



Cooper News

Issue No. 41

December 2001



From The Headteacher

A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all!

As Christmas approaches, I am pleased to report that many of the changes made to the school's curriculum and structure this year have had a positive impact on the school:

- The new school day has become familiar to all, leading to less pupil movement and, consequently, a greater sense of calm around the site.
- The new merit and rewards system has proved very successful, being popular with pupils and staff alike. I would like to thank the Staff Working Group, who initiated this aspect of our behaviour policy, for their efforts.
- A mentoring scheme is in place to help our Year 11 pupils in their planning and preparation for GCSE examinations, building up their confidence. The current experience of mock exams and study leave will give them a better idea of what support they need in the coming months.
- The new reporting system has been well received by staff and parents. We would especially like to thank Year 11 parents who gave us valuable feedback and, of course, the working group who developed the

new format.

- The Returners' Project that we are running in school has been most successful with 19 teachers looking to come back into teaching taking part. Several of them have taken up posts in Bicester schools, helping to address the teaching shortages in the area.

STAFFING NEWS

At the end of this term we will sadly be losing the services of several staff. In a short newsletter it is impossible to do justice to the service that they have offered and the qualities they have demonstrated. I would like to thank them for all the effort and hard work they have generously ploughed into the school for the sake of our pupils. We pay tribute to two loyal and long serving members of staff.

In summary, the changes are as follows:

Jean Goodridge has taught in Bicester for most of her working life; initially at what is now called Bicester Community College as a PE teacher, but more recently at Cooper as a valued member of the Science Department. She has had a major influence on the lives of many people as a former Year Head and in her post of responsibility for Pre-Voc pupils. She also introduced Focus Challenge, a scheme whereby pupils work to support a charity of their choice, in the school. Despite her heavy workload she still continues to play an active part in organising extra-curricular activities especially within the PE Department. Her contribution to the school will be sadly missed.

Jayne Ives joined the PE Department at Cooper School in 1978. Her teaching skills and enthusiasm have inspired countless young people to enjoy and pursue sport in school and beyond school in sports clubs at all levels. Jayne Ives' interest and enthusiasm for dance was conveyed to pupils by her teaching, the trips she organised and performances she supported. Jayne did not just teach PE, she ran countless adventure holidays including skiing, walking, climbing and canoeing trips. She taught Geography and History as well as being a very caring form tutor. As a form tutor she organised many social trips for her form and for other pupils. Jayne was also a very successful Year Head in the Upper School. It is not an exaggeration to say that for many of her pupils, Jayne's enthusiasm, interest and teaching skills have influenced their whole lifestyle! Cooper School will miss Jayne, we wish her well for her future in France.

Mrs Jayne Ives (PE) is leaving to live and work in France.

Mrs Jean Goodridge (Science) is leaving to work at a school in Oxford.

Mrs Carrie O'Regan (Technology) is leaving to pursue her wider educational career elsewhere.

Mrs Gill Lowen (Technology) is leaving to work at Lord Williams and concentrate on her family.

Mrs Val Westwell (Maths) is leaving on maternity leave, hopefully to return.

Mr Graham Gibbs (TA) is leaving to act as Engineering tutor at Aylesbury College.

Mrs Lorraine Luckhurst (TA) is leaving to undertake a wider role at another school.

To account for all the changes that

are taking place we have appointed several new staff:

Ms Hannah Boyne (PE) to take over from Mrs Ives as i/c girls' PE. Mrs Denise Wade (Science, 0.4) and Mrs Priti Patel (Science, 0.6) to cover Mrs Goodridge.

Mrs Dianne Pearson and Ms Diana Archer (Technology) to cover Mrs Lowen and Mrs O'Regan, until Easter, followed, in addition, at Easter by Mrs Emma Simpson who will be second in Technology.

We will hopefully be appointing to the temporary Maths post and the additional TA posts shortly.

AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND A WELCOME

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge, and thank, two people who have given greatly of their time, experience and skills to the school over many years:

- Rob Cornford has completed his term as a governor of the school. He has contributed fully and widely to both Full Governors and the Curriculum Subcommittee, utilising his skills and expertise for the wider good of the students and the school.
- Tad Williams has resigned from his role as Chair of the PTA following many years of dedicated and hard working service to the benefit of the school.

I would like to register my deep and sincere thanks to them for their sterling efforts and the undoubted value they have added to the running of Cooper School over the years.

I would like to welcome Malcolm Berry as the new parent-governor following the recent election. Malcolm has a background in LEA administration in a not-so-distant county and the governing body will value his expertise.

I would also like to welcome all

those parents who have volunteered to work with the new PTA group for the coming year. A full report on those involved/events being planned will be in the January newsletter.

BUILDINGS DEVELOPMENTS

This time last year I indicated to you that we had gained planning permission for the new buildings that would form the extension of the sports hall block. Unfortunately, although the money for this project was available and the building planned to start in the summer term, the tenders for the work came in too high and we were unable to get this project started.

We have now reached the point where the LEA are again tendering for the work. Once built, the design will provide additional dining space as well as improving the Sports/Performance Hall complex for both community and school use.

In addition, I am pleased to inform you of the major developments that we have undertaken in the Lecture Theatre to enhance our provision: new lighting, decoration, carpeting and seating alongside a repaired screening system will enable us to utilise the space efficiently again.

COMENIUS INTERNATIONAL LINKS PROJECT

During this term there have been many important visits and occasions for the Comenius project group:

- We received visitors from Estonia and Sweden in October
- Staff and pupils from these countries benefited greatly from the visit.
- Staff and pupils from Cooper visited Germany in November to undertake planning for the next phase of the project over the next two years.

HELP US ON FREE SCHOOL MEALS

As is usual at this time of year, the Government will use the percentage of our pupils who are eligible for free school meals as a basis for assessing our funding for the coming year and the standard of our performance over

the last.

The higher the percentage of our children who are eligible for free school meals, whether they take them or not, the better it is for the school in terms of our funding. It also enables us to be compared accurately and appropriately with similar schools rather than those with lower actual percentages of free school meals. Therefore, we need our figures to be accurate and, the more accurate our figure is, the better.

We would therefore like you to respond positively if your children **are eligible** for free school meals, whether they take them or not, by completing the form at the end of this newsletter, or that on the letter which your child will bring home shortly.

Please address the form to me directly. It will be treated in the strictest confidence.

END OF TERM

ARRANGEMENTS:

School will close for pupils at 12.45 p.m. on Wednesday, 19th December. Buses will leave at 12.50 p.m. Free school meals and snack lunches will be available for those who want them.

THESE SHOULD BE COLLECTED FROM THE DINING ROOM AT MORNING BREAK.

School will resume for all pupils at the normal time on Monday, 7th January 2002 (Week B).

SOMERVILLE DRIVE GATES CLOSURE

Following recent difficulties at lunch time in the area of the Somerville Drive gate, this entrance will be locked at lunchtime for the next half-term. The new arrangement will be monitored and reviewed at the end of this period, when parents will have the opportunity to make their opinion known. Students with lunch passes will still be able to leave the site by both the front and back gates.

COOPER SCHOOL REUNION 2001 TOP SCIENTIST PRESENTS PRIZES

Cooper School held their annual prize giving and reunion on Thursday, 29th November. The Performance Hall saw proud parents, governors and staff gathered together to applaud the achievements of the class of 2001.

The former pupils were greeted by the Chair of Governors, Mr David Dunne. Former pupil, Stephanie Gilmer, and current pupil, Kerri-Louise House, then entertained with their interpretations of "Eternal Flame" and "Stand By Me", ably accompanied by a school band including caretaker-turned-saxophonist, Brian Harvey.

The Headteacher, Mr Andrew Hamilton, then addressed the pupils, providing his own personal and fond memories of his first ever Year 11 group at Cooper School. The certificates and prizes were presented by guest speaker, Dr Martin Westwell, Research Director of the biotechnic company, Synaptica. He gave a captivating address using the example of the evolution of the bombardier beetle to show pupils how they all needed to make the most of their talents. A live demonstration of what happens to liver when plunged into hydrogen peroxide illustrated his message vividly!

The evening concluded with a variety of refreshments provided and served by the PTA. Flowers were by Joyce Price and the book tokens were produced by Coles Bookstore of Bicester. The 2001 Prize winners were:

Art		Emily Spinks
Business Studies		John Martin
Design & Technology	Food	Amy Clark
	Graphics	Alisha McMahon
	Resistant Materials	Emma Wise
	Systems	Lee Hillsdon
	Textiles	Helen Murray
English		Michelle Scott
Drama		Kim Ford
Geography		Lisa Avery
History		Alistair Warburton
Modern Foreign Languages	German	Claire Smith
	French	Amy Dille
Mathematics		Alison Johnston
Music		Emma Taylor
Physical Education		Stuart Lavery
Science		Stephanie Gilmer
		Andy Dunn
Religious Studies		Sean Lidster
Jan Charman Prize		Tara Baughan
Chair's Prize - Service to School		David Barrie
John Cutforth Prize		Claire Wilson

CYCLING SAFETY INITIATIVE



Last year, over 90,000 cyclists under the age of 16 were injured, with 22,500 receiving head injuries. Next term we will be reminding pupils about the importance of safety for pupils cycling to school. Our Community Police Officer, PC Jon Payne, will be addressing all years in assembly on cycle safety and in particular he will focus on the need to wear helmets (70% of all cyclists' deaths are through head injuries). In conjunction with the assembly we will be handing out details of a cycle helmet offer with a chance for you to buy a helmet at a subsidised rate. If you would like this leaflet before Christmas they will be available at Reception.

PC Payne is also very willing to run cycle proficiency training after school on Wednesday's if sufficient pupils are interested. Please write to PC Payne at the school if you would like further details of this.

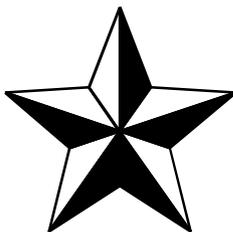
EXAMINATION CERTIFICATES

Students from last year's Year 11 who were unable to attend the Annual Reunion Evening should collect their certificates from Reception during normal school hours as soon as possible. Please note that these must be collected in person as a signature is required.



SHINING STARS OF BICESTER

On 29 November the Christmas lights were turned on by some exceptional children from Bicester. Schools and youth organisations were asked to the "Shining Star" awards, which were All the children had done something be represented by three pupils. Felicity their own time to work with BYPAC, a 10 and 25 years. They help with a wide drama and dance. Gary and Felicity certificate. Katherine Wilkinson (8.7)



Her most recent achievement is raising £250 for the John Radcliffe Critical Care Unit, along with her younger brother Lee. She asks for nothing in return for all her efforts. Katherine was awarded a certificate of achievement and a large silver plaque engraved with her name. **WELL DONE** to all three pupils, we are very proud of you.

Schools nominate special children to be considered for presented on the main stage on 29 November. outstanding. Cooper School were very proud to Vidler (8.6) and Gary Stuart (10.2) both give up youth group for disabled people aged between range of activities including visits, arts, crafts, were given a medal and an achievement spends her own time raising funds for charity.

SCIENCE AND DRAMA WORKSHOP

On Tuesday 6th November, while everyone else was in registration, we were already on our way to Didcot for a day filled with science and drama.

There were ten of us: Mrs Ramsey, Mrs Ellard and eight pupils from Year 10. Our purpose was to learn as many new drama skills and as much about scientific issues as possible in the space of the six hours we were there for.

This workshop was part of a series of workshops to help us to prepare for what would hopefully end up as a national competition. Even though Cooper was one of the 100 schools accepted, we had to produce a piece of work good enough to get us through the regional finals.

Our day started with a quick introduction and then they whisked the adults away for arrangement of final details and a tour around the area.

All the 160 pupils were put through their paces in a tough physical warm up which included lots of mime and group work. Then we had a short break in which we could drink as many cans of coke as we could fit in. Before long we were full of new energy, 'E' numbers and haribo sweets.

We were sorted into separate groups to go off and learn about issues such as cloning, IVF treatment and eternal youth. We spent an hour cramming our brains almost as full as our stomachs before it was time for lunch.

After lunch we were free, in our school groups, to use our new skills and ideas to produce a short piece of scientifically based physical theatre. For ours, we chose eternal youth. We performed in front of the other schools and thankfully it was a success.

We had a brilliant day and we all agreed that it was an enjoyable, but tiring experience.

A big thank you to Mrs Ellard and Mrs Ramsey!

Lucy Rigby and Annabel Williams 10.7



PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Junior Sports Leaders' Award (J.S.L.A.) and Football Association Junior Organisers' Award

For many years, pupils at Cooper have coached and umpired at sports events for younger pupils. Their work as volunteers has been appreciated but not really rewarded. All that has now changed for Upper School pupils as 100 Year 10 pupils begin the Junior Sports Leaders' Award and 23 Year 11 boys embark on the Football Association Junior Organisers' Award.

When successful these pupils will gain nationally recognised sports coaching awards covering topics such as Sports Organisation, Coaching Communication, Fair Play, Refereeing and Health and Safety. They will be qualified to assist primary school teachers with after school clubs or work with small groups of 8-11 year old players. Both awards lead to post-16 qualifications which are available through the Football Association, Sixth Form education or Cherwell District Council.

Next year the Football Association Award will also be available to Year 11 girls as girl's football becomes a focus sport at Cooper.

Rugby

Rugby Union has been played at Years 7, 8, 9 and 11 this term with each year having its own success.

The Year 11 results culminated in a 5-5 draw with Lord William's Sports College, Thame. This was an excellent achievement against a traditional rival and designated rugby

playing school. Four boys were rewarded for their efforts with County representation. Our congratulations go to *Eddie Devine, Darren Cottam, Adam White* and *Russell Johnson*.

The Year 9 team had a mixed season mainly because their better players did not decide to play for Cooper until it was too late. Let's hope they decide to play from the first game in Year 10. They showed their true potential with a demolition of Bicester Community College 43-0.



Year 8 are the most

improved team of the season. They began with a defeat by Blessed George Napier School and ended the season as County School semi-finalists having beaten John Mason, Langtree and Drayton in the County tournament. If they train hard in Year 9 they will easily improve their win/loss record. They also beat Bicester Community College 31-0.

The only unbeaten team of the season are Year 7. They have recorded wins against Lord William's, Banbury, Gosford Hill and Waddesdon. At the moment they are training at Bicester Rugby Club under floodlights. The school wishes to thank the Club for this facility.

Soccer

At the time of print, the Year 11 soccer team were waiting to play the Oxfordshire Schools Under-16 cup semi-final. They beat Lord William's, Chipping Norton and Matthew Arnold in the early stages to reach this exciting position.

In the Wagon Wheels 5-a-side tournament held at Cooper, the Year 7 squad won through to the next

round. Victory will see them as Oxfordshire champions in the Inter-County championships.

** HEALTH WARNING **

Next term every boy at Cooper will play soccer on grass. They all need studded footwear and shinpads to be safe.

Badminton

The demand for badminton (boys and girls) is huge at Cooper but we cannot staff all the sessions pupils need. If any parent could supervise badminton sessions in the Sports Hall on a Monday or Thursday from 3.30-5.00pm, their help would be greatly appreciated. Full training and support will be given. Contact John Brodley at the school.

.....AND FINALLY

The Physical Education department would like to thank Mrs Ives for all her enthusiasm and commitment to sport at Cooper. Not only did she run school teams, but literally hundreds of pupils will remember her outdoor education trips, skiing, walking, climbing and canoeing in the Ardeche.



SWIMMING

Congratulations to Neil Flynn (Year 9) and Rebecca Gill (Year 7) who have represented Oxfordshire at swimming this term.



YEAR 9 HOCKEY

The Year 9 girls represented the school enthusiastically in the Banbury Schools' League. Having lost several of the matches early in the season, performances improved and the team won four of the eight league games to finish mid table. Team members were: *Hollie Head, Gemelle Robertson, Hayley Hill, Lauren Berry, Carla Cassidy, Michelle Bone, Lisa Mott, Kat Forster, Katie Dunn, Laura Roberts, Lauren Saran, Charlotte Tuffrey, Louise Worth, Jess Lovell, Lianne Forbes, Carly Davies, Shelley Austen, Loren Guest, Leigh Honour.*

CHRISTMAS COOKING



The Christmas cookery course was cancelled due to the low level of response.

ABBREVIATION QUIZ

1. JSS by RK
2. HP by JKR
3. The FF by EB
4. The RC by EN
5. WF by JL
6. AMND by WS
7. C and the CF by RD
8. The H by JRRRT
9. NL by PP
10. BB by AS
11. The SQ by HCA
12. The L, the W and the W by CSL
13. The PM is TB
14. 100 Ps in a P
15. 12 Cs in a F
16. E is the Q of E
17. AGB invented the T
18. MO plays football for L
19. S comes before E
20. H8 had 6W

Sarah Rigby 8.6

ENGLISH SCHOOLS CROSS COUNTRY CUP

1ST ROUND AT STOWE SCHOOL, BUCKINGHAM

The Junior Boys' team was predominantly made up of Year 7s, selected on the basis of their 800m times in lessons. They performed excellently on the longer 2.8km course and finished ahead of their Year 8 teammates.

Individually they finished:

Adam Blackler	7.3	23 rd
James Adams	7.2	24 th
Brendan Murray	8.3	28 th
Sam Houlihan	7.7	44 th
Karl Freeman	8.5	49 th

The team race was of a very high standard and the Junior Boys did well to finish 8th.

The Inter-Boys' team was very strong this year, but found themselves facing tough competition from a number of schools over the 4.1km course. The mixed Year 9 and 10 team ran a fantastic race and grouped together well to finish within fourteen places. However, it wasn't quite enough to qualify for the next round as they finished 5th - level on points with the 4th placed team.

Their individual performances were:

Joe Stachowiak	10.4	10 th
Neil Flynn	9.6	11 th
David Broadhead	10.1	17 th
Colin Wilton	9.2	24 th

Well done to all the boys who have another chance to impress at the County Championships later this year.



DATES FOR THE SCHOOL **YEAR 2001-2002**

SPRING TERM 2001

Monday 7th January - Friday 8th February
Half term: Monday 11th -Friday 15th February
 Monday 18th February – Friday 22nd March

SUMMER TERM 2002

Tuesday 9th April - Friday 31st May
Staff Training:
 Monday 8th April - No pupils in School
May Day Bank Holiday:
 Friday 3rd & Monday 6th May
Half term: Monday 3rd - Friday 7th June
 Monday 10th June - Friday 19th July

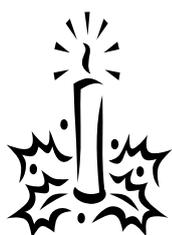
SCHOOL COUNSELLOR

Need someone to talk to?

The School Counsellor is happy to talk over any worry privately with a pupil. A form is available at Reception if you would like to book an appointment with Mrs Warburton.

BICESTER ADULT COMMUNITY EDUCATION CENTRE

The new brochure giving details of courses for the Spring and Summer terms is now available. Spring term courses start the week of 7 January 2002. Please telephone 01869 241532 for more details.



MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR



FREE SCHOOL MEALS FORM

Please return to A S Hamilton - Headteacher before 19th December 2001

My child/ren listed below is/are eligible for free school meals as the family is in receipt of income support and/or income-based job-seeker's allowance.

Name(s) of child(ren):

I would /would not like a form to enable my child/ren to take up free school meals (delete as appropriate).

Signed:

(Parent/Guardian)

Secondary Article Heading

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“Take a memorable quotation from this article (a pullquote) to pique your readers’ interest.”

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