself for 17 schools in July (Heads and Senior staff attended), which was very gratefully received.

Mandy English
Alumni Relations and Website Manager

News from the OSA

Quiz Night – The quiz night on Saturday 17th October was well-attended with 19 tables taking part including a record 3 tables of sixth formers. Thanks to everyone who worked so hard to make this such an enjoyable event. Full details of the amount raised will be published on the OSA website.



Refreshments – No doubt next half term will be extremely busy with school events in the run up to Christmas as well as the usual Parents' Evenings. If you are able to help with drinks at any of the concerts/events coming up could you please email sarahl@theosa.org.uk. If your child is performing and you are able to offer help during the interval then please volunteer.

Foreign Currency Collection – Please remember to bring any unwanted foreign currency or obsolete coins or notes and hand them into the school office. Last year we raised £901 for the school through the foreign currency collection.

Book Covers – As a reminder book covers are available for sale during the year and an order form can be found on the OSA website, www.theosa.org.uk. Alternatively a paper copy of the order form can be found in a yellow folder in the OSA box. Please mark any envelopes 'book cover order'.

Matched Funding – We are due to receive £670 from Santander matching the amount raised through the silent auction at the Summer Fete. So if you are employed by a company that is able to offer matched funding and would like to make a donation to Owen's School Association please contact sarahl@theosa.org.uk.

200 Club – The OSA operate a 200 club and two prizes are drawn on a monthly basis, plus an extra draw takes place in December. Annual membership is £12 per number. For further details please contact Bev King via 200club@theOSA.org.uk.

School Uniform – Should your son/daughter have outgrown any of their old school uniform could we ask you to think about donating it. Good quality previously owned school uniform is available throughout the year by contacting Julia Clews. School uniform will be available to purchase at Parents' Evenings. All items are carefully displayed and prices are very reasonable. Payment can be made by cash or cheque (payable to Owen's School Association). Of course all funds raised go back to the school. Stock is made up of donations and uncollected items of lost property stored in the school office at the end of each academic year.

Donations of good quality items can be handed into the school office, in a suitable bag, labeled for the attention of Julia Clews "OSA Nearly New", throughout the year.

OSA Committee - The OSA committee is always looking for new members who would like to help raise funds for the school. Should you wish to attend an OSA committee meeting as a one off or if you would like to join the committee, then meetings are held on the first Monday of each month at 8pm in The Old Library. The next meeting is scheduled for 2nd November 2015. We would love to see some new faces and look forward to welcoming you.

OSA

Forthcoming Events

Wednesday 11th November at 7.30pm

Junior Chamber Concert

Edward Guinness Hall

Tickets available on the door

Wednesday 18th November at 7.30pm

Senior Chamber Concert

Edward Guinness Hall

Tickets available on the door

Thursday 26th November at 7.30pm

Choral Concert

Edward Guinness Hall

*Tickets available through online booking**

Wednesday 9th December at 7.30pm

Windbands Evening

Edward Guinness Hall

*Tickets available through online booking**

Thursday 10th – Saturday 12th December at 7.30pm

Winter Play

Main School Hall

Tickets available by sending the form and cheque to Mrs Khan in the Main Office

Monday 14th December at 7.30pm

Nine Lessons and Carols

St. Mary's Church, Potters Bar

Seats available on the door

Wednesday 16th December at 7.30pm

Orchestral Concert

Edward Guinness Hall

*Tickets available through online booking**



Oaklands Social Badminton Club

We are a small friendly adult badminton club who play every Tuesday between 8pm – 10pm in the Dame Alice Owen's School Sports Hall and new members are always welcome. Social events are organised throughout the year. If you are looking for a badminton club or if you have not picked up a badminton racquet for years and wish to participate on a regular basis this is the club for you.

For more information contact:

Yvonne – 01707 642328

Email: yvonnenevby@sky.com