
◆ Beverlonian ◆

Volume 16 Issue 2

Spring Term 2010



Dear Parents

It really feels as if it has been a long hard and very cold winter. However it has been an excellent one for the school. We have been lauded and celebrated more than I can ever remember in the past. I am toying with moving to London to enable me to attend all the

events I have been invited to. Eating all these dinners is playing havoc with my new health and fitness campaign, but it is worth it. It is testimony to all the hard work and effort put in by your sons and daughters, my teachers and support staff, the external agencies connected with the school, the governors, Old Boys, friends, the Local Authority and you as parents. Everyone connected with the school should feel proud. When I go to these events I am aware that I am representing the whole community of Beverley Grammar School. I want you to know that

with every mouthful of the scrumptious food and every sip of the excellent wine I am thinking of you (and I am sure that you are happy for me to be there representing you). It is an honour.

As the days draw out and Spring approaches we are looking forward to great things ahead. I can assure you we are not sitting back on our laurels!

Christopher Goodwin
Headteacher

GUILDHALL CELEBRATION WITH ELIZABETH REID AND ED BALLS



I was invited to the Guild Hall by Elizabeth Reid the Head of the SSAT (Specialist Schools and Academies Trust) to represent Beverley Grammar School, as a High Performing Specialist School, in recognition of the Trust's sponsors. We were addressed by The Rt Worshipful The Lord Mayor Locum Terens, Alderman Sir David Howard and guest speaker, The Rt Hon Ed Balls MP, Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families.

The Guildhall is a truly impressive building suitably adorned with stained glass, lavish stonework and statues, literally oozing history. It makes a spectacular backdrop for such a reception.

We arrived at 6.00 pm to be greeted with drinks and canapés and were allowed to mingle and chat whilst being regaled with music supplied by students from a Brentford school.

Following the Lord Mayor's opening remarks Ed Balls addressed the reception. He gave a good speech focussing on putting students first which went down very well.

After this I was able to have a few minutes with Mr Balls, who received me very warmly, listened and offered advice whilst I explained about Beverley Grammar School and our financial predicament.

It was quite an honour to be discussing Beverley Grammar School and our success with Mrs Reid and the Rt Hon Ed Balls and I ended by inviting him to visit the Grammar School so that I can discuss matters with him in more depth.

GIBSON HALL CELEBRATION WITH CHRISTINE GILBERT



Christine Gilbert, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills, Ofsted, invited me to the Gibson Hall in Bishopsgate in honour of our three Outstanding Ofsteds. The Gibson Hall (our Mr Gibson assures me that it is his family's ancestral home) is a magnificent place. Amid the lavish adornments we were subjected to an array of dishes with drizzled duck and chocolate

baskets, fried vegetables, balsamic ice-cream and chicken breast—not necessarily in that order—all washed down with copious amounts of extremely pleasant red wine of a certain vintage. I found myself on table one with Mrs Gilbert. I later found out that this honour was bestowed upon the elite group of schools who had multiple Outstanding Ofsteds. Quite a prestigious recognition.

After eating and having the opportunity to speak to Mrs Gilbert we had our photos taken for posterity and Mrs Gilbert gave her address:

“I wholeheartedly congratulate these providers on their success and hard work in delivering such high standards. Excellence does not happen by chance. These providers have a real drive to inspire, challenge, and support children, young people and adult learners. But there is no reason why everyone can't be outstanding, I hope they will be a source of inspiration to others.”

KINGS PLACE HIGH ATTAINMENT CELEBRATION WITH ELIZABETH REID AGAIN



Once again March will find me tramping the streets of London to yet another celebratory dinner; this time at the Kings Place in Islington, following an invitation from Mrs Elizabeth Reid in celebration of our High Attainment at GCSE last summer, with particular regard to English, Maths, Science and Modern Languages.

I do hope it's not duck again!

2nd KINGS PLACE CELEBRATION OF GCSE SUCCESS

Even as I was putting the finishing touches to this edition and preparing to go down to London for our celebration meal I received yet another invite. This time it is to celebrate the fact that we have achieved successive year on year improvements in our GCSE results over the last 4 years totalling in excess of 15% higher. I think Mrs Reid must have taken a shine to me! Rather than keep on paying out on these rail fares I did suggest to the governors that they should buy me a flat down in London so that I could be permanently based there. They didn't seem to keen although I did see a nice rather salubrious little pad in Mayfair. Ho hum.

Anyway, perhaps it'll be emu au gratin this time.

RT HON ED BALLS AND FUNDING

As you may have gathered from all the media coverage recently I have been down to London to visit Mr Balls. I have been particularly vexed over the issue around funding. As a highly successful school, very popular and heavily oversubscribed, we are full to the gills with students. One would imagine that this should result in us being awash with funds. Unfortunately this is not the case. We have had to claw our way out of a substantial deficit and just

manage to keep our heads above water. This is a situation that puts my staff and students at a considerable disadvantage. It prevents us developing as fast as we would like. It means that our buildings and facilities are not as good as we would wish.

As a county, the East Riding is the eighth worst funded in the country. On pupil weighting alone we would be nearly half a million pounds better off if we were down the

road in Hull. On top of that they receive the various grants and funding that come with being in an area of deprivation such as Hull.

Now don't get me wrong – I do believe that inner cities require extra funding. It is the disparity of the funding that is too great. As a successful school we do not attract in the extra funding and neither do we get sufficient pupil weighting.

I contend that it takes money to maintain an outstanding level of success, that we do have issues of social deprivation and social problems, as well as issues with travel and collaboration, and that the prosperity of Beverley is dependent on the success of its schools.

It is in the interest of the Local Authority to recognise this as well as central government.

I took the liberty of following up my meeting with Mr Balls with a letter explaining my views in more depth and putting my invitation in writing.

We shall see if he can find the time.

TEXTING & EMAILING SNOW



We have decided to move into the 21st century and go for electronic communication.

This means that all our future communications will be electronic unless specifically asked for. Instead of wasting forests of trees on letters that never reach home we are going to send things electronically and save all those trees. This means that you should get things more quickly and will be kept abreast of what is going on. To achieve this we are deploying two systems:

Firstly, for all short messages, we are using a new texting service. This should keep you abreast of events, postponements, assessment needs, coursework and interruptions to the school.

Secondly, for longer pieces of information, such as reports and this Beverlonian, we are using e-mail.

Now this does presuppose that you have both a mobile phone and e-mail address. It also presupposes that we have your up-to-date numbers and addresses. So please make sure you send them in so that we can provide you with a better service. We will be up chasing people to get you all on line! If you do not have one or the other then let us know so that we can make alternative arrangements. We will be sending out forms to update our records – please get them back to us. **Thank you.**

I am sure you're as fed up with the snow as I am. I could do with a nice long period of balmy sunshine, a cool pool and a long drink.

As some of you might have read I did get a bit miffed with some of the comments flying about. My staff are extremely professional and went well beyond the call of professional duty to get in to school despite appalling conditions and because of that we were able to keep open for all but one afternoon. My only criterion for closing the school was the health and safety of students and staff. I did not want staff or students stranded in snow drifts or in dangerous situations on the roads. As it was there were staff and students who took up to five hours to get home and one member of staff had to abandon her car. Fortunately nobody was injured.

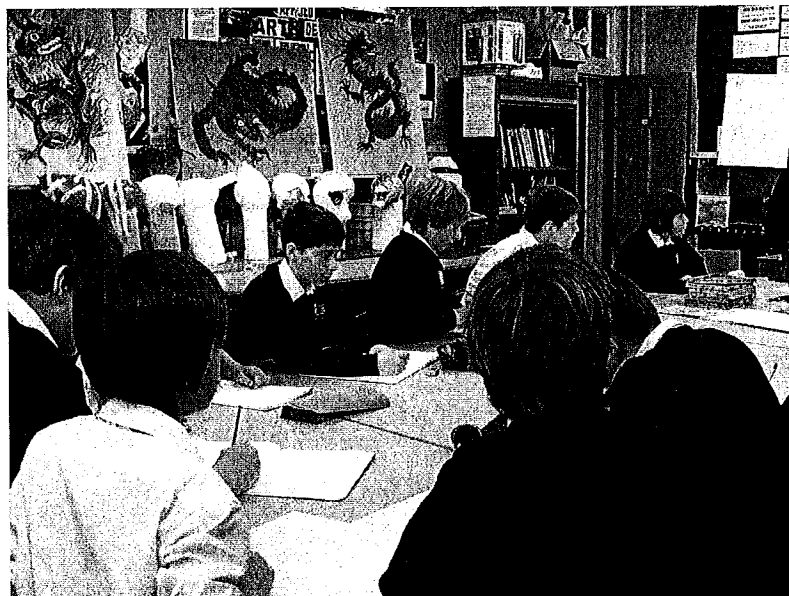
What compounded the situation was the poor meteorological forecasting with conflicting and changing views of what was coming.

I did take great exception to the comments that we were lazy and unprofessional and just looking to get time off, and was a little incandescent at the comments that highly qualified professionals such as teachers should be employed gritting pavements whilst 2 million workers who were unable to get in to other workplaces passed without comment.

I am quite happy to report to my nearest school if unable to get in but that does raise other issues. Firstly, there is the issue of safeguarding. I cannot see how we could ensure the necessary CRB checks to enable this to happen. Secondly, I know that with the complicated nature of the present day curriculum you cannot just walk into a classroom and teach a relevant lesson. To teach a modern-day lesson requires preparation and a knowledge of that particular syllabus. For someone to pick up classes, with half of the students missing, and do something meaningful out of their subject area would not be education as we know it.

I do accept the difficulty shutting the school down causes for parents who work and we do take that into careful consideration when making our decisions. Hence we struggled to stay open and succeeded most of the time.

Hopefully we have seen the last of the white stuff and our new texting service and website will make communication better.

CHINA WEEK

Once again the whole school has been focussing on China. Not only do we have our continuing Mandarin lessons but there has been the active involvement of all departments on producing things Chinese. The school is festooned with lanterns, dragons, Chinese writing, paintings, flags, posters and decoration. Subjects are producing projects on population, food, the economy, the history, language and culture. Students are busy blending maths and music, making lanterns, cooking food and learning the art of Chinese drawing and painting. The school has been a hive of activity.

The culmination of all this work was Friday afternoon when we entertained our local primaries with an afternoon of Chinese performance that was both educational and fun. Our students produced presentations in which they taught us all to count and speak some basic Chinese phrases, with facts about the economy, history and geography of China. They produced power-point presentations, performed music and Tai Chi, and watched enthralled as members of the local Chinese community performed traditional fan-dances with a spectacular ending consisting of the traditional dragon dance in full costume with drums and clashing symbals.

The event was filmed for Look North and our boys were wonderful. A big thank you to all the staff and students who produced such an excellent display. In particular to Mrs Doolan, Mrs Wedgwood, and Mrs Brown with the help of our local Chinese community. Thank you all. You were marvellous. Thank you to our primary schools for supporting the event.

YEAR 7 & Y8 DISCO

This was the first Disco for 4 years and fun was had by all. It was a great success.

Thanks must go to the 'Friends' who worked with Mrs Good, ably assisted by over 30 staff. So thank you Michelle and Christine for organising it all and thank you to the 30 staff, numerous parents, and students from the Student Voice who gave up their time to stand around in the cold and ensure it ran smoothly. To all those who designed posters and tickets, sold the drinks and confectionery, made tea and coffee, toured and directed traffic, drummed up support, cleared up afterwards and all the volunteers who kept order and made it safe. Thank you also to the police who helped with the traffic and popped in to ensure things ran smoothly.

There was a great crowd of 300 Y7 & Y8 who were grooving and bopping to the thumping bass of the excellent Disco. Sparkly disco gear mingled with multicoloured glo-sticks, laser beams and flashing lights as groups of students showed off their moves. There were conga lines and groups with their synchronised dance steps, pulsating sounds, cheering, prancing and generally having a great time.

It was great to see the boys and girls together and a really good party atmosphere. Well done everybody. I've just managed to thaw out – Here's to the next!!!

ECO WEEK

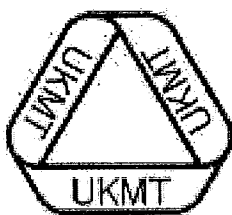


A date for your diary: On Thursday 1st July we are holding an Eco Fair as a culmination to our Eco week. The marquee is on order, local businesses have been contacted, and our students are already working towards the big day. Be sure to come along and support us in our efforts to improve our environment. More information to follow.

ECO SCHOOLS AMBASSADOR

We are currently working on an Eco-Ambassador scheme. The idea is that we all work together to reduce the school's carbon footprint. The Eco-Ambassador (one per form, yet to be appointed) would be responsible for turning off lights, recycling, closing windows etc. This is on our next meeting's agenda, so further developments will feature in the Summer edition of the Beverlonian.

MATHS UKMT



Once again our Senior Team entry made it through to the National Finals in London. It's

quite strange that I never bumped into them! To make it to the national finals is really outstanding. It is a most prestigious event with teams from the likes of Eton, Harrow and Westminster. Unfortunately we did not win but all our team members were a credit to the school and got a lot out of it. I am sure that it will stand them in good stead for the future.

NEW WEBSITE

We are trying to improve communication and part of that is our new web-site. It is up and running but not yet fully functional and complete. We want it to be the best and are looking to develop it over the course of the next year. With that in mind we would really appreciate your views on how it is looking and what we could do to make it better. Please take a few minutes to have a look and send in your positive suggestions for improvement. We will do our best to take them on board.

One major aspect of this site is that it allows better communication with parents. We are an open, caring school and we value your ideas and suggestions.

DRUGS IN BEVERLEY

We have been in communication with the Police and other Youth organisations in Beverley and are concerned that a number of things seem to be on the increase in our community involving a small minority of young people. Apart from underage drinking, which obviously has a big impact on behaviour and brain development of young people, we appear to have an increase in cannabis use and the new 'legal high' M-Cat. M-Cat has caused one student to collapse in a local school and is an unpredictable drug which could have many adverse reactions. Whether drinking, snorting M-Cat or smoking cannabis there is one thing we know and that is that it is not good for peoples' brains or learning. These things have no part to play in the healthy development of young people and the education process. Cannabis in particular causes adverse changes in behaviour and attitude that mess up young peoples' lives and rob them of future possibilities. They have no place in schools.

Please keep your eyes open and talk to your sons about these things. If you would like to know more then contact the school and find out some of the facts. It is obvious to us that alcohol and drugs are having a detrimental effect on a small minority of our boys.

I do not want to find myself dealing with a student's death, health problem or blighted opportunities. I also do not want to have to permanently exclude someone over a drug related incident, but it is a problem in Beverley at the moment.

STUDENT VOICE UPDATE

This year's Student Voice at Beverley Grammar are proof that democracy and people power really do work. What an enthusiastic, committed and organised group of people they are. Their meetings put Alan Sugar's boardroom on the Apprentice to shame! Even though they have only been in post since November, here is a summary of the exciting things they have been up to:

East Riding Youth Assembly- ERYA

We are very proud that two of our members are involved in the East Riding Youth Assembly: Elliott Pearson (our Deputy Chair) and Chevan Ilangaratne (aka Chevvers). Despite not being elected to the parliament, we are so pleased to have a connection with this fantastic assembly. As a result of this, Chevvers has helped to organise a 'Question Time' with our local MP Graham Stuart. We are hoping for this to take place on 26th March, so will update you all in the Summer edition of the Beverlonian

Our commitment to inclusion

Three of our committed SV reps attended the December Disability Awareness meeting. Elliott Pearson, Tom Dolman and Josh Cartmel gave up their time and stayed behind after school, to ensure a pupil's perspective was heard at this meeting. As a school, we are totally committed to inclusion and it was wonderful to hear the Student Voice echo this when the guys fed back in January. There is a lot for school to think about in terms of accessibility for disabled students, and we will continue to be involved in this very important scheme.

Linking in to this, we have spent time getting our heads around the

IDP- Inclusion Development Programme.

This is a 4 year programme ultimately aiming to remove barriers to achievement and increase awareness and understanding. This year's focus is on supporting pupils on the Autism Spectrum. Mrs Good, Mrs McKee and the new Learning Support Manager Mrs Brown have been working with the Student Voice to raise our awareness of this condition. They have also empowered us to work with our forms on the issues people face who are on the Autism Spectrum. See www.autism.org.uk for more information.

ECM- Every Child Matters

We have been working with our forms on this huge government initiative. Every Child Matters is a programme of change to improve outcomes for all children and young people. It takes forward the Government's vision of radical reform for children, young people and families. It has five outcomes which are that all young people have the right to:

1. Be healthy
2. Stay safe
3. Enjoy and Achieve
4. Make a positive contribution
5. Achieve economic well-being

Our SV reps have worked with their forms to improve their understanding of this initiative and to map how Beverley Grammar School helps us to achieve these aims.

Path

In the words of Tom Dolman, this is the 'Big Cheese' we are currently working on. Our aim is to raise enough money to build a path across the top field, allowing easy access from the Expressive Arts block to the Lincoln Way gate. Mr Goodwin has confirmed his support and we are currently liaising with our forms to find ways to raise the £3000 needed (ideas such as "wear what you like" days, and bands/music events have already been put forward).

Sport Relief

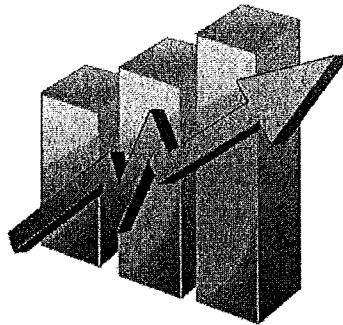
On the topic of fundraising, Mr Scott and Mrs Larvin-Smith are co-ordinating all the Sports Relief activities in conjunction with the Student Voice and Sports representatives. Watch this space for the fantastic fundraising ideas.

Community Cohesion

Respect is the basis of everything we do. In this day and age where there is such diversity of cultures, religions and views it is crucial that we not only all learn how to get

along together and value each other but also learn that we are all elements of the same community. Here at Beverley Grammar School we actively celebrate this diversity and greatly value the richness of view and experience that it brings. We promote tolerance and freedom of expression within the bounds of the rules of our society and laws of the land. We, as a school, explore values, beliefs and morals within the framework of our community. We believe in the democratic process and the rights and responsibilities of individuals. We seek to redress injustice and fight against intolerance and bigotry wherever it is fostered. There is no room for hatred and bullying within the community we strive to create. This is a community that is varied and harmonious and where all types can feel equally at home. Whatever race, religion, colour, creed, politics, sexuality, belief or hair colour you may have, as long as it does not espouse violence or repression, we are all equally free to express ourselves and live in harmony and with respect. Our students are all united in being Beverley Grammar School boys and rightly proud of their school. We are proud of our whole community and seek to be a positive force in making it better. We take pride in being part of the community of Beverley. We are proud of the long traditions, heritage and values of this school, our community and the country we are part of. We seek to take our place in it as valued respected citizens and play an active role in making it a better place to live for all of us.

ATTENDANCE IS OUTSTANDING!



Well done everyone!! We have a target of 95% and we have exceeded that! Our attendance is presently **95.4%** and leading the way is 11F, so well done to you lads.

Attendance and punctuality are key elements in getting a job. Employers always look at these things first. At Beverley Grammar School we are number 1 for attendance and our reputation goes far and wide. So thank you parents in helping us keep this as a prime target. I know how much work you do to keep it up at this level.

95.4% is exceptional. We are through the worst of the winter months with its flu, colds and general illness. What I would ask for is your support in not taking holidays during term time. The impact on your son's education is enormous. I would remind parents that the county policy is that absence in Y10 and Y11, the crucial exam years, cannot be authorised. Your son's future is too important.

Can I also remind parents and students that punctuality is also recorded and extremely important to employers. The vast majority of our boys have excellent punctuality and this really does show up that tiny minority who are habitually late. They are jeopardising their future employment opportunities. It will come back to bite them!

EXAMS AND MENTORING

As a school we are carefully tracking the progress of all our students in all their subjects. This enables us to identify the students who are coasting and not making the necessary progress. At BGS all our students are equally important and we want them all to succeed. To this end we identify students in Y10 and Y11 for one to one help via our Mentor Mrs Redmore. We want to work with

parents to get them back on course and securing their future.

We hope you and your sons have found this useful and would be grateful for any feedback you could get back to us. Obviously with limited finance we have to be selective with this service and target it on the greatest needs but we hope it is making the difference that is so important.

PEERING AT THE MENTORS

The peer mentoring scheme for Year 7 will start in September 2010. This is a new initiative to help new boys in Year 7 settle into school – a kind of Buddy system. We are also looking to provide support for those boys with barriers to learning.

Changing schools is a big thing and we are looking to make it easier. We want our new boys to settle in quickly and get off to a good start. We aim to make their first experience brilliant.

To start the process off we are producing a DVD to show each Y7 Form sometime in June. We are looking for 10 (present year 7 boys) to mentor our 2010 intake. We are looking for good listeners, communicators, friendly approachable boys (that sounds like everyone!).

We think that our Year 7 boys have a really good understanding of what it is like to start here as they've just been through it. They are ideal to help the new boys and we have some excellent Year 7 lads who could really make a difference. If you are one of those Year 7 boys who feel that you have the qualities necessary and could do the job then please give your name in to Mrs Redmore.

When we've got all the names in we will select our merry band of mentors through interview via the Student Voice.

HEALTH & SAFETY - THE DRIVE

The safety of our students is our paramount consideration.

We have taken numerous steps in risk assessing, health and safety inspections, fire procedures and surveys to ensure your son's safety. Every member of staff and helper is CRB checked unless they are on short-term visits, in which case they are accompanied. We have stringent rules on safeguarding, badges and procedures and we would ask you to assist us in this so that we can make the school safe.

One of our major concerns is safety on the school drive. We only have one access to the school and it has to be used by all 850 students as well as over 100 staff and all visitors. Mixing vehicles and pedestrians is far from ideal. Hence we have to have rules.

Please assist us in making our students safe:

- Do not come up the drive to drop them off
- Drop your sons off at a distance from the school to avoid the traffic outside the gates.
- If visiting the school do not arrive or leave when pedestrians are using the drive (8.40-9.00 am or 3.30-3.45 pm)
- The speed limit is a strict 10 MPH

Thank you for your help in this.

ACCESS TO SCHOOL POLICIES

As an open, caring, friendly school we are looking for ways of enabling better communication and access to information. Lots of things are coming to fruition. We have the Website, texting service, and Virtual Learning Environment. One thing we are doing is putting our policies up on the website for parents to access. We hope that promotes a better understanding of the things we are setting out to achieve and enables comment and interaction so we can improve them.

MUSIC

EARPHONES



Earphones are now an essential part of music lessons. Students cannot operate without them! All students must bring their own earphones to music lessons. Earphones can be purchased from the music department for as little as £1. More robust pairs are £2. It is important that students label them with their name and form and treat them with care. Students who do not bring earphones will be given a lunchtime detention and may well miss out on practical work in the lesson. Please remind your son to bring earphones on days when he has a music lesson.

Instrumental Lessons

There are a small number of vacancies available on brass and woodwind mainly. Contact Mrs. Turner in writing for more information.

NEWS FROM LAST TERM**Christmas Service in Beverley Minster**

Thank you very much to all those who played, sang, read, helped with or attended the advent service. It was a very enjoyable evening and the students all played and sang very well.

Busking

Thank you to Mr. Cranmer and the Brass Group who went busking in Beverley for nearly an hour on the last day of the autumn term. The snow was falling so heavily that the boys could not see their music so, after 50 minutes, they reluctantly had to retire to a café for hot chocolate! A cheque for over £130 has been sent to Shelter charity for the homeless. Thank you also to all those parents who came and supported them. It gave us all a very small taste of what it must be like to be out in the cold without a home.

NEWS FOR THIS TERM**Spring Concert – Tuesday 23rd March 7.15pm School Hall**

Featuring: Year 7 Choir, Orchestra, Brass Group, Wind ensemble, String Group, & Chamber Choir

Tickets on sale in the library from Monday 15th March.
£2.50 All adults £1.50 Children - including refreshments

THINGS FOR NEXT TERM

Songs of Praise

The BBC have invited our Chamber Choir to join the congregation for Songs of Praise in Beverley Minster. The rehearsal is Tuesday 4th May with recordings on Monday 10th and Tuesday 11th May. (7pm to 10pm each evening.) This is an exciting opportunity for the choir.

Chamber Concert Tuesday 6th July 7.15pm School Hall

Tickets available 2 weeks before from the library. £3.50 including supper

East Riding Youth Orchestra and Schools' Choir

Saturday 17th July in City Hall Hull. 7.30pm. Tickets available from Hull City Hall Box Office nearer the time. Chamber Choir will be singing in this concert a part of a large choir made up of students from several schools in the East Riding of Yorkshire.

BGS Entertainers

A small group of students have prepared a performance of short musical items lasting about 40 minutes. They are ready to go into the local community to entertain. If you know of any group who may like to book them then please let Mrs. Turner know. Residential homes for the elderly are the sort of venues we had in mind.

SPORT**Football**

Matches are now underway after half term and all the teams continue to do well with the cup matches being played in the last few weeks.

Well done to Louis Bruce who has been selected to represent Humberside.

Cross Country

We continue to shine at cross country. It must be all that practice out on our wonderful Westwood; an inspiration to our boys. It means that a number of our boys have represented the East Riding Schools Team.

- Year 7 Tom Bolton, Joe Wardill
- Year 8 Alex Borthwick, David Mason.
- Year 11 Jordan Mounsey
- Year 12 James Gilbert

Jordan and James have achieved selection for the Humberside Schools team to run in the English Schools Championships.

Y9 Rugby Tournament win

The Y9 tournament was keenly fought between five strong local teams: Longcroft, Hornsea, Driffield, Bridlington and BGS. It was always going to be tough.

The first match was against Hornsea and proved the easiest of the 3. We scored 4 tries with 2 from James Edmonds and contributions from Matty Liggins and Josh Cook. Hornsea came up with some big hits but failed to penetrate the monstrous defence from the whole team.

The Beverley Derby was the most awaited match of the tournament. It was a close-run thing with great defence from both sides and Matty Liggins, Elliott Becker and Leonardo Nellen wading in with big hits. Captain Josh Cook urged them to keep fighting and that's what they did. Minutes from the end a gap opened up and Josh Cook skipped through to score the winning try against his former team leaving Longcroft in despair.

The team headed into their game against Driffield in high spirits having just defeated Longcroft—the match favourites. Leo Nellen scored the first try to put us in front. It was all a question of keeping level heads and making sure the defence was firm. Then James Edmonds dummied the defence to run half the pitch for a second try and the game was virtually over. Josh Cook touched down for a third and Grammar came out worthy winners with 3 tries to nil.

The game against Bridlington started with a bang as Leo Nellen returned the kick off with a run the whole length of the pitch to stun them with an opening try. This was soon added to when Brad Ryan sped down the wing for a second. We were unstoppable—2 tries up in the first few minutes. Josh Cook and Matthew Liggins ran in two more and the defence stood firm absorbing everything flung at them. Another 4 try win!

This meant the Grammar School were tournament winners, unbeaten in 4 matches and without a single try scored against them—truly worthy winners!

(Match report—Matthew Liggins and Josh Cook)

PARENT EVENING REVIEWS

Thank you for all your returns in our parent evening surveys. It is heartening to find that the vast majority of you find the care and education we give your sons to be of an excellent standard. Thank you for your comments, all of which are noted and considered. The one thing that kept coming up was to address the format of parents' evening. We are aware of the immense problems with queuing and arranging appointments. It is really infuriating for you and it is equally frustrating for us. Unfortunately it is not an easy one to address. We have

looked at what other schools are doing and there does not seem to be a better model out there.

The problem is that some teachers have two classes in the year which means that they have to try to fit in 60 parents. We run the evening over two hours (between 5.00 pm and 7.00 pm). The first half runs very smoothly when fewer parents are in. The second half gets much more crowded and some parents leave it very late to arrive—some did not arrive until 6.45 p.m. when the end was at 7.00 p.m. Interviews are supposed

to last for no longer than 5 minutes but sometimes there is lots to say and they run over. This means things get out of sync with timings. Some students double book which adds to the problem.

Many of my staff do not have time to get home and back. They start the day at 8.00 am and work through. It makes for a long and tiring day and I want them fresh in the classroom the next day to teach your sons and daughters. On both of the previous evenings I had teachers in until nearly 8.00 pm. Three hours for a parents' evening on top of a hard day teaching is too long.

We are reviewing things and I have asked staff and parents for improvements to the present system. We have had some suggestions, if you have more please mail them in.

Presently we are considering:
Closing the school for the afternoon and holding it from 2.00 – 5.00.

Limiting interviews to 3 or 4 minutes

Staff only seeing students who have issues that need addressing with parents

Limiting parents to a maximum of 5 or 6 subjects.

(Unfortunately we cannot run each event over two evenings due to the teachers workload and the new laws that affect this. The law states no more than one meeting a week. Staff with responsibilities may well already be doing 2 or 3 meetings a week as it is and there are 9 year group meetings a year – it soon adds up!)



Over many years we have had an active Friends PTA organisation who have done sterling work raising funds and supporting the school. Regrettably in recent times it has proved harder and harder to drum up support. The pressures on teachers and parents have increased and events have dwindled. The upshot of this is that the Friends have decided to call it a day.

Their last event was the highly successful Lower School Disco. The Friends will now go through the business of allocating its funds and tying up the loose ends. We may look at a possible re-launch in the next academic year!

Can I take this opportunity to thank all the Friends, past and present, for all their tremendous work over the years. It has been greatly appreciated by staff and students and we have many fond memories of past events. Can I add a special thank you to Michelle and Christine who have really struggled to hold things together against all the odds. Thank you everyone! Let us hope that the new academic year will see a successful relaunch!

PARENT SURVEYS

We have commissioned a parent survey to assist us in developing the school further. I know they can be a pain to fill in but they are extremely important to us in assessing how effective our policies are and looking for ways to improve.

We are an Outstanding School and we aim to get even better. One element in that is to listen to what you have to say. What are we doing well? What can we do to improve? Please help us in this by filling out the survey. **Thank you.**

NEW BUILDING

Every year we receive a small sum of money from the government towards new building work. The governors put their 10% in and we are able to address some of the schools needs; though I have to tell you that it is never enough. With the school numbers growing we have ever increasing needs. So if there are any multibillionaires out there with a few million spare we have a good use for it!

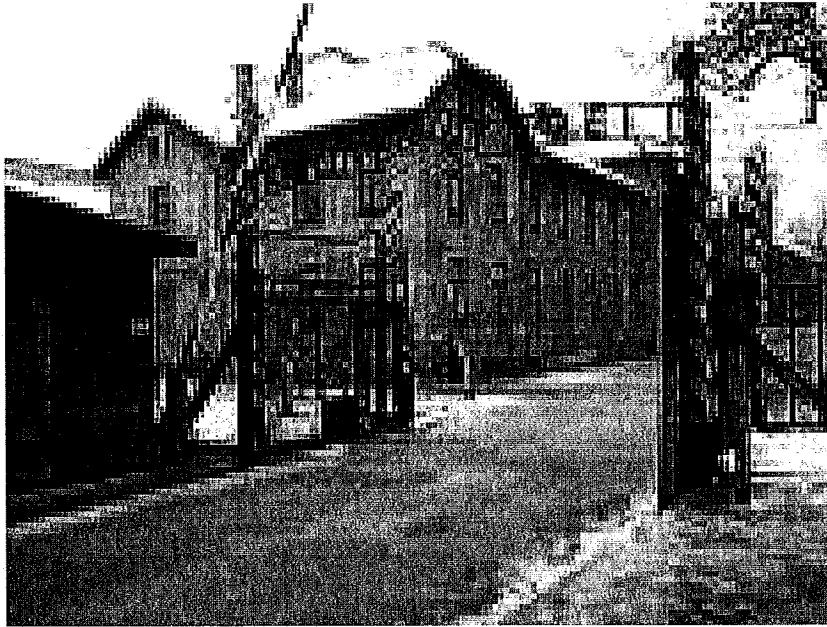
This year we are hoping to improve the toilets, PE and changing facilities. They are disgraceful and have needed addressing for decades. Hopefully, this summer, we may be able to do something towards that.

PUBLIC SPEAKING COMPETITION



On 9th March, Mrs Wedgwood took two students, Nicholas Try (year 12) and Gerald Pickford (Year 13), to compete in the annual Beverley Rotary Club Speaking Competition. Nicholas spoke about the heroism of Paul Rusesabagina, who was featured in the film 'Hotel Rwanda' and Gerald spoke about Beverley Minster being 'good value for money'. Both boys produced speeches of high quality and we were delighted that Gerald took first place in the competition, making this the fourth consecutive year in which we have been placed either first or second.

**LESSONS FROM AUSCHWITZ BY LAURA DEMIRKAZIK
& JOSH WALMSLEY, YEAR 13**



If you were to walk along the streets of Beverley, it would be difficult to find someone who has never heard of Auschwitz, whether it is seen as a historical museum, a dedicated memorial, or even a simple tourist destination (as hard as that is to believe). It is true that people have planned celebratory hen and stag weekends which involve trips on the 'fun bus' to one of the most recognisable death camps known to the world. Fortunately, this is contrary to the popular conception of the meaning of Auschwitz and many people recognise it as the site of a horrific passage in history

which, despite dealing with the most difficult of issues, must not be forgotten. But what really is Auschwitz? Why is it relevant to people living in the world today? And perhaps more importantly, what does it mean for students at Beverley Grammar School?

In the April of this year, we began our journey in trying to understand and remember the universal importance of the holocaust, and particularly those who suffered at Auschwitz. Our journey was completed in four vital steps, the first two being preparation seminars in Leeds with our peers and the organisers of the Lessons from Auschwitz project. In these we received advice on how to deal emotionally with what we were to experience. We were also lucky enough to hear a memorable recollection from two holocaust survivors. Both of these incredible people lost their entire families and endured circumstances that are impossible for us to even comprehend. Their accounts will certainly remain with us for the rest of our lives and they served to realise the fact that those inflicted upon by the Nazi regime were everyday individuals like you and I.

In the early hours of the 29th April we began our journey to the airport and arrived in Krakow, Poland by around midday. The group of around 200 students was split up into small groups, each with its own guide. Before visiting the camp itself, we stopped first at a Jewish cemetery and its neglect was obvious; plants were overgrown and a key had to be requested to unlock the entrance which was chained up due to previous vandalism carried out by 'Neo-Nazi radicals'. This was perhaps the first instance in which we saw the reality and horror of the holocaust in that people's memorials, which are always thought by us in Britain to be public sites of commemoration and reflection, were locked away from the general public because of some people's disgusting lack of respect and perhaps education. A number of monuments had been built using pieces of broken headstones, and we were told of how the Nazis had used the stone of people's graves for paving the streets. The neglect of the area was both shocking and upsetting and reinforced the importance of remembering and respecting the Holocaust and the millions who lost their lives.

We then arrived at Auschwitz itself. We discussed how most of us had imagined hut-like structures, but we were instead surrounded by modern brick buildings which gave the impression of a museum rather than a concentration camp in which three million lost their lives. The tour began with boards filled with pictures, maps and figures, similar to those we see in history text books. We then entered a long corridor and behind

the glass were masses of human hair, discoloured and parched. This was a highly emotional stage in our journey and before our eyes we could see the absolute human loss and we began to see the importance of remembering the fallen as people like you and I, rather than just a statistical figure in a death toll. We were lead around numerous rooms, containing suitcases with names painted on, shoes and other personal items, each humanising those who were murdered and giving a level of empathy impossible to reach by reading a text book.

We then travelled the short distance to Birkenau which was the horrifying and most recognisable face of the evil of Auschwitz. Its wooden huts stood tall in an arid and desolate landscape, and as the image of the train tracks leading through the notorious entrance emerged as a silhouette in the distance, we knew we were really there. As we went inside the buildings we saw the horrendous conditions that those imprisoned endured, and we could physically see why many of the incarcerated, died within weeks of their arrival. We were then lead into one of the few existing gas chambers. The fingernail marks of those who had desperately tried to escape their inhumane torture were scratched into the concrete walls, and the reality that we were stood where so many were gassed to death was almost too sickening to imagine. When Germany lost the war, the Nazis had frantically tried to destroy the evidence of the millions they had murdered and we witnessed the rubble where gas chambers and crematoriums had been destroyed which was a shameful image to say the least.

The journey ended with an inspirational and motivating speech by Rabbi Barry Marcus. He described to us the importance of young people remembering those who lost their lives in the Holocaust and to honour their deaths by ensuring that our generation never repeat what happened. We were each given a candle which we placed along the railway, a gesture that seemed so insignificant compared to the horrific deaths those imprisoned endured. However, it is these little, seemingly insignificant gestures, which set the foundation for a great deal of hope. The holocaust is one of the most terrible examples of bullying in history and we at Beverley Grammar School can help to prevent such atrocities by working to stamp out the little problems in our own environment.

The experience of the Lessons from Auschwitz project is one that will remain with us forever. It humanised those who lost their lives and made genocide a reality, and we urge you to not look at the Holocaust as simply an event of the past, or just another part of the history curriculum, but as the horrific murder of 11 000 000 innocent people like you and I. It is our generation that can ensure that historical atrocities like the holocaust do not serve to re-visit us through our respect of each other and awareness of the absolute negativity of discrimination.

D A T E S
F O R
Y O U R
D I A R Y

Last day of Spring term	-	Friday 26th March 2010
First day of Summer Term for students	-	Tuesday 13th April 2010
May Day	-	Monday 3rd May 2010
Half Term	-	Monday 31st May to Friday 4th June 2010
Last day of Summer Term	-	Friday 23rd July 2010