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improved  
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## Cransley ranks fifth in the country for it's GCSE success

We are proud to announce that, in their recent national survey of small Independent Schools without a Sixth Form, the Sunday Times Educational Supplement ranked Cransley School fifth in the country for it's GCSE success.

This is an improvement of ten places on last year, when we were ranked fifteenth. For the past three years 100% of our Senior 5 students have achieved 5 or more GCSE passes at A\*-C. This enviable record is a result of a combination of a dedicated, highly qualified staff, hard-working students and supportive parents.

At the end of their career at Cransley, all our students go on to further study. We receive regular reports of their continued progress from their schools and colleges, who comment on their mature, disciplined approach to their studies. Many of the girls go on to University and post 18 study and we are delighted when they return to see us.



Although a number of girls join the Senior School at 11, the majority of the students come through from our Pre-Prep and Junior Department where the foundations of their later achievements have been laid. If you are interested in seeing the tables, visit the Sunday Times website, under the section **Parentpower**.

## "Big Art" Day

The buzz and excitement of devoting a whole day to 'big' art activities launched our school year with a bang. We made large 3D fish structures, Nursery Rhyme wall hangings and the Omumbo Rombonga tree was a clear favourite with Class 1. All the children had fun experimenting with a variety of media, such as clay, water-colours, pastels and fabric.

As this and our other themed days in Science and Mathematics have proved so successful, we have decided to continue and plan further days in other subject areas.

## The "Big Sing" - the largest simultaneous sing along record, broken

Both Junior and Senior choirs entered the year's "Big Sing" and helped to break the Guinness World record for the largest simultaneous sing along. The song was "You gotta be..." and we had a live link to the O2 building in London.

Over 60% of pupils have extra curricular music lessons and 8 peripatetic staff teach a variety of instruments from voice to saxophone, violin and drumkit.

A number of girls enjoyed a visit to the Bridgewater Hall to hear the Hallé Orchestra in concert.

Senior 3 girls enjoyed a Gamelon workshop recently. They enjoyed playing traditional music from Indonesia on a variety of gongs, metallaphones and drums.

## RED NOSE DAY

Friday 13th March 2009

Pupils from Cransley School supported Comic Relief by dressing back to front or coming in Fancy Dress. Special events took place throughout the day. Mrs Brown organised a raffle for the staff to win a car wash. As you can imagine this was very popular and the lucky winners were Mrs Baxter (Class 6 Teacher), Mrs Holt (School Secretary) and Mrs Old (Dyslexia Department).

We would like to thank everyone who donated to this worthy cause. We raised over £700 which will be added to the already fantastic total raised on the day by the whole country.

## ROALD DAHL DAY

The Pre-Prep and Junior School celebrated one of our favourite author's birthdays by organising a range of activities, storytelling, making posters, designing book covers and book reviews.

## MARY POPPINS

Pupils from Class 1 upwards enjoyed a wonderful matinee performance of the magical Mary Poppins at the Palace Theatre, Manchester. The highlight of the show was when Mary Poppins flew off the stage and gasps were heard around the theatre.

## Robin Wood challenge activities

Robin Wood is a great place to take up the challenge of new activities. Set in the Lancashire countryside, Dobroyd Castle is a wonderful venue to enjoy a weekend of fun and excitement. Class 6 and Senior 1 were put through their paces in problem solving, raft building, canoeing, climbing and archery as well as enjoying the thrills of the giant swing and the zip wire. Despite the odd soaking, both pupils and staff had an excellent time and returned home exhausted but truly proud of their achievements. We all look forward to next years' visit!

## New York, New York Fun on the Ice



Recently, Mrs Easton and Mrs Palmer decided to be really brave and take the girls to New York for a combined Music and Drama Department excursion. 21 of us endured a terrifying flight into the teeth of an ice-storm before landing with enormous relief at a snow-covered JFK Airport. It was worth it! We took in so many amazing sights, went ice-skating, shopped at Macy's then visited Broadway to see the fabulous "Chicago". It was a truly unforgettable experience. (Yes, we know Chicago was on in Liverpool at the same time!).

MUSIC & DRAMA

## Amsterdam trip - February 2009

A 4 am start had seemed like a good idea when it was planned, but in the darkness of the school car park on a cold February morning, we were not so sure as the group of excited Senior 2 and Senior 3 students gathered to start our long journey to Amsterdam.

Inspired by studying Anne Frank's diary in R.S., we visited the house on the Prinzengratz where the illfated Frank family had hidden during the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands in the Second World War. It proved to be a most moving experience for us all, especially as we were allowed to go through the museum and into the garden to see the horse chestnut tree that Anne had watched from her hiding place. This area is not normally open to the public but, because the girls had been so well behaved and had clearly gained so much from the visit, our guide had let us through. We also enjoyed

the exhibition of Van Gogh, and the colours of the night! Mrs West had studied the night paintings with her students in their Art lessons, but seeing them so close proved to be a better way to appreciate them.

After a brief look at the shops, an intrepid Mrs Crumpton with a Dutch McDonalds flag in her hat, led the way from the Dam Square to our boat for a tour of the canals and a chance to take numerous photographs. Last, but not least, the girls sampled the delights of a heated swimming pool at the Hotel Orange - the wave machine was so dramatic that the girls were flying from side to side squealing with excitement. A lovely way to round off the weekend.

The journey was a long one - we had not factored in the Rotterdam traffic - but it did not spoil the fun. February 2010 we are planning our visit to Rome - but this time we will fly.





## Senior 4 visit to Brittany

In March, Mrs Gilmour and Mrs Wagstaff took the Senior 4 French group to visit our exchange school in Rostrenen in Brittany. We teamed up with three other schools from the UK, Germany and Poland and enjoyed a worthwhile and pleasurable week, visiting Mont St Michel and the Island of Brehat, as well as spending time in our partner school. In April, the French girls came to England and spent an enjoyable week staying with their host Cransley families.

MODERN LANGUAGE

## Sunshine and culture at Lake Garda

In July, 25 excited girls & 4 staff drove down to Gatwick to board a BA flight to Lake Garda for a 5 day trip of sunshine, culture and relaxation. Italy did not disappoint! We marvelled at Venice, experienced the never-to-be forgotten thrill of going to the Opera in Verona, enjoyed a day of fun-in-the-sun at a busy water park and made the most of the opportunity to make some new friends.



## The King and I

After weeks of hard work, much laughter and even a few tears, the girls in the Music and Drama Departments, under the direction of Mrs Easton and Mrs Palmer staged an extremely entertaining production of "The King and I". The audiences were transported to Siam, treated to the old favourites such as "Shall We Dance?" and "I Whistle a Happy Tune", marvelled at the performances of their daughters and were moved to tears when the old King died. Hannah

Thompson was both eloquent and elegant as Anna whilst Emma Barton made a truly formidable King.

## Stratford Trip

Last September saw us spending three days in the beautiful historic town of Stratford. We were lucky enough to be able to see quite a controversial version of the "Taming of the shrew". We visited Shakespeare's birthplace, Anne Hathaway's cottage and went on a river trip, yet still had plenty of time for the girls' favourite pastime - shopping!

It has been quite a year for Shakespeare! We were also lucky enough to go to London for a most enjoyable overnight stay. We visited the Globe Theatre, always a fascinating experience and were treated to an absorbing tour workshop.

The highlight was then either a colourful, vibrant performance of "Mary Poppins" for the younger girls or for the older ones, the spine chilling, thrilling "Woman in Black". Our thanks go to Mrs Gaunt for organising this occasion.

MUSIC & DRAMA

# Building Improvements

## Belmont Hall

Over the summer holidays a great deal of work was carried out on the school buildings and below you will see some of the pictures of the repairs and restoration.

Over the last few years we have all eagerly awaited the start of the Belmont Hall Enabling Development but at this time it is still at discussion stage between the Developers, English Heritage and the Local Council. If this development does proceed it is not likely to happen for a number of years yet, so the Governors of the school have made the decision to start repair work to the buildings, which we are required to carry out under our lease.

Over the summer holidays the driveway was widened by our landlord making it easier for traffic to pass on the drive. We also spent over £10,000 to have the drive resurfaced and this has made a considerable improvement to the entrance to the school, as well as saving the suspension on most of our cars!!



The Driveway before...



The Driveway before...

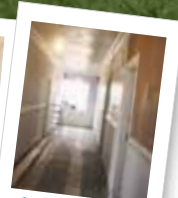


The Driveway after...

During the last year our landlord has carried out a great deal of work on the roof of the building and now this has been completed it has allowed us to refurbish the top floor of Senior School building. Lockers have been removed and relocated, partition walls removed to allow more light onto the corridor and restoration of plasterwork was also carried out. All the electrics on this floor were upgraded and finally complete redecoration and new carpeting was finished before we started back at school in September.



The Top floor before...



The Top floor before...



The Top floor after...

During half term in October the Geography room was re-decorated and two more classrooms on this floor will be re-decorated after Christmas.



The Geography Room...

In the cellars, a much needed Music Practice Room was created and some outbuildings behind the HE room were removed.



The New Music Practice Room...



The New Music Practice Room...

## Pre-Prep and Junior School Buildings

Our announcement on Prize Giving Day about the replacement of the Junior School buildings continues to gather pace. We now have all our plans and costs for the initial stage of the work, which would be to replace the Junior school L-shaped timber building in the first instance, which will cost in the region of £250,000.

Our school surveyors have been in discussion with the local Planning Authority and have sent drawings plus all additional material that has been requested to the Cheshire West Planning department. A pre-application meeting between the Surveyors and the Planners has been scheduled for the 17th December 2009 and following this meeting we hope to immediately submit our Application for the new building to obtain both Planning and Listed Building Consent.

As soon as we have a decision from the Local Authority the school will write to all parents and advise you of the outcome.

The PE Department also had a new storage shed purchased for it by the PTA Fundraisers and our most grateful thanks go to them for all their help.

The next stage of our plans for Belmont Hall include refurbishment of the rear entrance to the building, including the corridor leading to the offices and side entrance, which is long overdue and improvements to the décor of the School Dining Room.

The senior girls changing room will also be moved to a new area that will prove to be much more suitable.

# New Governors Join the Cransley School Board

## Stephen Hine

Stephen joined our Board at the end of the summer term in 2009 and is a graduate in Computer Science. He has worked for various IT organisations throughout his career starting as a consultant and moving into senior management positions and more recently onto the Board of Directors of a major international software company. Stephen has worked extensively throughout Europe and America and his key areas of expertise are IT, people management, contract law, sales and marketing.

## Dominic Moss

Dominic joined the Board of Governors in September this year. He is a recognised expert in the field of personal injury law. Dominic is a member of APIL (The Association of Personal Injury Lawyers) and is one of relatively few solicitors to hold the Graduate Diploma in Personal Injury Litigation.

Some of Dominic's more high profile cases have been featured in the press and on television. In addition, Dominic has Court of Appeal Experience and some of his cases have been quoted in legal journals.

On the social side Dom is married to Debbie and lives in Northwich. His hobbies include sailing and skiing.

## INTRODUCING GERMAN

Last year, German was introduced to Cransley for the first time, with all girls in Senior 2 studying German as well as Spanish and French. With the help of Mrs Wagstaff and Mrs Crumpton, they wrote letters to pupils in the Erweiterte Realschule in Freisen, Germany. A Group of girls have now chosen to continue German in Senior 3.

## Quarry Bank Mill

In March, Senior 4 will visit Quarry Bank Mill at Styal in Cheshire to prepare for their GCSE coursework. We will visit the Pauper Apprentice House to learn how Samuel Greggs child workforce lived in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. As well as learning about the daily routine of the children, including diet, education and life in the factory, we will have a tour around the mill itself to see how the raw cotton from America was manufactured into the finished product. This water powered mill is now a "working" museum that is very popular for GCSE coursework. Our pupils find it a very enjoyable day.

## NEW STAFF NEWS

We would like to welcome a new member of staff, Mrs Alison Norton to the English and Drama Departments. Alison has settled quickly, proving herself to be a popular, efficient member of staff. Already, she has been on various trips, helped to run a lunchtime Drama Club for Seniors 1 and 2 and initiated the visit of RADA professional to help the GCSE Drama students with their practical.

## JUNIOR ART

Mrs Eagar has been busy introducing Class 2 and 3 to Egyptian art and this term they have created a collage - Life on the Nile - inspired by her recent trip to Egypt. As the class were starting this project, much publicity was given to the opening of the new room in the Egyptian section of the British Museum. Mrs Eagar sent a letter and a photograph to Dr Parkinson, the eminent Egyptologist whose brain child it was to restore the beautiful tablets found in the tomb of Nebamun. He sent a reply which said "Thank you very much for the photo of the collage made by your class - it is very impressive (I especially like the flying birds). I hope that your class get a chance to visit the gallery."

## Tate Gallery Trip

In February, Class 5 visited the Tate Gallery in Liverpool. The children spent the morning working with an accomplished artist, drawing and sketching. After lunch they had the opportunity to look at the many famous works of art held at the Gallery.

## Jim's garden

The Junior School Council have decided to dedicate the Class 6 Garden to Jim Hickson who was our beloved caretaker. Unfortunately, Jim passed away recently but the garden will be a token of our affection for him.

Mrs Heaven's garden club will begin to make the garden into a special place by planting borders, making a barrel pond and erecting an archway full of climbing plants around the gateway. The plaque on the gate was lovingly created by members of the School council out of clay.

## GARDENING CLUB

As well as being responsible for creating Jim's Garden, the Gardening Club, who are eagerly awaiting delivery of their new gardening equipment from the Morrison's voucher Scheme, are planning to sow seeds for our own vegetable plot.

Mrs Eagar designed scarecrows in her Art lessons to protect Mrs Heaven's seeds from birds. We are now having to think about how to protect them from rabbits and slugs!

# SPORTS ACTION

## NEW STAFF

In September we welcomed Mrs Jill Pargeter to the PE department. Her appointment to teach for 2 days has allowed the department to expand activities and matches, this has also meant that Miss Davies has been able to give more time to her new role as Pastoral Coordinator. So far Mrs Pargeter has introduced orienteering to her classes and she has enabled Senior 4 and Senior 5 to have two activities in their lessons giving greater variety. She has also organised a trip to see Northern Thunder play netball in the National League at Bury, we all enjoyed the experience and it was a very valuable trip, particularly for the Senior 5 GCSE PE students.

## YOGA (NEW ACTIVITY)

Mrs Reynolds (Mum of Jessica in Senior 5) has taught members of Senior 5 Yoga. A course of 6 weeks was enjoyed by girls and they really felt the benefit of being stretched.

## NETBALL

September saw Senior 5 (Under16s) enter the ISA North Tournament, with only a few practices available due to the early date Cransley met their fierce rivals, Hillcrest in the first game. The match was very fast and certainly keenly contested which resulted in a 5-5 draw, on reflection a fair result. The next games saw wins against Tower College 6-2 and Bridgewater 12-1. The local derby against the Grange was full of mistakes and both teams were nervous with Cransley scraping a 2-1 win. A new entry this year was Hill House. We think they had been "grown" specifically for netball, tall, fast and well coordinated (in uniform and skills!), we lost 8-3, however at the end of the tournament we had achieved second place and were presented with some fine medals, well done. Team members: Elizabeth Edwards, Amy Bridgewood, Su Zar, Alex Birkbeck, Rachael Colquitt, Lauren Halliwell, Natalie Jones, Emma Barton & Iona Barr.

C5 and 6 started their season with matches against the Grange and Loreto. Class 6 lost to Grange 3-1 with Amber Leguijt, the player of the match, but beat Loreto 4-3 with Amy Jones as player of the match. They have also travelled to Hillcrest and won 4-1. Class 6 team members: Nicole Grumley, Millie Hurst, Victoria Gardner, Alex Cornwell, Amy Bremner and Leila McGrorty.

Class 5 beat Loreto 4-3 with Florence Gibbons, player of the match.

Team members: Olivia Brown, Alivia Whitfield, Gemma Drinkwater, Emily Sproston, Alex Wild and Charlie Cooper.

League netball for Senior 2, 3 and 4 occurs from September through to March involving matches against Hartford, Rudheath, Middlewich, Bridgewater, St Nicholas, The Grange, Verdin, Woodford Lodge and Weaverham. We also have had friendly games against Abbeygate, Hillcrest and Loreto.

## HOCKEY

Hockey matches have been played against all the local high schools and also Abbeygate College and are played on a friendly basis. This year Miss Davies has organised several tournaments for the Mid-Cheshire Schools, the purpose was to encourage schools to play more competitive hockey. Netball leagues have been available for Under 13, 14 and 15s for some years now and Miss Davies felt that hockey, too, needed to expand and update. The first tournaments were held in October for the Under 16s, Cransley beat Leftwich 3-0, Hartford 1-0, St Nicholas 1-0 and drew with Weaverham 0-0. This ensured a clear victory and certificates were given out in assembly. In the second tournament the Under 16s were second with a win and 2 draws.

Team members: Zoe Sutherland, Alex

Birkbeck, Sophie Halliwell, Lauren Halliwell, Su Zar, Naomi Evans, Rachael Colquitt, Natalie Jones.

**The Under 14s** came second in their first tournament with 3 draws and a win but made up for it by coming first in the next one with 2 wins and a draw.

Team members: Abby Mellis, Laura Harrington, Lara Green, Hope Houston, Alex Gabbutt, Elizabeth Kerr, Emily Edwards, Emma Tate, Ellie Hayes, Charlotte Acton.

**The Under 13s** were the last group to have their tournaments, in the first one they won 2 and lost one but were winners on points and in the second tournament were clear winners with 3 wins, well done.

Team members: Rachel Cottier, Tia Warburton, Samantha Curry, Charlotte

Acton, Dolly Croot, Hannah Ferrabee, Olivia Hammond, Ellie Hayes, Lara Green and Georgina Blackshaw.

**The Under 16s** and the Under 14s both entered the Cheshire Schools Tournaments, these were held on Saturday mornings with lots of teams at a variety of venues, only the winners from each area going through to the finals. Both teams did themselves proud against tough opponents. The Under 16s went to West Kirkby and the Under 14s to Kings at Chester, it gave the teams a chance to have matches against opponents they would not normally meet and to gain further valuable experience.

## CROSS COUNTRY

We had the **Senior Mid-Cheshire Championships** in October at Hartford. For **Senior 1** it was their first taste of real racing, it was cold, windy, muddy and a long course. They had been practising more regularly than they would like but it proved justified! The best runner on the day was Dolly Croot who came in 15th but several others were in the twenties. Other team members were Natasha Plumpton, Georgina and Alexandra Newton, Emma Bradburn and Millie Colyer. Out of approximately 100 runners they all ran very well and the team came 5th.

**Senior 2 and 3** amalgamated to form one Under 14 team, Emma Tate was 7th with Georgina Blackshaw 20th, the other racers were Rachel Cottier, Samantha Curry and Georgina Harrington.

**Senior 4's** course was a long way, (I am sure they will say that is an understatement!), it took our runners at least 25 minutes to complete the race but I was very proud of them all, they kept going under tough conditions and all who finished came in the top 20. Well done - Naomi Evans, Sophie Halliwell, Catherine Barnes and Olivia Cross.

**ISA North Senior Championships** were held at Kingswood College near Ormskirk at

the end of January, a change from the usual venue at John Leigh Park in Altrincham. We arrived in good time to the venue and walked down from the coach park towards the marshalling area. The course was well marked but the girls soon discovered that the races would, again, be the real thing as far as cross country was concerned. No sooner had they started to follow the ticker tape, they found themselves in a boggy field, up to their ankles in mud, squeals could be heard from some distance! We put our kit in the marquee and went to walk the course which went through a wood, the girls had to jump across a mud pit or else be filthy, needless to say they jumped. The rest of the course was up and down too, after all the other schools had done the same preparation as us, the field turned into the bog except now it was knee deep. Many a trainer went missing in the goo but it did make for a true test for the pupils and a course which was described by the pupils as fun. The best result of the day came from Emma Tate, who came third, a quite exceptional performance.

Team members:

**Under 14s** - Georgina Blackshaw, Olivia Hammond, Dolly Croot, Rachel Cottier, Natasha Plumpton, Georgina Newton and

Alexandra Newton.

**Under 16s** - Hope Houston, Georgina Harrington, Catherine Barnes, Naomi Evans, Sophie Halliwell, Filly Geary and Kate Emsley-Martin.

As a result, Emma was selected to run for the North at Princethorpe College in the National Championships on 28th March (many thanks to her parents who took her) but she was disappointed with her final position of 15th. To get to the nationals is quite an outstanding achievement, well done Emma.

**ISA Junior Championships** were held at John Leigh Park. Mrs Brown and Miss Davies, along with many parents, enjoyed a sunny afternoon watching the children run around the park. The best performance was from Amy Jones who was 19th, again we had about 100 runners in each race, so well done Amy. Team members:

**Under 11 Boys** - Sullivan Dunne, Ellis House, William Mansfield-Hickman, Jacob Brown, Jake Humphrey, Declan Jones, Joshua Gibson.

**Under 11 Girls** - Sophie Catterall, Samantha Platt, Katie Bradburn, Olivia Brown, Hannah Fryer, Emily Sproston.

**Under 12 Girls** - Amber Leguijt, Alex Cornwell, Victoria Gardner, Amy Bremner, Leila McGrorty, Amy Jones.

## Why not join the Ju Jitsu Club?



Cransley School Ju Jitsu Club has been running for nearly four years. It is part of the Mid Cheshire Budo Federation who was founded by David Flaherty MBE over 40 years ago. The lessons are delivered by Mrs Cope, who is known as Sensei Jill by all her students. Sensei Jill is a 3rd Dan Black Belt and a qualified Club Coach with a Level 2 NVQ qualification in coaching.

The club takes place on a Wednesday and a Friday after school, depending on age and ability and is open to all pupils from Class 2 upwards. The students take gradings 2 - 3 times a year where the students receive a new belt and certificate. At the moment the club has students ranging from beginner to some senior girls who will be taking their black belts next Christmas. Girls taking GCSE PE may also choose Ju Jitsu as one of their four sports and do not need any previous knowledge.

## Drama Club

Every Tuesday lunchtime, 20 or so girls from Seniors 1, 2 & 3 meet together at Drama Club for a chance to learn some new skills, boost their confidence, make lots of noise & have fun! A number of pupils also take their English Speaking Board examinations, entertaining us with subjects as diverse as cat breeding to army cadets. The visiting examiners always praise the courtesy and general friendliness of all our students.

## Gymnastics Club

The Junior gym club has run regularly on a Monday lunchtime and many badges have been passed. After school club, which is open to all, was well attended to begin with. Miss Davies hopes to have children turn up more regularly so that she can organise more displays.