



Harris Girls' Academy East Dulwich

Issue 13 December 2009

Parents invited to try our new canteen

Parents are being invited to try a meal in our refurbished canteen, which recently underwent a £250,000 refit and now has new menu options including a choice of tasty hot meals as well as baguettes, a salad bar and healthy snacks.

The new canteen features brightly coloured seating areas with a choice of tables, chairs, stools and bar-top areas. 'There's a variety of tasty, healthy options including a meal of the day which is always popular with students,' says Sandra Simpson of catering company Sodexo, which has a contract to run the canteen.



Salad bar and fruit on offer daily.

Sample menu

Main courses

- Spicy lamb served with rice
- Salmon and mushroom stir fry served with jacket wedges
- Roast vegetables in a puff pastry case
- Green beans

Desserts

- Cherry cheesecake
 - Apple pie served with custard
- £1.60

Open plan

'The serving area is now open plan so it's easier for students to move around the different areas and see what's on offer,' says Sandra. The meal of the day costs £1.60, including a dessert. Students can also get a free breakfast in the canteen every Friday between 8-8.30am, funded by the Academy's health sciences budget.

'Parents are very welcome to come along and have lunch at the school to see for themselves how much it has changed,' says Sandra. If any parent would like to try the new canteen simply call Colleen Thorn, Catering Manager, on 020 7358 1418.



Attractive seating in our new canteen.



Aminata, Year 11, pictured with celebrity chef Paul Rankin after winning joint first prize in our Masterchef competition for her dish of spiced pumpkin soup and salmon and watercress sauce. Full story on page 8.



Our **mission** is to embrace the **opportunities** and **challenges** of learning, and enjoy **academic, social** and **personal** success.

Ragged Child in school hall

Students from Years 8 and 9 performed *The Ragged Child* last month, a hard-hitting play set in Victorian London about divisions between rich and poor. The capital is suffering from an outbreak of cholera. The poor have to drink dirty water from the Thames and the streets are full of abandoned, starving children. One of these is Joe Cooper who is desperate to get money to buy medicine for his sick sister Annie. The rich don't care – they blame the poor for getting into this situation. So what will Joe do?

Ragged Child was performed in our refurbished school hall which includes new stage lighting and projection equipment – all designed to create professional-style productions.

'As a drama teacher, I have found that the standard of performance is greatly enhanced when students can work on a proper stage with proper lighting and it is certainly appreciated by my Year 9 BTEC and Year 12 A level Performance Studies students,' says drama teacher Margaret Willman.



Students perform *Ragged Child* in our recently re-equipped school hall.



Learning new skills at the UK Sailing Academy.



Wet and wonderful

Windsurfing, kayaking and sailing were just some of the activities on offer recently during a week long water sports trip to the UK Sailing Academy at the Isle of Wight, sponsored by Lord Harris.

'During the week, the girls were set a series of water-based challenges, such as building a raft or working as a team to sail a keel boat,' said Hayley Birch, School Sports Partnership Development Manager. 'To succeed in the challenges, the girls had to develop their team working, communication and problem solving skills.'

'For one challenge I had to work with my friends to build a boat,' said Phennat Rujart. 'We were the only group whose boat did not sink!' Maryama Moalin enjoyed the trip too: 'I really enjoyed swimming in the evening. Before the trip I didn't know how to swim but by the end of the trip I was able to do this with help from the instructors and my friends.'

The trip was a great success with the girls all learning a new activity.



Learning safety



Bouldering



At the summit!

Climbing wall arrives

Our new climbing wall is giving students a thrilling learning experience. Indoor climbing is one of the UK's fastest-growing indoor sports and we're delighted to have our very own wall.

Students learn climbing techniques using harnesses and ropes, while a lower 'bouldering' wall is an opportunity to practise without special equipment.

'Teaching climbing is challenging but it's very rewarding to see a student achieve something they never thought they would,' says Director of Sport, Katy Sowersby. 'It teaches teamwork, achieving your personal best, problem solving, setting targets, failing, trying again and succeeding – all things students can apply in other areas of their lives too.'

'Challenge'

'Looking down from the heights of the sports hall with the biggest smile in the world is something a lot of our students will remember for the rest of their lives.'

'It's a challenge, it makes you push yourself,' says Holly Newman of Year 10. 'You have to trust your partner because your life is in their hands. It makes your hands hurt at first too!'



On the up

Focus on post-16

Chris Everitt, our new Vice Principal responsible for post-16 students, talks to us about the latest developments at Harris East Dulwich Post Sixteen.

How many post-16 students are at HGAED?

We currently have 65 students at Harris East Dulwich Post Sixteen, studying a variety of courses and following different pathways. As this is a partnership between the Harris Girls' and Harris Boys' academies we expect numbers to rise quickly. When we reach capacity we will have around 400 students studying here.

What courses are on offer?

In the academic year 2010/2011 we will offer over 38 different courses in partnership with the boys' academy – our largest curriculum offer to date. These will include a range of BTEC courses which are equivalent to one, two or three A-levels. We will also offer a comprehensive range of 17 AS subjects, which can also be combined with BTEC qualifications. In short, students can potentially leave us with the equivalent of 5 A-Levels.

What do you feel are the strengths of post-16 provision at HGAED?

Apart from our brand new facilities, which are being built at present, we offer excellent teaching in small groups which focus on personalised support. Academic mentoring and rigorous tracking ensure students can achieve their aspirational targets. We offer a positive and professional ethos where all students have the opportunity to achieve and where everyone has high standards based around a business model. We offer a caring and thoughtful community with lots of opportunities for student leadership.

What facilities are on offer to post-16 students?

Lord Harris has been given £20 million to spend on new buildings and installing the latest technology to create a state-of-the-art learning environment. Brand new buildings will open in January 2011 and we are very fortunate to have excellent facilities while we wait for these developments to be completed.

Many students comment that it feels like a professional office when they walk in, which is exactly right, because we've based our entire ethos on professionalism. We believe that students should have outstanding facilities to meet our professional expectations. Post-16 students have their own common room, study room and are provided with a laptop. We have a 3D interactive whiteboard and over 30 new laptops which can be used in lessons to help personalised learning.

What's your vision for how post-16 courses at HGAED might develop in future?

I want Harris East Dulwich Post Sixteen to become a lead post-16 provider for the students of South London offering an outstanding education. We will be one of the top performing sixth forms in the country. Our curriculum will grow substantially next year and, as we recruit more students, our curriculum will continue to grow. The vision is that we will be first choice and students will be able to follow their first choice pathway without any restriction.

If any students would like to apply for a place at Harris East Dulwich Post Sixteen, or would like a prospectus, please contact C Everitt, Vice Principal on 0207 732 2276.



Meet our new head girl

Meet Aileen Coffey Colgan, who has been chosen to be our new head girl following a selection process which included a business-style job interview. Aileen had to apply for the position and was interviewed by Chris Everitt, Vice Principal, and Miss Donnelly, Sixth Form Manager.



Head girl, Aileen Coffey Colgan.

New for 2010...

Watch out for details of our new sports lab, which arrives in 2010, containing the very latest technology to monitor what happens to the body during exercise, plus different ways of measuring speed and agility. Work on the new Harris Wing, due to open in January 2011, is also on schedule.



Students with Lord Harris at the door of you know where!

Number 10 visit

Two students from Year 11 were invited to Downing Street recently to meet Sarah Brown, the Prime Minister's wife, and discuss the work of the Harris Student Commission on Learning.

Elizabeth Komolafe and Reeya Wheeler were among a party of 14 students who also toured Number 10 and got a chance to sit in the Prime Minister's chair in the cabinet room.

All the students on the trip were members of the Student Commission, which is researching new ways to enhance learning for students across the Harris federation.

Afterwards, the students attended an education seminar at the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA) in central London, where they answered delegates' questions about the work of the commission.



Elizabeth Komolafe is quizzed by education experts about the work of the Harris Student Commission on Learning.

Do we need Black History Month?



Students take part in the Black History Month debate.

This was the subject of a special debate held in October at HGAED to mark 2009 Black History Month. Students from seven Southwark secondary schools gathered at our academy to learn debating skills and test them in a live debate in front of other students. Our team had five students (one each from Years 7–11) and came second overall – a very impressive performance.

Our popular Black History Group meets every Wednesday during term time. 'The group is not just for black students,' says history teacher Nick Knowland. 'We talk about ideas behind the history of other minorities and women too, to show how the ideas behind the study of Black History are relevant to a very wide range of people.'



Filming the debate to share with others.

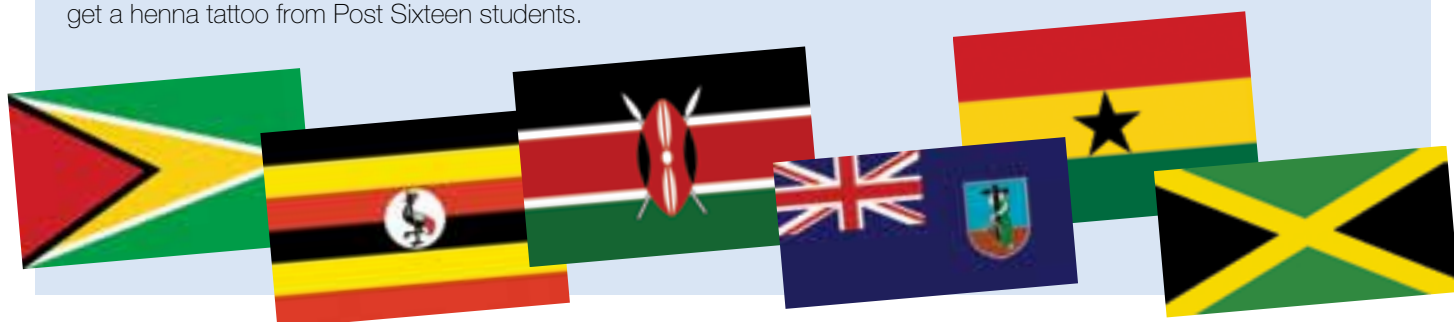
35 nations celebrated

Around 250 people gathered in the main school hall in October for a special Black History Month celebration.

Students performed their own drama, dance and poetry pieces inspired by Black History and listened to a fantastic reading of his own work by performance poet Mark Andrew Thompson.

Everyone then moved to the canteen to sample delicious traditional dishes from Kenya, Jamaica, Guyana, Montserrat, Ghana, Uganda and other countries, with the hall decorated in national flags from 35 nations.

In between eating, students and visitors could try out different African crafts, hair weaving, a poetry workshop and even get a henna tattoo from Post Sixteen students.



Hello Sweden...

Students from HGAED got together online with pupils from Sweden, America and Australia recently as part of an event to see how children learn in other parts of the world.

The Big Learnover was a 24-hour event featuring live internet video links between schools in three continents. Planned by the Harris Student Commission on Learning as part of its research into new ways of learning, some students had to wake at 5am to make sure they could talk to students on the other side of the world.

'Students were bowled over by the Swedish system, which allows students to plan their own timetable,' says Catherine Cheffins, Head of History. 'All students follow a 35-step programme at their own pace, with students of different ages learning together.' American students also spoke about how they liked independent student-led learning.



Live video links with schools in Sweden, America, Australia and the UK.

Experts

The Student Commission will now look at whether flexible, project-based learning might play a bigger part in the curriculum here too. Members of the Student Commission will meet education experts from around the country and work with Goldsmith's University before presenting their findings to Principal, Jane Fletcher, next year.

HGAED students taking part in the Big Learnover were Lara Okafor, Emanuela Adjei-Manu, Tayo Mustapha and Sophie Franklino.

The hand-held Flip camera provides an engaging way of recording ideas and performances for instant playback.



Flip the camera

Small hand-held cameras are now a familiar feature of lessons throughout the school, including PE, history and languages.

The Flip cameras allow students to easily record discussion, sports performances and oral work. Then you simply plug the camera into a computer or interactive whiteboard to watch the results on a large screen.

History teacher Nick Knowland uses the cameras to record students' discussions on historical topics, for example, which the class can play back and evaluate during the next lesson.

'It's good because you can look back at what you're doing and evaluate yourself and others too,' says Jhane Murray Samuels of Year 8. 'Otherwise you don't see yourself and can't think how to get better.'

The cameras provide a useful addition to traditional writing – giving another engaging way to record ideas.



Recording a discussion about suffragette Emily Davison during a Year 8 history lesson.

Monday is BTEC day

Year 9 students now spend every Monday learning a subject of their choice – working towards a qualification equivalent to two GCSEs at grades A*-C.

Courses on offer include dance, acting, art and textiles, travel and tourism, film and media, IT and health and social care. At the end of Year 9 students can gain a BTEC certificate which they can build on in Year 10 to earn a BTEC diploma, equivalent to four GCSEs at grades A*-C.

The courses are challenging and practical with an emphasis on learning real skills which could be useful in the workplace. 'Students like having a whole day on a subject they have chosen,' says dance teacher Kirsty Martin. 'It's a chance to dig deeper into a subject than would be possible in just one or two lessons, so they can really see the progress they make every day.'

Coursework

Learning is interactive with opportunities to make podcasts, for example, learn in groups and continuously improve coursework.

'In health and social care we're looking at communication in different settings such as GP surgeries and hospitals,' says Assistant Principal Stephanie Newman. 'Next month we'll be spending time working in the day centre at St Christopher's Hospice, to give students real work experience.'

New staff

A special welcome to new teachers Ms Kober (2nd in Science) and Ms Higgins (English) and also to Mr Taylor, our new senior ICT technician.



Harris Girls' Academy East Dulwich
Homestall Road
London
SE22 0NR
Tel 020 7732 2276
Email info@hgaed.org.uk
www.hgaed.org.uk

SOUTH LONDON SCHOOLS

Harris federation



Paul Rankin watches Aminata, Year 11, during the final.

Masterchefs cook up treat

Aminata, Year 11, has won joint first prize in a Masterchef competition judged by celebrity chef Paul Rankin (see cover picture).

Five students took part in a Masterchef competition held at HGAED last month, with the winner, Aminata, going on to the final, where she competed against students from other Harris federation schools.

Aminata won special praise for her spiced pumpkin soup followed by salmon and watercress sauce served with sauted potatoes. 'Paul Rankin admired her culinary skills and enjoyed the tantalising flavours that were infused in her dishes and her presentation skills,' says Kerry Stephenson, teacher of food technology.

Aminata's prizes included the latest Nintendo DSi and a signed copy of Paul Rankin's book. Other students who took part were Chisara Agor of Year 11 and Mame Darko, Kortney Johnson-Blake and Hang Le of Year 8. Great cooking everyone!



Teachers judged the chefs' creations at the HGAED heat.