



PARISH COUNCIL REPORT

MARCH 2017

Students and staff were rewarded for their hard work and commitment with another great set of GCSE results last summer. Of the 148 pupils at Claydon High School, 70% of students achieved A*-C in both English and Maths. Students in Chemistry, Physics and Further Maths recorded a fantastic 100% A*-C success rate with top results in other subjects including: Biology 97%, English Language 85%, Spanish 85%, Business Studies 82%, Drama 81%, R.E. 80%, P.E. 80%, Media Studies 77% and Maths 75%. We are determined that our students are given every opportunity to be the best that they can be and they certainly excelled themselves. Students should all be very proud of what they have achieved, in terms of both academic success and the contribution they have made to school life over the past five years.

Once again, I am delighted to be able to offer opportunities for trips abroad and this year we have had three excursions. A group of Year 10 and 11 Spanish and Art students travelled to Barcelona in mid-October for four days; In December, students from across all year groups travelled to France, visiting the Christmas market in Lille; and during the February half-term holiday, a group of students travelled to Austria for our bi-annual ski trip. These trips give students an invaluable chance to broaden their knowledge of the world, practise their language skills and absorb the diversity, culture and architecture of these fantastic cities and towns.

We regularly invite authors, poets and speakers to the school to give presentations and hold workshops for different year groups. These visits prove to be extremely rewarding for all involved and are a great way to inspire and enthuse students about reading and writing. So far this year we have welcomed poet Luke Wright, author Cathy Cassidy, TV presenter and Journalist Bill Turnbull and local Lawyer and advocate to the Supreme Court, Mr Skippen.

Our annual WOW Week took place at the end of October. This involved three days of specially designed activities for each year group. Year 7 camped at Mersea Outdoor Centre, taking part in various team-building activities such as orienteering and rocket building. Years 8-10 participated in a Media based enterprise challenge, focused on creating an entrepreneurial spirit, developing leadership skills and accelerating employability skills. Year 11 students spent a day at a college, sixth form or university of their choice and worked with the YMCA on activities in school, finishing the week with a trip to Trinity Park for the Suffolk Skills Show.

Following on from WOW week, in December, Year 11 students took part in a 'Learning about Work Day'. Employers from local businesses came into school to act as business mentors and to work with small groups of students for the day, looking at CV and application form writing, conducting mock interviews and teaching them about employer expectations when applying for jobs. With only a few weeks to go, Year 11 continue to prepare for their exams and last half-term 140 students travelled to the Outdoor Centre in East Mersea, Essex to take part in an intense GCSE Bootcamp. This overnight event was a chance for Year 11 students to get together to learn vital revision strategies to take away with them as well as taking part in structured Maths and English revision within a classroom setting and enjoying some outdoor challenges.

We have had a very musical year so far with families, friends, governors, teachers and students enjoying a fantastic Christmas concert, featuring over 20 separate performances, involving more than 70 students across all year groups. There were string, brass, guitar, ukulele and woodwind

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ensembles as well as solo instrumental performances, choral pieces, rock band numbers and the inimitable staff choir! On 7th February a group of students were joined by local singer songwriter, Connor Ryan Adams and a team from I.E.M. (Industry Education in Music) to take part in a 'Battle of the Bands' music workshop and concert. Students from across all year groups split into groups to form nine separate 'bands' and spent the day composing original pop music from scratch. On 7th March, a talented group of 36 students performed in the Celebration of Schools' Music concert, held at the world famous concert hall at Snape Maltings. Finally, Year 10 GCSE students gave a Music Recital to friends and family in preparation for their exam. All our students have worked fantastically hard to give amazing performances. As I write this, auditions are imminent for our forthcoming 'Claydon Spotlights' show in July, featuring music, singing, drama and dance.

On 16th March, our school reporters from Years 7-10 were joined by guest visitors from NCS (National Citizens Service), Future Female Society, Volunteering Matters and The Teapot Project for the annual BBC School Report Day. This year took on the theme of Mental Health and Wellbeing with our own focus on 'making a difference in your local community'. Four lucky students joined Mark Murphy to co-host and produce BBC Radio Suffolk's breakfast show. Not only did they record a pre prepared interview with Stephen Skeet of Volunteering Matters, they read the weather, interviewed Dr Daniel Poulter MP live on air and then contributed to a live phone-in discussion with only a few minutes notice.

The PE department has had a successful year with some great sporting achievements in cross-country, table tennis and athletics. Year 11 GCSE students had the opportunity to demonstrate leadership skills when they ran a successful Year 6 Sports Morning for over 120 students from our feeder primary schools. A range of activities were on offer, including table tennis, badminton and fitness and rowing challenges. We have just held our annual Fun Run and look forward to Sports Day and our 'Sports Personality of the Year' awards evening in July.

In other areas of the school - Year 11 Business Studies students visited Colchester Zoo. GCSE Geography students travelled to Felixstowe to investigate the role of hard engineering in protecting our coastline. Art and Textile students visited The Knitting and Stitching show at Alexandra Palace in London. Year 10 and 11 GCSE Art students visited the Tate Modern in London. Year 8 and 10 students visited the renowned Design Museum in Kensington, London. A Maths team took part in the regional finals of the UK Team Maths Challenge at Framlingham College and our Science department held a week long timetable of activities and events to commemorate British Science Week.

We look forward to welcoming Year 6 students to the school in the summer term to take part in transition events designed to prepare them for when they start with us in September. Should you know of anyone moving into our catchment area please do let them know that we have a few places remaining.

We also have some lovely celebratory events planned, including a praise assembly and community tea party.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank students, staff, governors and the PTA for their continued hard work and to parents/carers for their ongoing support. If anyone would like a tour of the school, please feel free to book into one of our monthly Open Mornings – I would be delighted to meet you.

Sarah Skinner
Headteacher