

Bredon News



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Spring Term 2010

A term of achievement Principally Speaking by David Keyte

Looking back over the Spring Term, I am very pleased to be able to say that it has been a term filled with achievements in many different areas of School life.

Foremost among the successes we have celebrated are the six Gold Duke of Edinburgh's Awards gained by last year's leavers. Four of the six were at St James's Palace this term to receive their awards from Prince Philip. Achieving gold is no mean feat: it requires sustained effort across the five areas of Community, Physical Activity, Skill, an Expedition and a Residential element. Dedication is required not only from the young people taking part, but also from the staff who support them. Of course, this was a vintage year for us – Bredon's highest-ever number of gold winners – and there is no guarantee that we will be able to repeat such numbers every year. Nevertheless, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award remains a key programme for Bredon School, helping to get our students out and about and broaden their experience of life.

We have enjoyed sporting success, including Matthew Hodson's and James Dunn's victory in the final of the U16 badminton doubles at the Independent Schools Association's national championships. I have been pleased to see the resurgence of

competitive netball at Bredon School after a ten-year absence. Thanks are due to teaching assistant Miss Rachel Sullivan for her work with the netball players and also with the dance group, which she took to the Gloucestershire Dance Festival.

All the Juniors who took up the challenge of walking the 15 Malvern peaks also deserve congratulations, both for their endurance in completing the walk and for helping to raise money for children in Zimbabwe who are less fortunate than themselves.

Our Vice Principal, Mrs Webb, has raised Bredon School's profile on the international stage with her participation in the World Dyslexia Forum hosted by UNESCO in Paris.

Pupils who have achieved great things away from the School also deserve recognition and praise. I am thinking particularly of Lewis McManus, whose rugby career is really beginning to flourish with his appearances for the Scottish Exiles.

As we now look forward towards the Summer Term and a busy schedule of public examinations for our older students, it is good first to take a moment to reflect on all that we have achieved!



Spanish connection

The parents of eight-year-old twins Violeta and Alvaro Marco Verdu from Spain were so taken with Colegios Laude's new link with Bredon School that they decided to move the whole family to England for six months. The twins are pupils at Bredon's sister school, Laude Newton College in Alicante.

Alvaro and Violeta are living in Cheltenham and enjoying life as day pupils this term. Asked about their favourite things at Bredon, Alvaro said: "I like the animals and the forest school." The family return to Alicante in July.

Three children from Colegios Laude schools are at Bredon for the whole academic year: Irene Rodriguez Hevia and Carlota Fernandez Viejo (both at Palacio de Granda School) and Cristina San Juan Yague (International School of Aravaca).

A welcome Exile!

A 16-year-old Bredon pupil has been chosen to play rugby for the Scottish Exiles – a national team for players of Scottish heritage. Lewis McManus, who plays lock, has played in two U18 games against Caledonia and Glasgow, winning them both and scoring a try in each.

Lewis is hoping to win a place at Hartpury College in its Rugby Academy and then to turn professional in the sport. Later in his career, he would like to work with children with learning difficulties. "Bredon School is great because it has given me a lot of support in terms of providing transport for training and matches at Hucclecote Rugby Club. I've also benefited from the support I get for dyslexia," said Lewis.

- Lewis is pictured wearing one of the new Bredon School rugby shirts. The School has secured shirt sponsorship from ID Sports & Leisure (idsports.net & idleisure.com) – a custom clothing and sporting supplies company – which has provided 55 shirts.



Staff profile: Mr Jon Clarke, IT Manager

Jon Clarke has been at the School for just over two years and looks after all the IT. This includes purchasing both hardware and software, maintaining existing equipment and running the School's network.

He left school in Droitwich immediately after his GCSEs and went straight into computing. He worked as a Senior Network Engineer at Evesham Technology for several years, where his achievements included gaining accreditation from Becta, the Government agency promoting the use of information and communications technology. While at Evesham Technology he also helped to install the computer network at Bredon School. When he was offered a permanent job at Bredon School he felt it was the right move at the right time.

"I had become increasingly interested in computer networks in education settings. At Evesham I had seen both good and bad examples. I knew that at Bredon we had made a good start and that David Keyte was committed in investing in IT."

"I'm on a bit of a mission quietly!" said Mr Clarke. "I want to develop the IT here to make Bredon School a centre of

technological excellence, which other schools will use as a model."

Since his arrival at Bredon, Mr Clarke has taken on responsibility for training teachers and pupils in the use of hardware and software, building up the School network and making sure it meets national guidelines. Most of the file-servers have been replaced with new equipment and improved camera equipment for site security has also been installed. The current IT project at the School is 'refreshing' the Access Centre's technology.

- Mr Clarke is married to Claire and has two daughters, Hannah and Alice. His main interest outside family and work is music. "Phil McKerr is helping me to learn guitar. We jam together. I like rock but he is gradually moving me into the blues!"



Salsa Night – it's hot!

A Salsa Night was among the highlights of a busy term for Bredon School's Parents' Association. The association organised the Salsa Night in Pull Court for students from Years 11-13 and a disco for younger pupils in the Sports Hall. BSPA Co-Chair Kate Gower said: "We

brought in a salsa teacher, Wesley Prince, who in just a couple of hours was fantastic at getting everybody moving. It was so popular that he's coming back to teach six lessons in the Summer Term."

Two weeks later parents and teachers let their hair down at the BSPA Race Night. "It was a huge laugh and we raised almost £700," said Mrs Gower.

Forthcoming BSPA activities include running a Pimm's Tent at Bredon's May Day Fete on Monday 3rd May. The association is again organising a Leavers' Ball, which this year will be on the theme of James Bond. It is likely to take place around the end of June at Tewkesbury's Hilton Puckrup Hall.

Views from the Inside

Matthew Hodson is 16-years-old and in Year 11. He came to Bredon in Year 5 and was formerly a pupil at Eversfield School in Solihull.

"I'm a weekly boarder at Bredon. I came here because of the specialist support which I really needed back then. My family live in Cobham, Surrey, so I catch the train home at weekends. I've been doing that for about a year and I enjoy the sense of independence.

My main hobby is racket sports. I got through to last year's county U16 badminton singles' final. This year in the Regional Finals I came fifth. My parents have got a home in South Carolina and I play tennis there at the Stan Smith Academy. I'll be taking part in county trials this summer. Miss Abbott has been very supportive both with my studies and my sport – finding out information about competitions and trials.

I've not decided what to do next year; whether to stay at Bredon or go on to Hartpury College or Brooklands. I'd like to take the OCR National Diploma in Sport and go on to Uni to study Sports Management."

- See p4 for Matthew's latest badminton triumph!



Twelve-year-old **Millie Hems** joined Bredon School in September 2009 as a day pupil. She travels in daily from her home in Solihull, a trip of about 45 minutes.

"We looked at four different schools. I chose Bredon because my friend Polly was coming here, I liked the farm and people were very friendly. I came here for a taster day and knew that this was the School for me; and of course there's extra support for dyslexia.

My favourite subjects are English, Art and Chemistry. I like Miss Somerton because she lets us do some really interesting and fun experiments. I enjoyed designing and making a corset and skirt out of brown paper for the Catwalk Show.

I like doing PE and hockey; I don't do them seriously – I'm not in the School team or anything like that – but I like playing them just for fun.

I like being here; I've made friends easily, the teachers are very supportive and the food's good. My favourite is fish'n'chips on Fridays. I've got two younger sisters, they might come here too, but I don't know yet."



At the palace! Bredon School's gold Duke of Edinburgh's Award winners Tom Howells, Will Bowen, Dan Hughes and Matt Griffin visited St James's Palace to be presented with their awards by Prince Philip himself. They were accompanied by teacher Mike Tweddell. Two other Bredon gold award winners, Oliver Leventhal and James Pine, are likely to receive their awards at a presentation in July.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Bredon School at the forefront

Bredon Vice Principal Sue Webb travelled to the World Dyslexia Forum 2010 in Paris, held at UNESCO. The conference was attended by delegates from all over the world, with many eminent specialists presenting the latest research into dyslexia. Mrs Webb's involvement dates from last summer, when she was asked to report on aspects of Bredon School's dyslexic teaching.

Can you help Help for Heroes?

Kelly Davies, of Year 10, is raising funds for Help for Heroes, the charity for injured Services men and women. She is appealing for the donation of items for a charity auction in the evening of 8th June, to be held at Pull Court.

Catwalk show

Twelve-year-old Alice Stevens is shown here with the corset she designed and created for this year's Catwalk Show. Fifty pupils from the Juniors to the Sixth Form took part.



Up hill and down dale for charity

Bredon's juniors raised more than £600 for a school in Zimbabwe in one of their biggest-ever charity fund-raisers.

The 28 children aged from 7-11 set off from the Tank Quarry car park at the northern end of The Malverns, then walked up and down 15 peaks to Hollybush car park in the south. Led by teacher Mike Tweddell, the pupils were accompanied by Head of Juniors Jane Merchant, five other teachers, 25 parents and friends – and four dogs!

The money raised will go to the Ntunungwe School, near Bulawayo. "Our teacher,

Mrs Merchant, told us about the school which has to be rebuilt because there is a huge white ants nest underneath it," said eight-year-old Lauren Hayward. "The ants are poisonous, so until people have

got the money to build it again all the children must have lessons outside."

"The walk was really hard, and it was quite cold," said 10-year-old Edward Clews, "but it was worth it, because you see the pictures of the children in Zimbabwe and you know you're doing it to help them."

All the pupils who took part completed the walk and each one received a commemorative medal [pictured]. The children also donated £50 that they had raised through the tuck shop. "We had a vote," said Edward. "A couple of the juniors wanted to buy some more K'nex [a construction toy] but most of us decided to send the money to the school."

Mrs Merchant first came across the school when she was visiting a friend living near Bulawayo 10 years ago. "I was



both shocked and humbled by what the teachers and children achieved at the school with so little. There are about 250 children at the school and half have lost their parents to AIDS or civil unrest."



Getting a head start with driving skills

Bredon pupil Max Willson appeared on national television this term, extolling the virtues of the Young Driver scheme. Twelve-year-old Max, whose father Quentin is a well-known motoring correspondent, appeared on the BBC Breakfast Show.

"It was great fun being on the news and then coming in to School and finding that everyone was talking about it," said Max. "The trip to the BBC in London was a fantastic experience too."

The Young Driver project points out that statistics show it is lack of driving experience, not age, that causes so many newly qualified drivers to have accidents.

Young Driver therefore offers children aged 11 and over the opportunity to drive in a dual-control car. Younger children learn very quickly and can pick up the mechanics of how the car works at an earlier age, which will make them safer drivers when they pass their test, according to the Young Driver organisation.

Bredon's national badminton champions!

Matthew Hodson and James Dunn triumphed in the national Independent Schools Association's U16 badminton doubles competition.

PE teacher Conryn Abbott reported that the two took their first game 21-18 and then triumphed 21-19 in a very close final to win the tournament. "Both players cleared well from the back of the court, covered the net and worked well as a team. A fantastic achievement!"

The singles were equally exciting. Matthew won all of his games to reach the semi-final, which he won to go through to the final.

In a gruelling final during which some of the rallies were 27 strokes long, Matt narrowly lost the first game 21-19 and the second 25-23.

