



# Sir Roger Manwood's School

## Head Master's Newsletter

**March 2005**

Dear Parents and Members of the School

### 1. Parental Perceptions Survey

Last summer term we asked parents to complete an "Evaluation Questionnaire". The response rate was pleasingly high and the information gleaned is proving very useful in helping us to plan for future improvement.

When asked to identify your most important priorities in school, "Teaching Quality" was placed first and "Happiness of the Child" second. This reflects the national picture: parents want good teaching and confident children in a caring, disciplined environment. Your perception of our performance in these areas was very positive, you scored us highly, but at the same time you sent us a message that you wanted it to be better and better.

The same message came through on the quality of school facilities; you gave this a high score but also saw this area of school life as an important priority to continue to improve.

Another priority area identified was "School Communication". As you know we have introduced a new Assessment Form this academic year. We hope that as a result the communication of academic information to parents has been greatly enhanced. The "level indicators" enable teachers to track individual pupil progress against achievable but challenging benchmarks and give very clear messages as to the progress being made. The Assessment Form also allows areas for concern to be flagged up and then followed up.

The new system certainly works with great clarity at KS4 and KS5 where GCSE and AS/A2 grades are a currency which everybody can identify with readily. At KS3 it is not so straightforward because National Curriculum Levels are less easily understood, especially as they are not necessarily well standardised between the different subjects across the curriculum. It is important that each teacher explains to their pupils what a L6a or a L7c means in their particular subject.

Another area of communication we are hoping to develop is the school's web-site. We feel that there is a great hitherto untapped potential here for expanding the site to include for example, pupils' work and curriculum information, information on careers and

communications between school and home. In regard to the latter we are very conscious that many letters from school (including this newsletter) never find their way to the intended recipients.

Currently the school web-site can be found at: [atschool.eduweb.co.uk/srms/index.html](http://atschool.eduweb.co.uk/srms/index.html). Another simple way to access the site is to go through Google and simply ask it to search for Sir Roger Manwood's School. The newsletters from school are always placed on the web-site.

One last thought on communication would be for the school to have everybody's home email address and then send information home electronically. Is this a possible way forward? Or should we just post important information up on the web-site and expect parents to regularly access it for up-dates?

The Parental Survey was thus very valuable to us and early next term we are planning a similar exercise with the pupils

## 2. Sir Roger Manwood's Careers Convention

This is being held on the first Wednesday back after the Easter holiday – 13 th April 2005, 7.30pm in the Sports Hall. It is open to parents and students from Years 8 – 13. A very wide range of organisations are represented to answer your questions about possible careers, universities and GAP year opportunities. Mr Ainsworth has worked tremendously hard in organising this event, so make sure you come along and make the most of this opportunity.

## 3. Two Weeks in Beijing

We now have the dates for the Language Immersion Course in Beijing organised by the British Council. The course will run from Thursday 21 st July to Sunday 7 th August. The course will involve 3 hours of language tuition in the morning and organised excursions in the afternoons. The course is based at the Central University for Nationalities and the students will be staying in the university accommodation.

Students studying Mandarin have been given priority to take up this opportunity but there are still some places available. Students from Years 8 – 12 are eligible and if you are interested see Mrs Venn. The only cost to students is the cost of the airfare.

Our link with Hengshui High School in Hebei Province (350kms south of Beijing) is continuing to prosper. We are expecting to receive 8 students and two teachers from 25 th June to the 13 th July – if any parents would like to offer hospitality to one of the students Mrs Venn would be delighted to hear from you.

A number of staff will be visiting Hengshui High School in the summer holidays and will teach English in their Summer School.

## 4. School Rules

You are probably aware that we decided to have a purge this term on a number of areas of school life where we felt the pupils could do better. One area, for example, was the wearing of uniform. We are very pleased with the response from the pupils and we now want everybody to continue to maintain these high standards when we return after the holidays.

#### 5. Healthy Eating in School

This issue has risen even higher on the agenda in recent months, not least because of Jamie Oliver's programme on TV.

Some time ago we decided to remove the sale of crisps, sweets and unhealthy drinks from the school. There are undoubtedly also a wide range of healthy options on sale in the Canteen each day. However, the Catering Manager is keen to review current practices and it is his intention to reduce the occasions on which such items as burgers and chips are available. This new regime will start next term.

#### 6. Friends of Manwood's

The Friends are planning a number of events for next term:

Sunday 26 th June 1pm Treasure Hunt around Sandwich. A BBQ and swimming back at base.

Friday 1 st July is Sports Day and the Friends will again be supporting this event, serving refreshments etc. Parents are very welcome to come along to this event and support the pupils in their athletic endeavours.

Saturday 2 nd July 5pm Divertimento – an evening of music and drama.

The Friends have recently committed money to the Swimming Pool to help us get it successfully up and running next term. We are now working hard to try and achieve this.

The School is also looking into the possibility of buying a new minibus and the Friends again will support this initiative. Thus, I hope you agree that all their hard work and fund-raising efforts are helping the school in some very worthwhile ways and you will want to support one or more of the above events.

#### 7. The Summer Term and Exams

The disruption caused by the snow, and the early timing of Easter this year, makes this coming holiday of even greater importance for those students who will be taking important public examinations in the summer. GCSE and GCE AS/A2 students should be planning to use the two weeks to get some important examination preparation under their belts.

The Key Stage 3 SAT's examinations for Year 9 students begin on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May.  
The Internal School Examinations for Years 7, 8, 9, 10 begin on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> June.

## 8. Recent Achievements

Boys' Sport: The Hockey season has proven to be a very frustrating one for everybody involved in the school teams due to the inclement weather accounting for 18 cancellations. Despite this, as with Rugby, the future of Manwood's Hockey appears to be very bright.

The U15, U14 and U13 squads have had very good seasons, winning a large number of games between them. The U13 chalked up particularly impressive wins against Chatham House (4-1) and St Lawrence College (3-2). Their season will finish with the John Maylam Tournament on the last Monday of term. Expectations are high as we go to print and we wish them well for the day. The U14's started the season impressively with a 7-0 victory in the Kent Cup. Unfortunately, we met cup favourites Langley Park in the next round and, despite a strong first half performance, we conceded to the better side. The U14's were hit by cancellations more than any other side during the term, but their potential for the future was confirmed with an impressive 5-2 victory against Chatham House. The U15's have a number of players who will be challenging for the senior squad next season so it was particularly pleasing to see them secure some fine victories, including a 7-4 win against Harvey Grammar and a 3-1 result against St Lawrence College. Expectations were high for the Peter Firminger Tournament, despite being in the toughest group for the morning stage, so it was very disappointing to miss out on a quarter final spot by 1 point. We recovered from this disappointment by winning all of our afternoon games comfortably to win our group and finish 9<sup>th</sup> overall.

The U12 and senior sides had little success this year, but the junior players are developing quickly. As for the senior players, special mention must be made of Ainsley Waite, George Bostock, Kevin Spencer, Dave Miller, Adam Muggivan, Kyle McKenzie-Fraser and Jamie Rankin who have given 100% to the squad and will be missed next season. A good number of strong players are also coming through with Matt Gwyn, Josh Tutton, Chris Goulden and Alex Greaves all representing Kent this year.

Rugby has also featured this term with the U12, U13 and U16 playing 9 matches between them. We were extremely successful here, winning 8 of these matches. In their respective Dover leagues the U12 and U16 squads maintained a 100% record and if the bad weather had not caused so many cancellations, we were likely to be celebrating two league titles.

We now look forward to an extensive fixture list for Cricket, Tennis and Athletics in the summer term.

Girls' Sport: Unfortunately the Netball fixtures have been badly affected by the snow and wet weather this term and about a third have been cancelled. Of the remaining matches the junior sides have performed well, with all the sides winning the majority of their

matches. Particular highlights for them were decisive wins against St Edmund's, Canterbury and Dover College. The 2<sup>nd</sup> VII played well as a team and can be reasonably satisfied with their performances. The 1<sup>st</sup> VII fought hard against very strong opposition but only managed to achieve one success against Dover College.

Cross Country. Two girls, Amy Hill-Turner (Year 9) and Suzi Miller (Year 11), competed in the County Cross-Country Championships and finished in very creditable positions.

Katie Morris (Year 7) is excelling in the field of Gymnastics and will be representing the region of Kent, Surrey and Sussex in a national competition in April.

The ski trip to Wagrain in Austria over the February half term proved to be very successful again. Many thanks go to all the staff who make this possible. Mr Boyle is now planning for 2006.

This term has also been very busy on the Performing Arts front. Synthesis VI, an evening of dance, drama and song, lived up to all expectations. The Senior and Junior Drama Clubs and Dance Clubs put together a cornucopia of entertainment under the expert guidance of Jenny Parks (from the Deal and Dover Academy of Performing Arts) and Mr Holden, Mrs Coles and Mrs Mitchell in school.

Mr Jon Williams, the new Head of Music, has also been very active. The "Battle of the Bands" competition was followed by two evenings of Rock and Pop Concerts. In the last week of term there will be the Spring Concert in the School Hall.

The School Orchestra, under Mrs Cullis, continues to maintain its link with Hardelot in northern France, and earlier in the term gave a joint concert with our French partners at St Leonard's Church.

Young Enterprise Companies have been operating in school this term. In January Gini Sharvill (Year 12) won the Dover Area Young Enterprise Public Speaking Competition. She thus went on to represent the Dover Area in the County Final and came a very creditable second. She spoke about the economic challenges and opportunities facing Kent over the next ten years.

With the departure of Mrs Garvey, the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme is being looked after by Mr Acourt for the remainder of this academic year. The interest in school remains very buoyant and a number of students will be presented with awards at a Presentation ceremony in the summer term:

Bronze Award: Hannah Johnson (Year 11), Annika Johnson (Year 11), Katie Jasper (Year 11).

Silver Award: Sam Johnson (Year 13).

Gold Award: Sam Johnson (Year 13), Claire Williams (Year 13).

On the academic front a number of sixth form students competed in the British Physics Olympiad 2005 with success: Bronze Awards went to Jehan Ariyaratnam, Sam Johnson, Gary Tse, Gordon Watson and Olusomi Delano and a Silver Award to George Bostock. In school Mrs Judd, School Librarian, organised a "Chemical Crossword Competition". Seve Findlater (Year 11) and Gary Tse (Year 13) won their respective age groups.

The Art Department have also had a particularly busy term with Year 10 and Years 12 and 13 trips to the National Portrait Gallery, the National Gallery, Tate Britain and Tate Modern. In July a group of sixth formers will visit Florence for a four day study/drawing course.

The Department has also joined in a Creative Partnership with Sandwich Technology School and Sandwich Junior School. This has resulted in a number of projects and presently Year 10 students are working on "giant" sculptures for parades locally and in France.

The Charity Committee continue to work hard in school raising money for the British Heart Foundation. A Charity Week saw forms throughout the school organise fund-raising activities, ranging from male leg waxing to the school's own slant on "Who Wants to be a Millionaire". Other initiatives also saw money raised for the Tsunami disaster and form 12H raised £80 to buy a flock of poultry for a poor family in Africa.

The end of this term saw the reciprocal visit from our German exchange school partner. Miss Scott was very pleased that everything went well. We are very grateful to those families who hosted a German student.

On the last day of term the CCF will depart for Snowdonia on their Adventure Week. We wish them well.

Another busy term therefore comes to a close. Apologies to those individuals and groups who did not get a mention in this newsletter; the above is far from an exhaustive survey of everything that goes on at Manwood's.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy Easter Holiday.

Yours sincerely

C R L Morgan

Headmaster