



16 September 2016

The Link

Charles Darwin School

Aspire—Endeavour—Achieve

HEADLINES

Presentation Evening

Last night's Presentation Evening was superb.

It was a wonderful occasion at which we celebrated the achievements of our examination students who did so well this summer and those who are progressing well in their schooling. We were also able to say our fond farewells to those students who will shortly be going off to university as well as those who have already secured employment.

The guest speaker, Will Curtis, Managing Director of Biggin Hill Airport, gave some valuable advice from his own experiences of schooling and his journey to becoming a pilot.

Will's talk was particularly inspiring; I know that many students will take on board what he said very seriously. My thanks to Will and also to Dolores Bray-Ash, MBE, who hosted the event and to all families, Governors and special guests who joined in our celebrations.

My congratulations to all our students for their outstanding success and my best wishes for the future

Sunil Chotai

Support the Friends 50/50 Club

Please consider joining the Friends' 50/50 club—see the application form sent out with this edition of the Link. The more people who join the larger the prize, so it really is the more the merrier.

Sports Awards

Thursday, 6 October 2016

7:00pm to 9:00pm

Refreshments will be served in the canteen before the Awards from 6:30pm.

Tickets £4.10 each are now available on ParentPay. Please note students are allowed a maximum of four guests per family at this ceremony.

Sixth Form African Adventure to Zanzibar



For 12 days from 21 July to 1 August Miss Miller, Miss Curwood and Mr Simpson led a group of our Sixth Form students on a trip of a lifetime to Zanzibar in Tanzania. Read about it here, in their own words or look at their blog at www.cdsinzanzibar.wordpress.com.

From start to finish, this trip has been the most rewarding experience and has allowed me to witness more of the world than I'd ever have imagined. Stepping onto the plane at Heathrow, I struggled to convey just how nervous yet excited I was for the journey ahead - I'd be lying if I said I found the first day incredible as battling travel sickness with tiredness is definitely not easy, however I feel as though I managed to adapt to the new culture after the "eventful" ferry crossing.

Teaching a class of 109 after 15 minutes of preparation and only a chalk board to help immediately brought to my attention how difficult education was for these children - the teachers were not practical or exciting and the children were uncomfortable having not moved for several hours whilst sitting, cramped, on the floor. Being able to change this, if only for a week, was the most incredible sensation. Allowing the children to be active and involved in the lessons along with helping them to remember important information through the use of songs and repetition enabled them to further their education in a new way.

I can't quite put into words the feeling I got when I stood in front of a massive class and heard them repeating back what I was saying - although I guess you could say I somehow managed to put it into words with "OH MY GOD THIS IS THE MOST INCREDIBLE DAY EVER I'M BUZZING" which, according to Mr Simpson, I said a lot.

This trip has been genuinely life-changing in a number of ways - I've cemented friendships that I hope will be life-long, and created new ones, helped to improve the education of children in an under-developed area, learnt to adapt to a new culture which is VERY different to my own and also I've come to realise that teaching may be a potential future career for me.



I would recommend this trip to anyone because it has given me a new outlook on how I need to live my life, shown me that I can be confident, allowed me to be myself around people and given me an insight into my future - I can't thank the people who came on this trip enough - Miss Miller, Miss Curwood and Mr Simpson, the African Adventures team and then most importantly the 14 other people who came on the trip. I can honestly say that without each and every single one of them, I would not have had the same experience.

Morgan Rodway-Wing

Well where do I start? Coming to Zanzibar would prove a new challenge for me, one that I was excited about. As soon as I arrived I could tell that, culturally, things would be different. From the dusty paths to the never quiet roads, it was certainly different from England.

Going to the beach on the first weekend and exploring the spice farm and stone town, helped me to get to grips with what Zanzibar is like, it was amazing. I couldn't describe to you how excited I was for the week ahead at the school.

There, we were treated like celebrities, all the kids so full of enthusiasm and willing to learn. Teaching those children has to be one of the best things I have ever done in my life, seeing their happy faces brought out the real me, allowing me to express myself, letting loose and most importantly having fun.

Everyone was so welcoming to us and I can honestly say it has changed me as a person for the better, I had never done something like this in my life before and hand on heart would easily do it again.

To spend this journey with such amazing people has made the trip even better, many memories have been made and will be treasured forever.

Even though I am still young, this will be one of the best experiences of my life and one I will never forget, I have loved every moment and honestly do not want it to end.

Alfie Leighton

These past ten days we have been on a journey like none of us have ever experienced before, better than we all imagined and what a team of staff and students to share it with! Our pupils made me so proud every day and reminded me how lucky I am to teach at Charles Darwin School. I am so grateful for the opportunity to have accompanied you all on the trip. Our students successfully faced everything thrown at them head on and were phenomenal from minute one. They have embraced the different culture, adapted to their new surroundings and shone every step of the way. There have been moments this week I have watched our students teaching in awe. The joy and happiness they brought to their lessons, along with the singing, dancing and unique learning experience some of the pupils have never had before was magical. I have witnessed our students step out of their comfort zone and exit a classroom with a beaming smile on their faces. They have grown together and gained a confidence I hope will stay with them for their promising futures.

I am certain we have all learnt to appreciate what we have back home, but also that it isn't material things that matter because words and actions are much more powerful and influential long term. Nothing in life should be taken for granted.

Remember to take every opportunity and aim high with everything you do. Thank you Team Zanzibar 2016...
La La Salama Africa!

Miss Curwood

Dear Team Zanzibar,

As I am certain you can imagine, particularly after this week, a teaching career is jam-packed with highs and lows. Leading a trip of this scale is not a decision to be taken lightly and demands a huge amount of time and commitment pre-departure and even more whilst away. It was made much easier by Mrs Kearney's constant support and she should be thanked whole-heartedly.

I knew I was blessed with a good group from quite early on in the planning- our walk to the Tanzanian embassy was just a snapshot for me of your determination and resilience. Another indicator was only needing three or four reminders to get forms/info/money/passports etc handed-in, rather than the standard 10 or more. Being away with you on this trip has been more than a pleasure, it has been privilege. Nothing has phased you, challenges have been tackled head-on with an abundance of enthusiasm. You have been adaptable, approachable, inquisitive, committed, excellent team-workers, hysterical, respectful, sensitive and most importantly you have shown an extremely mature ability to know when each of these attributes should be adopted. It takes years for most adults to master this and some never do.

Charles Darwin School community should be proud to have such excellent ambassadors amongst it's pupils. Be sure to share your experiences with anyone who will listen, especially those who enabled you to take part in this adventure. However those at home will only have a snapshot of just how much you have grown over these 11 days. There have been many moments this week where I have found it impossible to articulate just how proud I am of you- Miss Miller is rarely speechless!

Mr Simpson and Miss Curwood have been superb support for us all on the trip, both providing different experiences and viewpoints. Quizmaster, chief bants and friendship-band maker has kept our spirits high and reminded us on an almost hourly basis about the importance of water consumption and the barriers to sleeping he has faced. Miss 'primary-school-teacher-wannabe' Curwood quickly modelled how to bring pupils out of their shells and also acted as our voice coach and time-keeper. I cannot thank them enough.

Thank you to parents, family, friends and school staff who have sponsored, ran sessions, supported and written messages of encouragement both this week, and over the past twelve months. This has not gone unnoticed.

Finally, I thank each of you all individually for what has definitely been one of the highest and most proudest peaks of my teaching career.

Enjoy the rest of your summer.



Miss Miller



Events, Fixtures and Educational Visits

Monday 19 to Friday 23 September 2016:

19 September 2016—meeting of the Friends at 7:00pm in the hub, all welcome - see below

20 September 2016—Year 11 English trip to see Romeo and Juliet

20 September 2016—Sixth Form trip to see Things I Know to be True

21 September 2016—Y13 UCAS information evening

22 September 2016—Year 11 parents information evening

Forthcoming events

26 September 2016—Year 11 GCSE PE kayaking trip

30 September 2016—Year 13 trip to the UK University Search Fair

30 September 2016—Early close for Open Morning

1 October 2016—Open Morning

3 October 2016—late start for students

4 to 7 October 2016—Open Week

6 October 2016—Sports Awards

Pupils for Praise

**Duty pupils of the week ending
9/9/2016**

It was a brilliant start to the year. A big thank you to all my duties last week: they were Jude Longbottom, Jay Farrow, Malachi Reid and Sky Kilb in 8Asa.

Mrs Mills



History Star of the week is awarded to Abbey Churchill in 9ARu. Abbey has made a fantastic first impression in history. Abbey is keen to engage in class conversation and has already produced some excellent class work. I look forward to monitoring her ongoing success in history this year.

Miss Swinscoe

With a little help from our Friends

Volunteers wanted

Charles Darwin School is extremely fortunate to have the support of the Friends - a committed and active organisation which works hard to raise important additional funds for the school.

The first fundraising meeting of the year will take place on

Monday 19th September at 7.00pm in the Sixth Form hub.

We have been set a target of £10,000 to raise through a variety of activities this year. We would like to invite all parents, relatives and friends to attend and offer their ideas, support and assistance in raising the much needed funds.

Tea and cake will be available and new members and fresh ideas are always welcome, so please come along to find out more.

Many thanks

Gillian Simons, Chair of the Friends

Health matters: Vaccinations

Hounslow and Richmond Community Healthcare Trust, which now runs the Bromley Immunisation Service, will be in school on Friday 23 September to administer the HPV1 vaccination against cervical cancer for girls in Year 8. The vaccination is given as an injection in the upper arm, and will be followed up by the HPV2 injection on Wednesday 17 May 2017.

Parental consent forms covering both these injections, together with information leaflets will be sent home via form tutors and should be returned to Student Services by Wednesday 14 September at the latest.

Urgent reminder

If your child has an asthma inhaler, an epipen or diabetic equipment please ensure that your child carries one at all times and that you give Student Services a spare.

Thank you.

STOP PRESS:

Any items left in lockers or classrooms were removed over the summer. They will be retained until next Friday, 23 September when they will be disposed of.

If your child left anything at school before the summer break they should go to main reception next week without fail. Thank you.

PARENTS EVENINGS 2016/17

Year 12: 24 November 2016

Year 13: 24 November 2016

Year 11: 19 January 2017

Year 8: 9 February 2017

Year 9: 9 March 2017

Year 10: 26 April 2017

Year 7: 3 May 2017

Important reminder:

Please ensure you provide up to date contact information for students, including home, work and mobile telephone numbers, in case we need to contact you urgently.

If you move house, please let us have your new address promptly so that you continue to receive any letters sent home. You can call the main office on extension 263 or email contactdetails@cdarwin.com.

Maths Club starts

Maths Club will be running everyday after school in Ma2 from 3:00pm until 4:00—4:15pm. Pupils in all years from 7 to 13 are welcome to attend whether for extra support, homework support or to extend and improve their Maths learning.

See Mr Watson or Mr Desai for further information.

Advance notice

Open Day – Saturday 1 October

On Friday 30 September school will close at 12:40 so that staff can prepare for Open Day on Saturday. Pupils eligible for free school meals should collect sandwiches from the canteen at break.

On Monday 3 October school will commence at 09:30 for all pupils.