



# Nicholas Breakspear Catholic School

## MAY 2011 NEWSLETTER

### Headteacher's Report

Dear Parents/Carers

I thought it important that I keep you up to date on developments regarding the future of bus transport in the light of the Council's decision to effectively withdraw the school bus network from 2012. All of the secondary Catholic schools in County are continuing to work with the Diocese to provide a Catholic School's bus network from 2012. We are currently meeting with bus companies who are pitching for this very large contract. From the presentations it is clear that what will be put in place will be more bespoke cost competitive and payment flexible than the current system. In order to ensure the most competitive deal for our parents, we as a school are having parallel discussions with the bus companies to see if it would be better for you if we ran the service ourselves.

Which ever option ultimately comes to fruition, I want you all to be assured that Nicholas Breakspear parents **WILL** have a bus network from 2012 at the lowest cost and with the most bespoke option we can obtain. I would be very grateful if you could convey this message to all present and potential parents of our community who may not be aware of our plans.

With best wishes.

Mr Phil Jakszta



### Berlin A Level Trip 16<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> April

On the 16<sup>th</sup> April 2011, 40 Nicholas Breakspear students alongside the budding staff Mr Laing, Mr Carrasco and Miss Collins descended upon Berlin as part of the A Level Trip to explore the effects of the Cold War and World War Two on Germany and Poland. After a smooth flight and transfer we were quickly in the 'Berlin spirit', visiting 'Checkpoint Charlie' and enthusiastically participating in a walking tour of Berlin. The tour was heightened by our Tour Guide Markus and his now legendary catchphrase 'We love Zee Bear!' The following days saw the Breakspear students visit Potsdam (after an extended tour of the Berlin underground network led by the Kaiser Carrasco), the 1936 Olympic Stadium and a flying visit to the Berlin Airlift Memorial (no pun intended). Evening highlights included unique renditions of Take that's 'I want you back for good' and Nirvana's 'It smell's like Teen Spirit' at the Hotel's Karaoke night. Local residents were wowed by some of the vocals on display!

After three days in Berlin, we took an overnight coach to the Polish city of Krakow and again although a little tired, enthusiastically participated in a walking tour of the city. After a relaxing afternoon of discovering Polish McDonalds we were encouraged to become accustomed with local traditions through traditional Polish food and dance. This was enjoyed so much by Head Boy Matthew and Mr Laing that copies of the folk CDs were quickly purchased to practise in their own time. Our last full day in Poland was met with a more sombre mood, with a full day spent at Auschwitz death and labour camp. Although at times we were met with disturbing images and artefacts all students came away with a sense of humility and a unique insight into the horrors of war. Our last evening in Berlin was certainly eventful; At the ice skating rink Mr 'Bambi on ice' Carrasco, Mr Laing and Krishna proved to us why they will certainly not be making any future appearance at next Winter Olympic Games! Viewing of an eventful North London derby was a slightly less cultural experience.

We returned to England on the 21<sup>st</sup> with a sense of maturity and gain. That is with the exception of Mr Laing who returned with the loss of ten Euros and a Historical ruler that didn't even document the world wars, but taught us all that Mickey Mouse's birthday was in 1928! Although we returned tired from the trip, it was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone, with a new found love for 'Zee Bear!'

Written by Rachael Krishna and Matthew Carlyle

### Term Dates

#### Summer Term 2011

Monday 2nd May	Bank Holiday
Tuesday 3rd May	All Students Return
30th May-3rd June	Half Term
Friday 22nd July	Term Ends

#### Autumn Term 2011

Monday 5th September	Staff Inset Day
Tuesday 6th September	Yr 7 & 12 Return
Wednesday 7th September	All Students Return
24th-28th October	Half term
Friday 16th December	Term Ends

Mrs Price recently completed the London Marathon, a total of 26.2 miles. We caught up with her and asked her a few questions.

#### What was the hardest bit of the marathon?

After 19 miles my legs didn't want to move any further. It felt like they had turned to jelly. It was a case of pure mind over matter. I had tendonitis (an inflammation of the tendon) in my right foot and a chest infection. I completed the run in 5 hours 45 minutes and 57 seconds.

#### What was the best costume you saw on the day?

Sonic the hedgehog, who passed me around mile 22.

#### What was the best part of the marathon?

The atmosphere was unbelievable. The generosity of people as I went round was amazing. People were shouting out my name, giving out jelly babies. Seeing people I knew around the way was fantastic. Miss Edwards and Miss Renowden came to watch and my family were there at mile 26.

#### What training shoes do you wear?

I have bright red New Balance or ASICS shoes.

I have them fitted properly at a specialist shop.

#### What is your training regime for the marathon?

I only did 2 months proper training due to an injury, but I would recommend running four times a week with a long run on a Sunday (at least 15 miles) but you build up to that. The furthest I ran in training this year was 16 miles, but they recommend that you do 20.

#### What charity were you running for?

Cancer research, for personal reasons.

#### Will you do it again?

I've already entered the ballot for next year.



A comprehensive list of [term dates](http://www.nicholasbreakspearschool.co.uk) and [weekly calendars](http://www.nicholasbreakspearschool.co.uk) can be found in the 'For Parents' section of the school website: [www.nicholasbreakspearschool.co.uk](http://www.nicholasbreakspearschool.co.uk)

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## Year 11 Leavers

The time has come when Year 11 are flying away from the Nicky B nest. There were times that I thought this moment would never come! It's been a bumpy four years but the journey has been one I will never forget! I remember taking over as Head of Year at the beginning of year 8. You had no idea who I was and I knew nothing about you. I think we were all as apprehensive as one another.



Over the past four years I have loved watching you change into unique individuals. We have shared many moments together, some happy and some sad. You have grown up into great young men and women, although some of you are still waiting to hit the maturity level. I pray that this happens quickly!

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all the greatest of success in your future careers. I know there are some politicians, doctors, teachers and TV stars amongst you.

I hope you leave here with happy memories, each of you will always be remembered by myself and I hope that if we meet again in the distant future we will share a fond memory together. Ms A Speechley

Our form is 11DBE now, and like I said in year 8 I am still proud of that, do you know why? The answer, response and true reply to that is that we've stuck together through the highs and lows of secondary school life, through KS3 and KS4. Five whole years smiling, supporting and cheering each other on.

I know it's hard to believe but it really has been 5 years. Five DBE assemblies have flown by, a seemingly endless number of PSHE sessions have passed in a blur and we as a year, as a form, as a group have matured and grown with fond memories of Nicky B. Mr Bunce has always been there. Guiding us, working with us and planning each form activity; cheering us on in form v. form activities and upholding the 3 letter name of the most consistent form of our time – DBE.

For those of you that remember, in year 8, other students and I were asked to write speeches on our forms. At that time I said, and I quote, 'Mr Bunce simply adds to the magnificence that is DBE'. I now truthfully admit that I was wrong. Sir not only adds to DBE but completes our form. Without him, there is no name, no guidance and no form. Form time for me, and I'm sure many others in great DBE, has been a time of great fun, joy and laughter. It has truly been one of the times in the day that I looked forward to and definitely memories I will cherish.

In essence, Sir's humour and dedication has been a beacon of good times for our form. He has become somewhat of a living legend and an idol. His enthusiasm and interesting twists on some of the more insignificant notices of the day, cough books cough, always leave us wanting more. This marks an end of an era and I will no doubt remember my time as a member of Bunce's Army. Sir, you really are amazing and we give our utmost respect.

### Red House Day 2011—Cliff McNish

On Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> May, we hosted a Red House Book Award Portfolio Day, on behalf of the St Albans Children's Book Group. Book groups from 6 other schools visited our library, to join with one of our year 7 & 8 bookgroups. Everyone has been reading the shortlisted books for the *Red House Children's Book Award*, and so came together to discuss which one should win the award this year.

Pupils chose *Time Riders* by Alex Scarrow as their favourite, followed closely by *The Red Pyramid* by Rick Riordan in second place; *Trash* by Andy Mulligan was their least favourite.

Pupils then spent time being creative and making books reviews, word clouds and artwork which will form part of 3 portfolios which are to be presented to the 3 authors at the national award ceremony in June.

All the pupils taking part were also given a special treat of meeting author Cliff McNish, who has written many books, including the *Doomspell* trilogy.

Later on that day when visiting pupils had returned to their own schools, some pupils in year 8 were also given the honour of meeting Cliff McNish and hearing about his life as a writer. These pupils are currently doing written work about their experience, writing thank you letters to Cliff McNish or doing their own newspaper article.

Here are some extracts from their work:



"Yesterday afternoon Cliff McNish visited our school and told us about his life and his career and what inspired him to write. He told us about his first book called the *Doomspell* which he wrote about his daughter and scary witches." Sam Boniface

"My favourite part of your talk was when you were talking about your daughter and she said 'take as long as you want'... The question that I forgot to ask you while you were here is "how long does it take to write a book?" Tamas Poy

"I would like to read one of your books called *Hunting Ground*, which is a horror book. I thought that this book should be made into a horror movie, which will be a really scary film to watch." Ethan Ross

"My favourite part of your talk was when you were talking about your books and how your daughter asked you to write a story for her about a very horrible witch that has no hair, long eyes that go around her head, four sets of jaws and has no nose." Annalise Meneses Merton

" I think your book *The Hunting Ground* would make a really good movie. I would love to be in it." Natasha Cioffi



## Activities Week 2011

The school is running an Activities Week which will run over three days this year. The whole school timetable will be suspended on Wednesday 29th, Thursday 30th June and Friday 1st July. Instead of normal lessons a number of activities will take place as follows :

### Year 7

Wednesday 29 June	Year 7 Expressive Arts Trip to Whipsnade zoo
Thursday 30 June	Year 7 RE Trip to Neasden Temple and St. Albans Abbey

### Year 8

Wednesday 29 June	Year 8 Humanities Trip to Thorpe Park
Thursday 30 June	Year 8 Sports Activity and Cultural Day (at school) This involves 5 sports, Dance, Food, Art and Music

### Year 9

Wednesday 29 June	Year 9 Insight into Industry at the school
Thursday 30 June	Year 9 Insight into Industry at the school

Friday 1st July will feature a Sports Day for the whole of Year 7-9  
Year 10 will be on Work Experience for the whole of this week.  
Letters and payment details are available from the school website or main reception.



## Success in Athletics for Year 7 Girls!!

The Year 7 Girls Athletics team has made a fantastic start to the competitive season. They have been competing in the Yr 7 & 9 District friendly league which has been held at Westminster Lodge track every week since Easter. The girls have shown great enthusiasm towards the sport and have all been keen to compete for the school. They have behaved excellently at all competitions and have competed with excellent spirit and sportsmanship. Many of the girls have competed in the 'adult' version of the events for the first time and are really developing their skills as they compete. All girls should be please with their performances, but the following girls needs to be commended for their success:

Olivia Coll: Second in the 800m

Sinead Coll: First in 1500m (this is the first time a Yr 7 pupil has won this event in the time that all of the PE Dept have worked at the school!!)

Ellie Corroyer: First in the 100m

April Harpin: First in Discus



## Additional Bank Holiday

(Occasional Bank Holiday)

Please be aware that the school has an additional Bank Holiday on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> July due to the Royal Wedding being held during our Easter Holidays. The school will therefore be closed.

## Past Pupils of St Philip Howard School

Calling all past St Philip Howard pupils and parents. Sadly Mrs Edwards is retiring this summer – she was a key part of our school and will be greatly missed. We would appreciate it if you could write her a message/memory or send us photos that we could include in a memories book. You can either hand write the messages and drop them into St Philip Howard School or you can email them to [bursar@sphoward.herts.sch.uk](mailto:bursar@sphoward.herts.sch.uk). Please do this by Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> June. Thank you.

## Internet Safety

Internet safety and helping our children to be safe online is an increasing concern for many parents and carers. Children nowadays often have non-stop internet access through their mobile phone, iPod, games console, laptop or other device. This may not always be with a parent or carer's knowledge and can happen from anywhere, including from the privacy of a child's bedroom. The eSafety multi agency group of the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board is working towards gathering a broad range of data from parents, schools, children and others. Please take a few minutes to complete this parents/carers survey to help us with our future planning, advice and support: [www.hertsdirect.org/websurveys/cqi-bin/qwebcorporate.cgi?idx=DZN37H](http://www.hertsdirect.org/websurveys/cqi-bin/qwebcorporate.cgi?idx=DZN37H)

If you wish to find out more about the work of the eSafety multi-agency group in Hertfordshire, or are looking for guidance and advice, please email [esafety@hertscc.gov.uk](mailto:esafety@hertscc.gov.uk)

## Date for Your Diaries Reminder: Expressive Arts Showcase 7th July

Don't forget the Expressive Arts Showcase on 7th July. Here are the Year 13 students putting the finishing touches on their exam work.

Art Exhibition: Main Building. 5.00-7.00 pm (Free)

Drama and Music Performances: Alex Curtis Studio 7.15 pm (£3.00 charge)



## A-Level Geography Belfast Trip 2011

Back in January this year, A2 Level geographers travelled to Belfast, Northern Ireland, to study the city as part of their A2 course. Miss Kenneally, Ms Fitzgerald, Mr O'Sullivan, followed by 11 year 13 students flew to Belfast to study the areas surrounding the busy city centre.

Arriving in the evening at Belfast International, in the freezing cold, Mr O'Sullivan eventually found our minibus, and our first stop – as it always is – was McDonalds. We then headed off to our 5-star luxury hotel, as Miss Kenneally had informed us. A little later on, we arrived at Paddy's Palace Hostel. They say 'never judge a book by its cover', but you couldn't help yourself when you saw the luminous lime green door to the entrance. Carrying our luggage, we were shown to our rooms where 11 of us shared. We had 6 bunk beds, one light bulb which lit the entire room and broken curtains which we attempted to use to cure the draught coming through the dodgy window. We then settled/huddled for the night. It was the coldest night most of us had ever experienced in our lives. Early the next morning, adding extra layers, we set off; not really knowing what would be ahead of us. We arrived at the foot of Black Mountain, where we began our trek. Although it was exhausting and FREEZING COLD, getting to the top was worth it, even if we did have a few bruises from falling down on the way back. The views were amazing. Afterwards, we went for some lunch and had a brief tour of Inner City Belfast. We saw some of the murals and the peace walls, as well as Shankill. It was now evening and we got ready to go out to the Odyssey Arena where we played ten-pin bowling and where JLS were performing next door! Later in the evening we headed back and pleaded with the French manager to give us a heater for our room. Having a heater was probably one of the favoured moments of the trip.



The next morning, we were all packed, and due to the minibus not starting and waiting for a replacement, we headed off to see Lagan side a little later than planned. We walked alongside parts of the river Lagan where the majority of the area had millions of pounds invested and was now completely regenerated. Soon after our walk around the busy town centre and getting all the information and photos we needed for our research, we hit the road back to the airport. Although we were only in Belfast for a couple of days, it was a jam-packed trip that none of us will forget! It was a great final school trip to end on for all the year 13's who took part, despite the frostbite!

Eloise Yates

## The Gifted and Talented Programme

We talked to Mrs John, assistant Headteacher about her role as Gifted and Talented Co-ordinator.

### What do you do as Gifted and Talented Coordinator?

I make sure that every able child in this school is stretched in all subject areas.

### How does a pupil know if they are on the Gifted and Talented List for a certain subject?

I liaise with all Department Leaders and discuss the selection process. With their teachers they draw up a list of all the Gifted and Talented students in their area. A letter then goes home to parents saying that their child has been selected for the Gifted and Talented programme. This can be in as many as 10 subjects, or it could be for one subject. Each pupil will then get a letter from each individual department they have been selected for outlining the programme in that area.

### How is it going?

Really well. I have termly interviews detailed feedback sessions with a number of students which has highlighted good practice in many areas. Students are feeling really motivated and stretched this year in so many areas of the curriculum. The fact that they also know that they've been identified as Gifted and Talented, even if it's just for one subject, makes them feel really proud.

### What have been the highlights of your year regarding Gifted and Talented?

There is so much to talk about. Personally I have been involved in taking a group of ten Year 11 students to Cambridge University to look at possible options for Sixth Form and University. We've also had ex-students talk to Year 11 just before Year 11 were due to start their Mock Examinations. Ben Krishna is currently in his final Year at Oxford studying Bio-Chemistry, which will be followed by a PhD. Aniete Ekong is currently a Junior Doctor in Croydon. Their talk really helped to raise Year 11's expectations.

We have also taken Year 10 to master classes regarding stretching the most able and are currently organising for a number of Year 10 students to attend a Physics master class. 10 pupils will also be selected to attend Watford General Hospital to help provide a background for a career in Medicine. All subjects have organised trips, and in-house sessions to support the drive for Gifted and Talented Provision at Nicholas Breakspear.



Mrs. John with Thomas Crowley, Year 7

## The Agricultural Department have this produce for sale:

Honey £3.75 lb Eggs £1 half doz Bedding plants £1.30 tray, (African Marigolds, Alyssum, Lobelia) Geranium (£1.50 tray) Tomato plants @20p cut honeycomb, beeswax polish £1.40, Herbs (Price on request)

Later, cabbage, broccoli, kale, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts plants, £1.50 per score will be available

Gardening Club takes place every Wednesday after school, Beekeeping takes place every Friday after school.

