

December 2006

***Dear Parents and Members of the School***

***1. Examination Results Summer 2006***

We had another very successful year for our students in Year 13 and Year 11.

The A level results were very pleasing with 99% of all the exams taken passed and 57% passed with the top grades of A and B. 16 students achieved 3 grade A passes and more, with many more students also gaining an impressive set of results. The vast majority of students were as a result able to go on to the university of their choice.

The GCSE results saw a further improvement upon the previous year's good results. 95% of all the exams taken were passed at the top grades A\* - C and 46% were A\* and A passes. The average points achieved per candidate was 475 which equates to 8 grade A passes. Once again a number of students received letters from the Exam Boards informing them that they scored one of the top five marks in the country – two for German, one for French, two for Italian and one for Double Award Science.

***2. OfSTED November 2006***

After such a long wait since the last inspection in 1999 it was almost a relief to receive the 'phone call on a Monday morning to inform us that we were to be inspected on the Thursday and Friday of that week.

As you will know by now the Inspection went very well and the Report concluded that we were a good school with a number of outstanding features. Indeed, it was very pleasing for the Report to confirm that Manwood's "turns out confident, well-rounded young people who are exceptionally well equipped for future life. This is because of their excellent personal development and the high academic standards they achieve."

We have very high standards to maintain at Manwood's and we will continue to work hard to achieve this.

***3. Student Questionnaire***

As you know, the results of last term's questionnaire were collated and a Summary Report produced. This went to all staff and students and has been an agenda item at a lot of meetings this term.

The student suggestions about combating bullying played a part in the Anti-Bullying Week which we held in school in November. A drop-in centre, for example, has now been set up at lunch-times, manned by sixth form volunteers, and is open to all students.

The students' views on school lockers were also very interesting and have been discussed by the staff in various meetings and also by the students at the School Council. The outcome is a very radical suggestion which I will detail to everyone at the beginning of next term in the hope that we will have a consensus to move forward on this issue.

Next term will also see some serious planning on the use of the outdoor areas available to the students as Spring approaches. Again the Questionnaire has sparked some very interesting ideas which we want to develop.

Another issue that was raised in the School Council was the desirability of having a covered walkway for the queue that forms outside the School Dining Hall each day. This will be put in place next term.

#### **4. School Web-Site**

Have you had a look at the school's web-site recently?:

[www.srms.kent.sch.uk](http://www.srms.kent.sch.uk)

If not, can I please recommend that you do. More and more useful information is going on to the web-site, for example, the following can be found there:

- The term's calendar in detail, up-dated weekly including all sports fixtures.
- Term dates for 2006-07 and 2007-08
- Sixth Form Calendar dates
- Language School classes – times and dates
- Reporting and Assessment timetable
- Friends of Manwood's – upcoming events
- Curriculum – Departmental information (work in progress)
- Trips and Concerts – letters that can be downloaded
- Sport – match results
- Extra-Curricular – timetable of clubs and societies

#### **5. Major Capital Projects**

Confirmation of funding (£400k from KCC 2006/07 – 2007/08 + £40k from School funds 2007/08) has now been formally received from KCC to move ahead with the refurbishments to the Design Technology Workshop and to the four Science laboratories in B Block. The project will include term-time work and it is anticipated that it will be concluded for the start of the 2007/08 academic year.

#### **6. Friends of Manwood's**

Many thanks to the Friends who have worked tirelessly during the term organising fund-raising events. The Fashion Show was another spectacular success and the Quiz Evening and Christmas Fayre were also enjoyed by many people.

Towards the end of term the Friends agreed to make a significant contribution to the school to help towards the purchase of a new minibus. The Old Manwoodian Association have also made a financial contribution to this project. We hope to fulfil this aim next term.

#### **7. Safe Arrival and Departure from School – Manwood Road**

The School has recently been awarded a Gold Standard certificate by Kent County Council for the School Travel Plan which we produced earlier this year in association with Kent Highway Services. Whilst it is good to receive this award, it is more important that we introduce and benefit from the actions and objectives contained in the Plan.

The School's Travel Plan aims primarily to reduce reliance on private vehicles for pupil transport. We want to reduce significantly the number of such trips, by conversion to bus, train and, where feasible, to bicycles and walking. This can only be achieved with co-operation from all parents who currently bring their children to school by car.

So far we have been successful in bringing about the improvements to the road surface in Manwood Road. The work by Highways to improve the road markings and to install additional 'speed humps' is still awaited. Planning approval is also anticipated from Dover District Council following their survey of the School entrance on St George's Road, which showed that additional yellow zig-zag safety markings are needed; we have been told that this work could go ahead early in the New Year. It will also help to avoid some of the parking and congestion problems faced in that area. Furthermore, we will shortly be improving the cycle store facilities alongside the Library, to encourage the wider and year-round use of bicycles.

Two main challenges remain, both of which require support and co-operation from parents, and we therefore ask you to help us as follows:

1. Parking in Manwood Road - school buses drop off and collect pupils at the St George's Road (station) end of Manwood Road. There is discussion with Highways about providing marked bays for these buses, to avoid the safety risks associated with the buses having to reverse past parked cars. It is important that cars do not block this area in the mornings or afternoons.

2. Driving on Manwood Road - severe congestion, delays and frustration for drivers and residents caused by vehicles trying to drive along Manwood Road to drop pupils off at the School gates, is now causing real problems and is becoming a risk to pupil safety. We therefore ask that you consider not driving into Manwood Road to drop off or collect pupils at either end of the school day, but rather drop your son or daughter off at a convenient spot at a little distance from the school where there is less congestion.

### ***8. Travelling on Public Transport – Ambassadors for the School***

We talk a lot in school about the importance of behaving sensibly on the trains and buses, not least because of the important safety issues involved. It was therefore very pleasing to receive an email this month which I quote below in full:

"I am writing to inform and to congratulate you on the impeccable behaviour of your students.

I was returning from work on Friday evening and had reached Sandwich when a large number of your pupils boarded the train on which I was travelling towards Margate. The Roger Manwood's students took seats and conducted themselves excellently, despite the poor example set by children from another school who were noisy and boisterous. All of your children were polite and one boy in particular of whom I asked which school he attended.

I hope this letter is well received, and that you will give some feedback to the students of how their good behaviour is appreciated by the public. It is nice to see young people still being taught good, old fashioned manners."

### ***9. Duke of Edinburgh's Award***

Three expeditions have taken place this term including a Silver practice expedition in the North Downs area, a Bronze qualifying expedition in the High Weald of Kent and a Silver qualifying expedition in the Ashdown Forest. All students successfully completed each expedition; however, congratulations should be given to the two Silver qualifying groups who completed their expedition during the wettest weekend of October! In addition to the expeditions, students have been working on the service, skill and physical recreation sections of the award.

The annual presentation evening took place on November 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Nye Hall in Dover and 27 students received their Bronze Award and 8 students their Silver Award. Over 50 students have enrolled on the Bronze Award in Year 9. Training sessions for the expedition will begin early in January on Tuesdays and Thursdays after school.

## **10. Combined Cadet Force**

The CCF have had a very busy term. In September 17 Year 9 Cadets enjoyed a Field Day in school, whilst in October 23 Cadets from Year 9 upwards went on a two day overnight field weekend at Temple Ewell.

At Speech Day, Drum Major Nicola Robinson was presented with her Lord Lieutenant's Cadet of the Year Certificate. Congratulations are also due to the 11 Cadets who were awarded their Army Proficiency Certificates later in the term.

The CCF Band led the Sandwich Town Remembrance Sunday Parade whilst in the School Remembrance Service Band Bugler, Ben Worsfield, played "The Last Post" and "Reveille".

In the LJ Page Decimal Shoot in December the Old Manwoodians fielded a very strong team and defeated the School Team by 1003 points to 895.

At the end of term Lt. Col. R.S. Harlow received the Lord Lieutenant's Meritorious Service Certificate at an awards ceremony held in Canterbury. This was in recognition of his long and excellent service to the Cadet Force at Manwood's and is richly deserved.

## **11. Music**

The Autumn Term has been as busy and varied as ever for the music department. As you will see, the range of concerts and events that music has played a part in has been diverse.

The term began with *Divertimento*, an informal early evening musical entertainment based around the music department, common room and canteen areas. The event attracted over 200 people and involved a variety of music-making from rock and jazz to Mozart and Vivaldi.

Official school events have featured prominently in the music calendar for the term. Alongside a number of individual musical contributions to normal school assemblies, The Chamber Choir sang at the Harvest assembly, and the Girls Choir and Brass Group provided music for the Remembrance Assembly. Speech Day on October 20<sup>th</sup> saw performances by the School Orchestra and an excerpt from the forthcoming school production of *Annie*.

Lady Nikki Douglas' piano pupils gave another composite recital in M1 on 13<sup>th</sup> November with over 20 students playing pieces for an audience of fellow pupils, parents and friends.

Christmas is an especially busy time for the music department. A number of students provided music for the Christmas Lunch for the elderly in the school hall on December 6<sup>th</sup>. The Christmas Concert on December 7<sup>th</sup> was sold out of tickets nearly a week before the event this year, with standing room only on the night. Nearly 150 pupils were involved in the concert in a huge range of musical styles and ensembles. The Choirs were also joined by the gentlemen of The Manwood Singers, who rehearse in school on Thursday evenings, and to whom we are very grateful for their support.

Two Unplugged Rock & Pop concerts took place in the last week of term, with a good level of musical talent on show covering a range of popular music styles. We thank Jeff Alexander, Richard Rozze and Andee Price for all their work with students to prepare for these events.

A number of ensembles have been performing outside of school as well this term. The Jazz Band, under new director Dom Shawcross, took centre stage and were enthusiastically received in the Presentation ceremony for the East Kent Duke of Edinburgh Awards at Duke of Yorks School on 3<sup>rd</sup> November. This is the second time that the band has performed for this prestigious event. Members of the School Choir, and Chamber Choir participated in the Manwood Singers' Winter Concert at St George's Church, Deal on 9<sup>th</sup> Dec. The String Group took part in a concert with Kent Brass at St Nicholas Church on Sunday Dec 10<sup>th</sup>.

The Carol Services took place at St Clement's Church and the School Hall as usual which again involved choirs and orchestra.

Well done to everyone who has been involved in musical activities this term, and particular thanks to the many members of staff, instrumental teachers and parents whose support and encouragement for the students enables these events and performances to take place.

Looking ahead, the school production of Annie takes place on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> 2007. Tickets will go on sale early in the Spring Term.

## **12. The House System**

Having introduced the new House System at the beginning of the school term, the progress made has been excellent.

The identities of the four Houses, Dorman, Knolles, Trappes and Tudor, are developing well. The art competition to produce logos for the Houses has resulted in each House having its own striking design.

In the sporting field competitions have been held for hockey, rugby, badminton and cross country. Support from the students for the badminton matches held at lunch-times was a good reflection of the enthusiasm being generated across the school.

The Merits awarded for effort and academic achievement now also generate House points which has given students an added incentive. Similarly, The David Starkey Debating Competition has seen many teams entered throughout the school and debates happening on a regular basis each week – the traditional shields are still available to the overall winners, but many House points will also be won along the way.

Staff support has been very evident during the term, very ably supported by the House Captains, Vice Captains, Year Captains and Form Captains elected from the student body.

## **13. Rugby**

The U12 squad have had a tough first season of school rugby. Opponents have included very strong Sutton Valence, Kings Rochester and Kent College teams. Performances rather than results highlighted true potential, yet the boys still managed three good wins in their eight games. Convincing 29-0 (Chatham House), 17-0 (Dover Grammar) and 25-5 (Wellesley House) scorelines were well deserved and promising for the future.

The U13's suffered badly from the loss of Conor Michaels at scrum half due to injury early in the season. This meant a number of players switching positions to accommodate his loss, disrupting our patterns of play. Despite starting with a good 26-7 victory against Kent College, the team subsequently lost confidence. A narrow 12-10 defeat to Dover Grammar towards the end of the season summed up the bad luck experienced all season.

In direct contrast to the U13's, the year 9 squad began with a heavy defeat and a poor performance in the Kent Cup against Simon Langton. Hard work in training and a much improved work ethic on the field led to an impressive 15-5 victory over Kent College in the next game. This boosted confidence greatly and led by Oliver Best and Adam Asher the team went on to win the remainder of their games during the season. Scoring 191 points in six victories demonstrated their vast improvement from the beginning of the season in truly a team effort. The forwards worked tirelessly to win rucks with Jack Parker and Tom Newman leading the way. The great work continued with some excellent backs running, Gavin Elsam making fantastic progress with every game. The way the U14's turned their season around so quickly deserves great credit and we hope the same ethic and progress will continue next season.

A record of four wins and three defeats does not do the U15 squad justice. A large dedicated squad worked tirelessly under the guidance of Mr Stevens. The calibre of opposition faced catered for the three defeats, losing to Rochester Maths in the Kent Cup, Judd in the Daily Mail Cup and Duke of Yorks. This game has been lost every year since the boys started school so to lose 14-15 in the last two minutes, whilst hard to swallow, was testament to the progress made. However, convincing wins of 56-7, 50-0 and 46-5 reminded the team of their quality and many individuals should have an eye on the senior squad for next September.

A very young and inexperienced 2<sup>nd</sup> XV played some fantastic rugby, winning two of their five games. Individual performances throughout the season meant promotion to the 1<sup>st</sup> XV for a number of individuals who can be proud of their achievements. The season began with a tough fixture against an improving Oakwood Park 1st XV. An exciting game finished in a 34-53 defeat but highlighted our attacking potential. What followed were two excellent victories against Chatham House (33-7) and St. Lawrence 1<sup>st</sup> XV (22-10). A bizarre 5-38 scoreline in a very tight contest at Norton Knatchbull and a narrow 7-12 loss against a strong Duke of Yorks line up completed the season. Year 11 players Jack McCaughan, Lawrence Smith and Femi Ogunbiyi deserve particular praise for their performances.

The 1<sup>st</sup> XV suffered two fold. Firstly, we lost over half of the pack from last season and then we suffered with other schools letting us down and cancelling fixtures. Hopes were not high at the beginning of the year for much success. Despite this, and inspired by the leadership of Ben Latham and Henry Miles, the boys produced some excellent rugby in patches and deserved better than the three victories gained in seven matches. Two wins in the Daily Mail Cup meant progressing to the third round and an away tie at Skinners. Against a side who are still in the competition the boys had a true rugby experience and deserve a lot of credit for resisting Skinners for long periods of time. Despite a comprehensive defeat, we played some of our best rugby of the season with Josh Maw and James Brierley particularly outstanding.

The problems in the pack pre season were quickly cured with the honourable movement of Sam McClellan and Henry Miles into the forwards and the excellent performances of Noah Werth at prop. The backs were predominantly year 13 and at times played some fast flowing rugby, passing the ball out to the wing for Tom Harris, Charlie Thomson and Jason Read to exploit space. When we combined this type of rugby with efficient rucking in the forwards we demonstrated our true potential. Duke of Yorks is a fixture we have failed to win for many years at 1<sup>st</sup> XV level so to lose 14-15 was both a sickening blow to the boys and an encouraging sign of our development. With Harry Collins and Ben Smalley having outstanding seasons in the backs; with forwards improving with every game; and with a great deal of potential arriving from the U15's, next season is already a promising one.

Special thanks to all the staff who contributed to this season: Mr Wallace, Mr Stevens, Mr Acourt, Mr Boyle, Mr Vere, Mr Cox and Mr Pearce.

#### **14. Soccer**

In our second year of competition in the Dover League, the progress that has been made is quite marked.

The Year 7 team had a very successful season finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> in the League and progressing into the second round of the Kent Cup where they lost on penalties to a Harvey Grammar side.

The Year 8 team struggled in their League competition but did go through to the second round of the Kent Cup, also losing to Harvey Grammar.

The Year 9 team won 3 and lost 3 in the Dover League and were beaten by Dover Grammar in the Kent Cup. They have the talent to improve upon this next year.

The Year 10 team finished 5<sup>th</sup> in their League and the Year 11 team 6<sup>th</sup>.

The 1<sup>st</sup> XI played a number of friendly matches. In the Kent Cup they had a close game against Tunbridge Wells Grammar, a match also noted for being refereed by FIFA and Premiership referee Keith Bennet!

Girls' football is also continuing to develop within the school and a combined Year 7 and 8 team competed recently at a festival held in Dover. The girls qualified from their group and finally lost in the quarter finals.

The season traditionally ends with 7-a-side tournaments and we performed strongly here. The Years 7, 8 and 9 teams all reached the semi-finals, whilst the Year 10 team won their competition.

## **15. Hockey**

The quality of the play this year was as good as it has ever been. All six teams had a full fixture list and travelled far and wide. They also entered a number of competitions and despite not reaching the finals of any, performed extremely well as a team, with excellent team spirit and encouragement throughout.

The 1st Team had an excellent season and for the first time were captained by two upper sixth students – Sophie Daw and Beau Limbrick. The atmosphere within the team was excellent and their season finished with 3 wins and 3 draws and no losses.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> X1 were captained by Hazel Daw who showed excellent leadership skills. This team won 1, drew 1 and lost 3, however, their ability to work hard and support each other throughout the season was commendable.

The Under 15 team was captained by Breeze Handley. This team had some very challenging matches but again worked hard to achieve their successes. Their season finished with 2 wins and 2 losses overall.

The Under 14 team was captained by Lily Summers. They won 3 matches and lost 1. This was a very hard working team who have shown a great deal of improvement since the beginning of the season. They have a number of very talented players who, with continued hard work, should achieve more success in the future.

The Under 13 team played some very hard matches against a number of excellent teams. Whilst putting in a good performance they lost all of their matches. However, the team performed well as a unit and with continued hard work should improve in the future.

The Under 12 team was captained by Jessica Greaves. This team played 3 matches, winning 1 and losing 2. Again they played some very good sides and showed a great deal of promise in their playing ability. The seeds have been sown and there are a number of very good players in this team, who with continued hard work will come good.

## **16. Achievements in a Variety of Sporting Arenas**

### **a) Golf**

During the summer holidays the Manwood's golf team comprising Ed Cannons, Joe Douglas and Katie Cornwall played in the National Schools Championships as Kent Champions. They again acquitted themselves exceedingly well being placed 11<sup>th</sup> out of the 25 competing schools.

Ed Cannons and Katie Cornwall have been selected to play for Kent this term in a number of inter-county matches.

### **b) Team Show-Jumping**

Manwood's was represented by Lottie Gambrill (Year 9), Amanda Sycamore (Year 8) and Hayley Compson (Year 7) in a Schools Show Jumping Competition held at Ashford earlier this term. They were finally placed 6<sup>th</sup> out of the 14 schools competing; an excellent effort.

- c) South East Schools Modern Biathlon Championships 2006  
This competition took place at Horsham in October and involved a 1000 metre cross country run followed by a 50 metre swim. Manwood's team comprised three Year 8 students, Kerry Vinson, Dominica Szucsova and Ella Savage. The level of competition was extremely high and for the team to finish in 7<sup>th</sup> place overall was a very pleasing result.
- d) Mountain Biking and Cyclo cross  
Max Sykes (Year 9) has been travelling around the country competing in both these sporting disciplines to great effect. At the National Mountain Bike Championships he was placed 1<sup>st</sup> in the U14 competition. Cyclo cross is running a series of National Trophy competitions and after the first two rounds, held at Cheltenham and then Ipswich, Max was in first place in the U14 competition. We wish him all the best in future rounds.
- e) Rowing  
Hannah Moon (Year 11) is excelling at this sport. Hannah was invited to attend the National Trials for the 15 to 18 age group and was placed 5<sup>th</sup> out of the 80 competitors present. If things go well we could see her competing at the World Championships in Beijing 2007.
- f) English Channel Relay Swim  
Tom Russell (Year 9) was a member of a team that successfully swam the Channel in September, completing the crossing in 14 hours and 5 minutes. He now intends to do a solo channel attempt in the future, as well as being a member of a relay team that is planning a world record attempt.
- g) Cross –Country  
Amy Hill-Turner (Year 11) won the South East Kent Intermediate Girls Cross Country and will now represent the district at the Kent Schools Championships. Chris Thomas (Year 8) also excelled in the boys' event and will be running at the same Championships. We wish them all the best.

## **17. School Closure (bad weather) Procedures**

- a) **If the school is forced to close in the course of the school day:-**  
This decision is taken as soon as possible, erring on the side of caution – a safe journey home is the paramount consideration. If severe weather is forecast, parents are asked to make arrangements for their child(ren) either to enter the home or to stay with a neighbour.
- b) **Once the school has closed:-**  
Radio announcements appear on BBC Radio Kent and Invicta Radio, usually after the hourly news and at the half hour.
- Information will also be posted on the school web-site under the section "News".
- The school office may well not be staffed because of the weather. Every effort will be made to come to a decision about the next day by 5 p.m. The school will again err on the side of caution, in the interests of safety.
- c) **When the school is open:-**  
Pupils are expected to attend, if they can reach school safely by mid-morning. They are not expected to take serious risks in order to get to school. Parents are asked to let the school know at their earliest convenience after 8.30 a.m. (either by telephone or by email to [head@srms.kent.sch.uk](mailto:head@srms.kent.sch.uk)) if their child(ren) cannot get to school. If travel is by bus or car, the local bus station or the A.A. will advise on the situation. If travel is by rail, South Eastern Trains will advise on any disruption to the timetable.

As in the case of illness, parents are asked to supply a note once return to school is possible, giving the reason for absence and the exact date(s) of absence.

### **18. Chinese Speaking Competition**

A number of students (Charlie Thompson, Nick Moore, Greg Smith, Seve Findlater, Jess Harris, Matthew Bishop) who study Mandarin Chinese entered the British Council sponsored competition which was held in London. They wrote and performed a play which reflected their insights on modern day China gleaned from their visit to China last summer. Although they did not win the 1<sup>st</sup> prize of an all expenses paid trip to Beijing, their play was very well received and they were commended for their fluency, pronunciation and lively dialogue!

The students later performed two scenes from the play – the restaurant and street – bartering scenes – in School Assembly to rapturous acclaim.

All students are reminded that Mandarin Chinese classes are available to students of all ages. We are also expecting there to be further opportunities to visit China next year.

### **19. First Lego League – Kent Regional Final**

This year was the second time that Manwood's had entered this competition and again we came away with an award. The team comprised 4 Year 7 students, 2 Year 8 students and 1 Year 9 student. (Year 7 – James Pledger, Aaron Chidwick, Alex Dixon, Andrew Carlotti, Year 8 – Graham Harris, Damon Sutton, Year 9 – Luke Mennis).

The Final was a one day event held at the University of Kent and a consistent performance in the challenge rounds saw us in the lead at one point. However, the team finally finished 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Robot Challenge and also won 2<sup>nd</sup> prize for the Robot Design. This was a particularly commendable performance as the other teams were made up of much older students.

### **20. Comenius Project**

Comenius Projects are funded by the European Union and enable students and staff from across Europe to work together on joint projects.

Our Comenius Project is to do with attitudes towards recycling and whether these attitudes change according to age and social class and where we live. The students are working on this theme in ICT, Geography and Maths. In ICT they have designed a questionnaire, in Geography they are looking at resources and in Maths will do statistics. Our partner schools in Prague, in the Czech Republic, Cremona in Italy and Sundern in Germany are carrying through a similar exercise. When all the results have been collated and analysed, comparisons will be made.

Next summer there will be a meeting for representatives of all the schools to see what future action can be taken to improve recycling.

### **21. Charity Work**

The Charity Committee continues to meet regularly and organise events in school. The school's Harvest Assembly was very well-supported and a significant number of parcels were taken out to homes by students at the end of the school day. Several letters and cards subsequently came into school thanking the students for their visit.

At another School Assembly we were pleased to be able to present a cheque to a representative of the MacMillan Nurses organisation to help with their care for cancer patients. This followed a very successful fund-raising "Sticky Stall" in school.

The annual Christmas Lunch for the elderly citizens of Sandwich was again very well received with over 20 sixth formers helping to organise and participate in the afternoon's proceedings.

Congratulations should also go to form 7D, who raised over £500 for Children in Need; they came to school dressed as Victorian "Ragged Children". Also Form 11C which raised money for Oxfam by organising a cake stall and competitive games in their form room at lunch-time.

Thanks go to all those students who have supported these events.

## **22. Year 10 Design Technology Enterprise Project**

Pupils designed, made and sold clocks for the Christmas Market as part of their GCSE course. The pupils were highly successful in making sales of £280 and a profit of £188. They have decided to use the money to buy two goats, tools, seeds and a medicine kit for African families.

## **23. Staff Farewells**

At the end of term we say farewell to Mrs Margaret Cook who has taught mathematics for this term. We thank her for her commitment and hard work on behalf of her classes and wish her all the best for the future.

## **24. Trips Abroad**

The two China trips at the end of last summer term were both extremely successful. Kunming proved to be an interesting base for one group, whilst the sixth formers who taught English at Hengshui High School did fantastically well. We hope to have further visits to China next year.

Earlier this term the Art Department took their sixth form students to Madrid. The art work on display proved to be suitably inspiring and they also managed to fit in a visit to our partner school there.

The History Department had another very successful trip to Berlin with their GCSE students responding very positively to the experience.

In the last week of term the annual German exchange took place with our students staying at Sundern in North Rhine Westphalia. We look forward to the return visit next term.

## **25. Bridge Building Competition**

This was a new venture for Manwood's and one that attracted a sizeable number of entries and some excellent work. The competition was based around the West Point Bridge Building software. Students were asked to construct a bridge that would span a fixed river crossing using a fixed number of connecting joints. They had flexibility in their choice of design, material types, solid or hollow beams and size of materials. Once a bridge design was constructed it could be tested using the simulation software which would send a truck across the bridge highlighting the beams that were under tension or compression. Failed bridge designs would collapse dramatically on the computer screen. Revisions to the design could then be made. The primary objective was to complete this task at minimum cost. Competition was fierce with a few dollars often being the difference between first and second positions. A number of students managed to also provide bridge designs that found simulation errors in West Point's software.

The winning entries were:

1 <sup>st</sup> Prize	Greg Smith (Year 12)
2 <sup>nd</sup> Prize	Andrew Carlotti (Year 7) and Etienne Lugthart (Year 10)

## **26. Chess Competition**

This term has seen the annual Chess Competition being played at lunch-times. The winners were as follows:

Year 9	Ben Robinson
Year 10	Christopher Stowell
Year 11	Jack Northrop
Sixth Form	Kit Blundell
Staff	Mr Ainsworth
Overall Champion	Jake Giboin (Year 7)

## **27. The Boarding Community**

The Boarding Houses are full to capacity this year and we have a very healthy list of enquiries for next year.

The OfSTED Inspection confirmed that there is an excellent community spirit within the two Houses, the Grange and the Lodge, and congratulations are very much in order both to the students and all the staff, under the leadership of Mrs Urquhart and Mrs Coles, for building together such happy extended family homes.

The diverse intake of the two Houses certainly brings an added dimension to life at Manwood's which is very welcome.

At the end of this term Mrs Jill Sutton, Matron at the Grange, is retiring after 9 years in the House. We thank her for all her hard work on behalf of the boys there and wish her a very happy retirement.

**I am very conscious of the increasing length of these termly newsletters, but it is a testimony to the richness and variety of life at Manwood's. Even so I must also make an apology for those many worthy activities not given a mention, for this is not an exhaustive account.**

**I would like to take this opportunity to thank everybody for their hard work over the term and wish everyone a very happy Christmas and New Year.**

Yours sincerely

**Chris Morgan**  
**Headteacher**