



08.09.2023

Issue No: 1093

The Link

Charles Darwin School

Aspire - Endeavour - Achieve

Headlines

Behaviour in the Community

We have received many positive comments from the community over the last few weeks about the excellent behaviour of our students on buses and in the community. However, in the last couple of days we have received reports of anti-social behaviour after school in the local recreation ground, often involving scooters. The incidents this week have not involved students from Charles Darwin and I would strongly recommend parents to encourage their children not to go home via the Rec to ensure they do not get caught up with this type of behaviour.

Warm Weather

The warm weather this week was a challenge for us all. However, student focus in class has been excellent and we were able to move some classes to cooler classrooms or staff took students outside to conduct lessons in the shade. Looking at the forecast for next week, temperatures seem set to return to what we might traditionally expect for September. We will therefore expect students to be wearing their blazers.

Ofsted Report

The report following our inspection in June has now been published on the Ofsted website. I would like to thank those parents who have contacted me, congratulating the school on such an excellent report. I have to say that my thanks go to the students themselves, our extremely dedicated staff and to all families for your fantastic support. We couldn't have done it without you!

Aston Smith



Charles Darwin School

Operated by the Charles Darwin Academy Trust
Headteacher: Aston Smith, BA (Hons) MA NPQH

Aspire - Endeavour - Achieve



Open Morning - Saturday 30th September 2023

Parents of prospective students are invited to visit our high performing school to view and sample the exciting opportunities we have to offer. Pre booking for a tour only (9am) or Headteacher's presentation followed by a tour (9am, 10am or 11am) is essential by lunchtime on Thursday 28th September. Priority will be given to Year 6 children. Presentations will start promptly at the advertised time so please leave sufficient time for parking. (There will be very limited on-site parking available).

Early Tour only 9.00am	Presentation & Tour 1 9.00am	Presentation & Tour 2 10.00am	Presentation & Tour 3 11.00am
Email to book your place earlytour@cdarwin.com	Email to book your place hallandtour1@cdarwin.com	Email to book your place hallandtour2@cdarwin.com	Email to book your place hallandtour3@cdarwin.com

Please email the relevant tour/presentation with your name, **your child's name, their current year group, their current school and the number of places required.**

Open Week - Tuesday 3rd - Friday 6th October

If you wish to attend one of our Open Week tours you can pre-book a tour at 8.45am or 9.00am. Open week tours offer the opportunity to see the school in operation and to observe teaching taking place. This will be followed by a short Q & A session with the Headteacher. Please leave time for parking (none available on site). Pre-booking essential by 12.00pm on Monday 2nd October.


Tuesday 3rd October - book via tuesdaytours@cdarwin.com
Wednesday 4th October - book via wednesdaytours@cdarwin.com
Thursday 5th October - book via thursdaytours@cdarwin.com
Friday 6th October - book via fridaytours@cdarwin.com

Please see our recent Ofsted Report




Jail Lane
Biggin Hill
Westerham, Kent
TN16 3AU
Tel: 01959 574043
Email: enquiries@cdarwin.com
Website: www.cdarwin.com


**Updated School Uniform
from September 2023**




Price:
Tie - £5.40
Badge - £6.00




**Year 7 2023/24
onwards**



**Year 8 2023/24
onwards**



**Year 9 2023/24
onwards**



**Year 10 2023/24
onwards**

- Year 11 2023/24 - will remain with the current tie and blazer

To be bought from main reception in school

PTA Update



The Friends/PTA would like to welcome all new families to our school and welcome back all our existing families following the summer break. We have some ambitious plans for this coming school year. If you would like to help our efforts grow and support our PTA, just on an ad-hoc basis or take on some of the more involved roles, we would love to hear from you. You can contact us at friends@cdarwin.com. Our new team have only been established for a short time so we would very much welcome extra pairs of hands!

A V E N T U M

BANK OF AMERICA 

Significant Donations via PTA:

We were overwhelmed to receive the following items for our school following a recent appeal:

- 50 Dell computers from **Aventum Group**, a group of Insurance businesses.
- 55 computer monitors from **Bank Of America**.

We have parents who work for these companies who had heard about our recent appeal and came forward to offer us these amazing items.

Our IT department said: "It feels like Christmas has come early for Charles Darwin School. We can't wait to see the smiles on the students faces as they make use of these new resources."

Our headteacher, Mr Smith, said: "We are very grateful for these donations and they will make a significant difference to the learning experience."

If you or your company might be able to offer something, however small, please do get in touch with us at friends@cdarwin.com

Collection can be arranged for any donations, if helpful.

Sponsorship

We were delighted to support the rejuvenation of the garden and pond area, adjacent to the school hub and tennis courts. Lots of wildlife, especially pollinators, have been spotted enjoying the wonderful array of wild plants and flowers that bloomed during the summer months.



Provisional plans for 2023:

We are meeting early this term to start planning for this year but very much hope to plan the following activities in the next few months:

- Quiz Night
- Year 7 & 8 Disco
- A virtual balloon race

Donation Appeal

If anyone has any of the following items available to donate to our school, we would be very pleased to hear from you.

- **IT items:** Computer monitors or screens, computer mice, headphones or head sets
- **Stationery:** Reams of paper, laminators and/or pouches
- **Furniture:** Sets of tables or chairs for classrooms, office chairs, outdoor benches

Please e-mail us if you have anything you can donate at friends@cdarwin.com. We should be able to arrange collection too, if helpful.

NEW for 2023: Easyfundraising

Please sign up to Easyfundraising and add us as your charity. We have already raised £172.11 via the 21 supporters. All you need to do is:

- 1) Sign up via Easyfundraising or click here [Charles Darwin School PTA - Kent Fundraising | Easyfundraising](#)
- 2) Set up the donation reminder
- 3) Shop online at over 7000 retailers and a percentage of your total will be donated straight to our charity. Please note we won't be able to see any details about where you have been shopping.

Stay up to date

Please follow us on social media to help us grow our network:



Reading Corner at Charles Darwin

Students in all year groups should bring a reading book to school every day.

If you do not have a book, visit the school library either at lunch time or after school between 3 and 4pm. You can also visit your local library to borrow books.

Drop Everything and Read [DEAR]

Our first whole school 'Drop Everything and Read' [DEAR] session will take place on Friday 29th September. Everyone will need a reading book on this day.

The 'Drop Everything and Read' initiative is promoted by the Read For Good organisation as a great way to create fun and excitement around reading for pleasure. It is designed to send the important message that reading for pleasure is important, and something everyone should make time for.

Good Reads recommends the following as the winner of Best Young Adult Fiction 2022:

The Final Gambit by Jennifer Lynn Barnes

To inherit billions, all Avery Kylie Grambs has to do is survive a few more weeks living in Hawthorne House. The paparazzi are dogging her every step. Financial pressures are building. Danger is a fact of life. And the only thing getting Avery through it all is the Hawthorne brothers. Her life is intertwined with theirs. She knows their secrets and they know her.

But as the clock ticks down to the moment when Avery will become the richest teenager on the planet, trouble arrives in the form of a visitor who needs her help - and whose presence in Hawthorne House could change everything. It soon becomes clear that there is one last puzzle to solve, and Avery and the Hawthorne brothers are drawn into a dangerous game against an unknown and powerful player.

Mrs Pitt

The Little Mermaid

Coming soon....December 2023

Our school production this year is Disney's 'The Little Mermaid'.

Well done to all students who auditioned; we are excited to be starting rehearsals next week.

The production this year, requires quite a lot of costumes to be made. We are therefore looking for any parent/carer volunteers who may be able to help, in any capacity. Please get in touch via gcu@cdarwin.com if you think you could offer any assistance here with sewing etc. Many thanks

Miss Currie



On Sunday, 3rd September, Sasha Morrell competed at the national athletics club championship finals at the Manchester Regional Arena, representing Blackheath & Bromley AC. They were joined by the winners of the other regional divisions, namely Harrow and Dacorum, Rugby and Northampton, Team Avon, City of York AC and Trafford AC.

Blackheath and Bromley retained their title as national champions and Sasha won the silver medal in the under 17 400m hurdles and gold in the under 17 4x100m relay, with the team winning in 43.19 seconds (just under 10.8 seconds per leg).



WELCOME TO NEW STAFF



Miss Winter - Head of Dance

Hello, my name is Miss Winter and I am the new Head of Dance. I am looking forward to developing dance throughout Charles Darwin and cannot wait to start working on the whole school show in the next couple of weeks. I previously taught at a school in Canterbury, whilst living in Bromley, and I am very grateful that the commute to work is now shorter! In my spare time I enjoy, going to see live theatre, keeping active outside and at the gym, spending time with my family and I am a Brownie and Guide leader. Each year we go camping with our guides, and it is safe to say that week is my favourite week of the year. I am a keen runner and have run a couple of marathons now, next April I am fulfilling a running ambition and running the London Marathon for the first time. I am excited to try and raise the profile of dance in the school and am looking forward to the challenge!



Mrs Mitchell - Director of Sixth Form

I am really excited to be joining Charles Darwin School and have had such a warm welcome from staff and students. As an English teacher, you might expect that reading is top on my list of things to do in my spare time and I do love the work of the Brontë sisters, Jane Austen and José Saramago to name a few.

When I was younger, I used to play bass guitar but think I would be pretty rusty these days. However, I do love listening to music.

I live with my husband (also a teacher) and two sons and I spend a lot of my school holidays wielding a paintbrush or a power tool (sometimes both) as we renovate our home. Although my family may disagree, I also believe you can never have too many cushions!

A typical weekend for me, will be on the side-lines of a football pitch cheering on my sons, enjoying a walk in the country or on the coast and cooking a Sunday roast before tackling the laundry and ironing!



Miss Mann - Sociology and Business Studies

Hello everyone! My name is Miss Mann and I am very excited to start teaching Sociology and Business at Charles Darwin School. I joined the department last year as a placement during my teacher training. I have a degree in Sociology and am very happy to talk about what is going on in the world. I really enjoy socialising with friends, listening to music and watching rugby.'



Mrs Huggins - PE

My name is Mr Huggins and I am a new member of staff based in the PE department. As a former student of Charles Darwin I take huge pride in coming back to the school and teaching the next generation of students. My favourite sports are Rugby and Athletics and I will be leading on these clubs as part of this year's extra-curricular programme. In my spare time I enjoy watching rugby (Scotland and Harlequins) and spending quality time with my family. I look forward to meeting you all around school.



Mrs Russell - Assessment Secretary

Hi, I'm Alison, the new Assessment Secretary, here at Charles Darwin.

I am looking forward to meeting and working with lots of new people, after working for myself, for the past 12 years! I live locally and since starting my role, I've already bumped into a lot of familiar faces! I have a son (12) and daughter (8), who keep me very busy, outside of work, with their sporting and artistic interests. I love music and have quite an eclectic taste, from Nina Simone to Kings of Leon & Dancehall to Drum & Bass!

Pupil absence line: 01959 574043, option 1:

Reminder – please can parents call the absence line each day of your child's absence before 8.30am. This ensures we know your child is safe and their absence is authorised where possible. Our Attendance Officer is having to spend an increased amount of time each day chasing for responses.

Thank you for your support.



Charles Darwin School

Headteacher: Aston Smith, BA (Hons) MA NPQH

Jail Lane
Biggin Hill
Westerham
Kent TN16 3AU
Tel: 01959 574043
enquiries@cdarwin.com

Learning Support Assistant
25 hours per week Monday – Friday, term time only
September 2023
(actual salary £14,424 – pay award pending)

We are looking to appoint a Learning Support Assistant to join a well-established team supporting a range of students' needs in class, in small groups and/or specialised individual learning. Applicants should have good English and Maths skills (GCSE equivalent grade C or above) and be confident working with IT. Experience of working with secondary-aged students with a range of SEN and/or *experience of working with students with ASD would be advantageous.*

Further details and an application form are available on our website and should be sent to jho@cdarwin.com. Closing date: Friday 29th September 2023. Please note CVs alone cannot be considered.

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare and safety of children and young people and expects all staff to share this commitment. Any offer of employment will be subject to a DBS Enhanced Disclosure and full background checks.

Year 8 Duty Pupils:

Terence Friend
Lily Fowler
Ruby Ferguson
Bonnie Bayntun-Dudsbridge
Freya Brandrick

Luke James
Ava Reilly
Drew Laws
Grace Brown
Connor Philip

THANK YOU

Student Services Duty Pupils:

Spencer Deeney
Elizabeth Merredew
Holly Coles
Robyn Ashkettle
Neev Patel

They have been fantastic this week, and their help has been invaluable.

As you are aware attendance is linked to a student's attainment and at Charles Darwin we work closely with the parents to keep students' attendance levels as high as possible. Please could we ask that if your child feels unwell in the morning (headache etc.) and they do feel better later on, that you send them in. This will benefit them as they will not miss a whole days learning.

Please can we also remind parents to call in before 8.30am for each day of your child's absence and not rely on receiving a text from us chasing their absence.

Thank you for your continued support.

Students Services Team



Dates for the Diary

September

13th September - Year 11 Parents' Information Evening

29th September - early Close for Open day

30th September - **Open Morning**

October

3rd October - 6th October - Open Tours

16th October - 27th October - Half term

2023-24 Term Dates

Autumn 2023

Tuesday 29th August – Friday 13th October

Half Term: Monday 16th October – Friday 27th October

Monday 30th October – Friday 15th December

Christmas Holiday: Monday 18th December - Monday 1st January

Spring 2024

Tuesday 2nd January – Friday 9th February

Half Term: Monday 12th – Friday 16th February

Monday 19th February – Thursday 28th March

Easter Holiday: Friday 29th March – Friday 12th April

Summer 2024

Monday 15th April – Friday 24th May

(Monday 6th May - Bank Holiday)

Half Term: Monday 27th May – Friday 31st May

Monday 3rd June – Thursday 18th July

Note:

Good Friday 29th March 2024

Easter Monday 1st April 2024

INSET Days - School closed to students

Tuesday 29th August 2023

Monday 30th October 2023

Tuesday 2nd January 2024

Friday 26th January 2024

Pupil absence line: 01959 574043, option 1:

Reminder – please can parents call the absence line each day of your child's absence before 8.30am. This ensures we know your child is safe and their absence is authorised where possible. Our Attendance Officer is having to spend an increased amount of time each day chasing for responses.

Thank you for your support.