

Bright Times

Issue 7 Term 1 2009

This issue is coming soon on our website www.oasisacademybrightstowe.org

Get Caught Reading in the Resource Centre.

As everyone knows, reading helps improve your mental acuity and we want to improve literacy within the Academy by encouraging more reading above and beyond what is required in the curriculum. Every student needs to expand their wider reading to increase their knowledge and for fun!

Since the beginning of September the Resource Centre has focused on providing a place to read. There are staff and students who are willing to spend time helping other students with their reading, and we even provide a script reading session for those who like to play the characters in their stories.

We have already added new books to the library stock including a series written by Mark Robson who we hope to have visit the Academy to spend the whole day with us. We already have The Daily Telegraph delivered every day and have just organised for a newspaper and magazine in Spanish to be provided.

Over 300 new books will be added to the library in the next few weeks, including many existing favourites such as J.K. Rowling and Darren Shan.

So come in and get caught reading – we will be issuing draw tickets and have a regular draw giving prizes for those caught reading most often.



FOCUS ON NEW STAFF

Interview with Ms Evans:



Q What is your job at Oasis Academy Brightstowe?

¡Hola! Me llamo Señorita Evans y soy profesora de español. Here at Oasis, I am Learning Coordinator for Modern Languages. We currently offer only Spanish, but I hope to introduce more languages in the future.

Q Where did you used to work?

In the past, I have taught in Cheltenham, Guernsey and Madrid. However, I have moved to Oasis from a school in Carmarthenshire, South-West Wales. It was a Welsh-medium school called Ysgol Gyfun Maesryrfa. There, I taught German, Spanish and French, all through the medium of Welsh, which is my first language. 'Rwy'n siarad Cymraeg hefyd.

Q What do you like best about Oasis Academy Brightstowe?

¡Me gusta enseñar aquí porque todo el mundo es muy amable! Everyone is very friendly and helpful, which has made starting in a new school so much easier. I have been very impressed with all the enthusiasm and interest in Spanish and I must say that many Oasis students have a real flair for the language! ¡Muy bien! The location of the academy is ideal as it is within close proximity to Bristol Airport. If I have had a very busy week, I may just be tempted to escape to sunny Spain! ¿Por qué no? Ja, ja, ja..

'ESCAPE TO THIS'
at
The Bristol Old Vic



I went to Bristol Old Vic with some of my Drama class to see 'Escape to This' performed by ACTA Community Theatre.

The plot was all about a family, mum, gran and daughter all living at home. The mum had no money but the daughter wanted to have all the same things as her friends and they couldn't afford it.

The daughter started chatting on a website to a man who wasn't who he claimed to be.

The place they performed in was really small. I think this made it more effective as it seemed like we were a part of it and it felt realistic. We could laugh with the characters and connect with them.

There were some funny moments in the play like when the mum went speed dating and she met a man who was a real nerd with big glasses on and he couldn't get his words out properly. All the men at the speed dating were played by girls which was very effective.

There was also a very tense moment when the daughter was chatting to the man on the computer because the audience knew what was going to happen but she didn't and this is called dramatic irony.

The play got me thinking about what happens in life. The message I got from it was don't try and be something you're not. There's no harm in trying to make a better life for yourself but you mustn't forget your old friends

I think the whole audience enjoyed watching 'Escape to This'.

By Abbie Vowles year11



Chess and Chequers in the Resource Centre.

Why not join the a regular number of students who play chess and chequers during morning break and lunch? The planning and strategy involved in playing the game is excellent mental exercise for your brain.

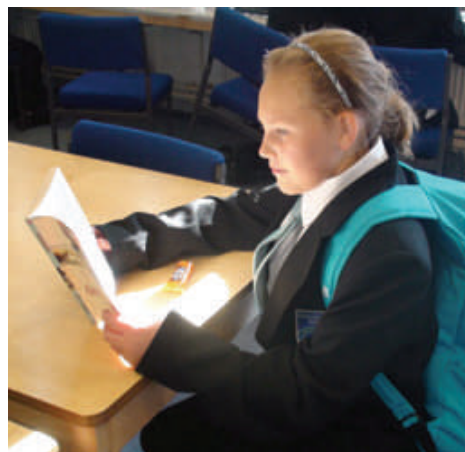
Coming soon!

3 way chess where 3 people can play at the same time on a triangular board.

In the future we may also get a 4 way chess board so that 2 students can play in teams or 1 student can play against three others.

Chinese chess which has different pieces and rules.

So why not come along, enjoy a game and meet new friends. To find out more ask Mr Parsons.



Calling all budding journalists and photographers!

If you would like to contribute to the next edition of Bright Times, see Miss Ganner.



FOCUS ON NEW STAFF

Interview with Mr Woodville:



The Mozambique Trip

After some successful fund raising last year by staff and students at Oasis Academy Brightstowe, one of our gap year students, Manda was able to travel to Mozambique to help to install a water tap to help the local community. The water tap was successfully completed in the August 2009 in the city of Beira, Mozambique, to serve a community of approximately 2,500 where clean water is scarce and even existing taps are now polluted, increasing chances of typhoid and cholera. Manda and the team managed to stay safe and come back healthy! There was some money left over. These excess funds are being used for Oasis Mozambique and their work with the poorest communities around the city of Beira. Well done to all staff and students who supported this worthwhile venture, we hope to continue our support of Oasis Mozambique this year.



Q What is your job at Oasis Academy Brightstowe?

My job is Assistant Principal Post-16/14-19 Coordinator.

That means I have two major roles, Firstly it is to establish a Sixth Form Centre here at Oasis Academy Brightstowe; and when it opens in September 2010 I will be the Head of the Sixth Form. I am also the 14-19 Coordinator – that means I coordinate students in Year 10 and 11 in terms of helping the Vice-Principal put together the curriculum model for Year 10 ie the options. Moreover, I monitor and track the attainment and going forward the progress of students in Year 10 and 11 to best ensure that students meet their target grades. Where students are not making progress or are off target I monitor the intervention strategies being used by my departments and where necessary I plan whole school intervention plans to help them to fulfil their potential and achieve their target grades.

Q Where did you used to work?

I previously worked at Edenham High School and Riddlesdown High School both in Croydon, South London as a teacher of geography. I then moved to St Laurence School, Bradford on Avon where I was Head of Geography before being promoted to Director of Post-16 Education.

Q What do you like best about Oasis Academy Brightstowe?

It would have to be the staff and students that create a real sense of community. I am so happy to have been so warmly welcomed by all. There is a real sense that Academy has improved the quality of education through committed staff, wanting to do the best for each student and a desire in students to be the best that they can be.

BRIGHTSTOWE STUDENTS PERFORM SHAKESPEARE

A group of talented students from Oasis Academy Brightstowe took part in the Shakespeare Schools Festival yesterday, performing the playwright's great tragedy *King Lear*.

The festival, which is running from 18th September – 12th November, gives 11-18 year olds the chance to perform half hour adaptations of famous Shakespeare works in professional theatres all over the UK.

This week, it was the turn of the Tobacco Factory Theatre to open its doors to young actors from ten schools across Bristol, including Oasis Academy Brightstowe.



Here is a performer's view of his experience: It was the day of our performance in the Shakespeare Schools Festival and on the way to the Tobacco Factory Theatre we were all so very nervous, feeling the butterflies in our stomachs. The coach was silent and all we could hear was the pounding of our hearts.

When we arrived at the theatre we were escorted to the 'Blue Room' to get changed for our rehearsal. First we had a 'tech rehearsal' which is to get the lighting right. Then we performed in front of the SSF team. They were pleased with our performance and they gave us some tips on how to improve.

We went for lunch and had an extortionately priced burger then returned to our rehearsals. The clock ticked on and hours flew by. Before we knew it, time was up and the audience, including our parents, started arriving. It was time to get ready to perform and our hearts started to pound again like on the coach.

We performed our play 'King Lear' with great success and we were all so very pleased. I achieved one of my dreams, to perform in front of a big crowd and make them laugh.

We waited with joy and happiness for the next schools to perform. We watched Red Maids School and Nailsea School then we all gathered on stage at the end to be congratulated.

That was the amazing day at the Shakespeare Schools Festival 2009 where dreams were fulfilled.

By Ben Deurance Year 11



BRIGHTSTOWE LAUNCH ACCELERATED READING PROGRAMME

Oasis Academy Brightstowe has launched an 'accelerated reading' programme as part of an increased focus on developing literacy levels across the school.

The programme, which is being rolled out by the Learning Resource Centre, aims to accurately assess the reading level of each student using reading test software which students can access online.

Using the results, the Academy can determine their reading level against the national standards and identify where individuals require more support. To support the programme, the Academy also plans to implement a coded shelving system in the Learning Resource Centre to make it easier for students to choose books that are appropriate for their ability.

Students will take short tests on each book they return, which will give them points for their efforts and provide the Academy with a measure of their progress. As their reading improves, the system encourages students to pick more challenging texts and move up in their reading ability.

Learning Resource Centre Manager, Geoff Parsons, said: "This is a great system which will really help us to work effectively to support students in their reading.

"In the past, we knew how many books were being loaned out, but not how well they were being read. We suspected that students might be getting put off if they accidentally chose books that were unsuitable for their ability.

"Now, we can direct students to books that are within their capabilities but that also challenge them to improve. The fact that the system is automated means that we can ensure every student takes part and better identifies the ones that are struggling.

"We can also reward students for the points they accumulate, which will hopefully encourage them to use the Learning Resource Centre on a more regular basis."

The Academy has also been given an additional £2000 to spend on books that correspond with the reading software to help expand the Academy's ever-growing library.

Thanks to our contributors this issue:

Ben Deurance (Yr 11), Abbie Vowles (Yr 11), Kasey Sprackland (Yr 8), Chloe Nowalski (Yr 8), Manda, Mr Geoff Parsons, Ms Laura Hope.