

Hilbre Endeavour

Christmas 2015



**INSIDE: Birdwatching, Books, Bouncing Trampoline
and much, much more!**



Introduction

A warm festive welcome to all our readers.

When we began our new academic year, I wrote in our newsletter about how proud I was to have been given the opportunity to be the Principal of Hilbre High School Humanities College and how I could only see us going from strength to strength. Well, I certainly feel that the first term has been a none-stop journey of looking deep into the soul of Hilbre High School, ensuring that the good becomes the very best and that areas identified for improvement

are quickly addressed. As such, it is a delight to write to you as the Interim-Principal of a happy and thriving school; a school that enjoys being Hilbre High and knows it is getting better and better from day to day!

It is therefore important to begin with a thank you. A thank you to all in the Hilbre community for the part played by each and every one of you in making Hilbre High special. We have a core aim this academic year, which is to ensure expectations are high, the level of challenge is demanding and that students take an increasing level of responsibility for their own progress and behaviour and I am confident that, with one term gone already, we are well on our way to achieving our aims! Also looking back to last year, congratulations to our students who took examinations for some fantastic GCSE, BTEC, AS and A Level results they achieved.

In school, from evidence collected during our lesson by lesson walkabouts over the term, students are clearly engaged in their work and there is a real sense of focus and determination around the school building. Our Learner Journal scrutinies have shown clearly that the overall standard of marking is very high and that our students' response to marking is showing good progress!

One of our most noticeable and significant changes has been the change we have made to break and lunchtime arrangements; the impact of this initiative has amazed us all in how positive an atmosphere around the school it has generated, with students responding very well to these new adjustments. It is gratifying to be able to honestly say how much calmer the building is on the inside, how cleaner an environment we now have at Hilbre with significantly less litter outside and none at all in the school building; all because of the changes made!

Keen to show the students we have listened to their opinions, in recognition of their commitment to Hilbre High and their excellent start to this year, we held our first non-uniform day in 10 years, during October, and what a success it was! We had a warm, positive atmosphere throughout the day and were delighted that our students had a highly popular request listened to and acted upon. With £945 raised on the day to support Wirral MIND, Guide Dogs for the Blind and the charity for PC Phillips, the day could not have been better and we will certainly have others.

In November, we saw the production of 'The Boy in a Dress' take place and I honestly don't think I have smiled and laughed as much during any school production. The students, both in the cast and crew were magnificent. They are our future stars!

On Armistice Day, I was incredibly proud to take part in a short service of remembrance outside the front of the school. For the first time, some students arrived in full Cadet uniform, which added to the atmosphere. The same week, our school Community Action Team held a Community Coffee Morning in which local members of our community dropped-in to meet our students, have a chat and share in some musical entertainment. Also that same week, we achieved the Investors in People Award!

Other accomplishments in the term; there have been many. Early on, we were really pleased to contribute donations of clothing and food gathered by staff, and money from a bucket collection amongst the student population, for a charity relief trip to the refugee camp at Calais. Later, seventy-two of our students from across year groups travelled down to London to see Nicole Kidman appear in a new play; Photograph 51. What an educationally rich treat that was for our budding future scientists! In November, our annual Prize Giving Evening at the Floral Pavilion in New Brighton was simply stunning. The evening was interspersed with the most amazing performances from our students that were simply breath-taking.

I'll end as I started, thank you to all in the Hilbre community for the part played by each and every one of you in making Hilbre High special. What a term we have had. Here's to the next one!

Happy Christmas to one and all.

Mark Bellamy
Interim-Principal

Hilbre Remembers...



On November 11th at 11 o'clock, some staff and pupils held a short service of Remembrance next to Hilbre's newly created Remembrance Garden. Some of our pupils who are cadets came in uniform for the day.

Mr. Wallis delivered a series of assemblies to all three Houses – Dee, Hoyle and Royden about the important work of the Royal British Legion and the Poppy.



Head Boy Mark Andrews and Tom Chisholm, along with pupils from Years 9, 10 and 11 helped in selling poppies.



On November 5th, a group of 30 Year 9 pupils visited Birkenhead Park Visitor Centre to see a presentation from the Western Front Association about life in the trenches during World War One. They were able to handle real artefacts and try on items of uniform.



Raising Aspirations: From Oxford to Madagascar – *We Can Do It!*

Recently a group of Year 11 and Year 12 students attended a presentation delivered by Isobel Plant from the Social Mobility Foundation. Students received information about the programme that includes internships with top employers, a professional mentor, career and skills workshops and university application support. Our Year 13 students Zac Houghton, Rob Webster and Tom Keight have all benefitted from the programme that has assisted them in applications for Medicine and entry to Oxford University.

The students shared their experience of the programme with the group and were able to have a question and answer time at the end of the session.

In the same session, Holly Carr our Head Girl of last year, delivered a presentation about her Gap Year experiences in Madagascar, where she conducted Biological research. The students had the opportunity to discuss with Year 13 students their journey from Year 11 to their final year in the Sixth form.

We will be having further presentations next term including a representative from Clatterbridge Hospital who will discuss Health Care Careers including Radiotherapy.



Lewis and Rosie: A Perfect Match!

Lewis has been a pupil at Hilbre for going on 7 years now. He has worked well throughout Hilbre gaining some very good GCSE results and it was great to know that he had applied to Sixth Form and he would be coming back to do his A Levels.



During the summer, Lewis was told that a match had been found for him for a Guide Dog. She was a 17 month old black Labrador and her name was Rosie. Lewis met Rosie and Rosie met Lewis; from there their friendship and working relationship began.

Rosie came to Hilbre with Lewis in September of this year and has fitted into school life extremely well, as you can see from the photographs.

You can often hear Rosie snoring in Directed Study, stretched out on the floor as Lewis gets on with his work.

It is lovely to see how Lewis and Rosie work together walking down the corridors going to their lessons or to lunch. We are very proud as a school of how well Lewis has coped with having this extra responsibility and how well Rosie has fitted in.

We are also very proud at how well all of our pupils have welcomed Rosie and have let her get on with her job. Trying to ignore such a lovely dog has been difficult for staff and pupils alike.

THE WIRRAL

MY name is Elliot Montieth; I'm 16 years old and I'm a very active and passionate Birder, Photographer, Conservationist and Volunteer based on the mighty Wirral peninsular in the North West of England.

My story began when I was 7 years old and my mum

took me to see some breeding Black-Winged Stilts up at WWT (Waterfowl and Wetlands Trust) Martin Mere. Since that day I've had an unrivalled love for the Natural World and spend as much time as possible exploring the earth's natural beauty, which being on the Wirral isn't that hard as you've got everything right on your doorstep.



WWT Martin Mere may have been where my story started off, but I needed somewhere where I could continue that story and where else better than the Wirral. If I were to sum-up the Wirral as a whole, it would have to be like someone has turned Minsmere into a county; it has every conceivable habitat that you can think of; Sand Dunes, Grassland, Farmland Wetlands, Mud Flats, Sand Banks, Woodland, Salt Marsh, Rough Grassland, Reed Beds and Heathland. Small but diverse.

The Wirral is boarded by both the Dee and Mersey Estuary, so as a result it's not just nationally important, it's internationally important for a wide variety of birds such as Shelduck, Pintail, Common Scoter, Cormorant, Sandwich Tern, Oystercatcher, Ringed Plover, Black-Tailed Godwit, Knot, Dunlin and Common Redshank!

Black-Tailed Godwits have to be my favourite out of that list for a few reasons; such as their "weekaweeka" call which blesses the air like snowflakes do on a cold crisp winter's day, and when they start to transform from their blazing copper summer plumage into winter plumage, with each bird having its own colour scheme.



Luckily for me, the best place for them on Wirral and one of the best places in the UK for Black-Tailed Godwits is Gilroy Nature Park. Gilroy is only a 5 minute walk from my school, and when I'm either in History, the 6th Form Block or my Form Room I can observe them filling the skies in their captivating flocks as they turn the sky black before barrelling downwards into Gilroy.

Sometimes after school or when I have a free period, I'll walk down to Gilroy and transfix myself on to these roosting beauties as they transform the park from nothing into an internationally important site, as they coat the park in their thousands.

On an average winter's day, the Wirral coastline will sustain around 100,000 wading birds and 10,000 waterfowl, with hotspots being Hilbre Island, West Kirby, Gilroy Nature Park, Heswall, New Brighton and Hoylake. You'd think with the sheer numbers that we get on the Wirral, that we'd get one or two rarities hidden amongst them, and guess what... we do!

Here's a short list; Hoopoe, Wryneck, Red-Backed Shrike, Woodchat Shrike, Terek Sandpiper, Laughing Gull, American Herring Gull, Surf Scoter, Blyth's Reed Warbler, Red-Flanked Bluetail, Radde's Warbler, Black-Winged Pratincole, Western Sandpiper, Red-Throated Pipit, Gyr Falcon, Semi-Palmated Sandpiper, Board-Billed Sandpiper, Yellow-Breasted Bunting, Red-Breasted Goose, Citrine Wagtail, White-Throated Sparrow, Alpine Swift, Little Swift, Great-Spotted Cuckoo, Black-Billed Cuckoo and Desert Warbler to name few.



But it's not the rarities that make the Wirral a special place and nor is it that we are the best place in England to watch Leach's Petrel and wintering Hen Harriers. What makes the Wirral special is whatever you want it to be; for me it's that the Wirral is a place of sheer beauty and perfection; it's a proud place to be from, because not everywhere is internationally important for such a wide array of birdlife.

The Wirral demonstrates that you don't need to go far and wide to see amazing wildlife spectacles and see mind blowing wildlife because it's right on your door step. In my garden I've had Peregrine Falcon, Black Redstart, Marsh Harrier and Waxwings. In school I've had Whimbrel, Red Kite, Merlin, Peregrine Falcons, Yellow-Legged Gull, Little Egret and Mediterranean Gull. Just a 15 minute walk away from my house I've got Breeding Peregrine Falcons, 60 wintering Great-Crested Grebe and Wirral/Cheshire's largest colony of Common Tern... which I found.

The Wirral, small but just simply magnificent.

To read more about Elliot's journeys across the almighty Wirral check out his fabulous site www.birdboy101.co.uk



Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award Success!

Congratulations to the following former and current students for their successful completion of the Gold Level of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme this half term. This is a massive achievement, and I'm sure they are all looking forward to receiving their invitation to the Palace to be presented with their award in 2016.
Mrs Ledson

Daivid Steiger
Hannah Burden
Harmony Bowker
Amber Bannon
Ben Cooke
Jack Riley
Christopher Starr



Art

Ian Murphy Inspired Year 11 Art Workshop

In mid-September, Mr Maycox attended an Ian Murphy 'Visual Language' workshop at Edge Hill University (as part of the Teacher Training Programme.) The daylong session looked at ways to engage students in other approaches to drawing, working at scale and experimenting with media.

On Friday, October 23rd, a class of twenty one Year 11s (Art & Design) and four Y12s (Fine Art) took part in a workshop reflecting what Mr Maycox had taken from Ian Murphy's teachings-the aim being to extend the students' understanding of drawing and manipulating materials. The students spent four hours (periods 2-5) creating an A2 image based on architectural details. The work they produced was phenomenal (especially considering the time they had to complete it) and will of course go on to add a new dimension to their respective coursework folders.



Here you can see a Year 11 student going through the process of drawing with torn paper, applying various materials and then drawing back into her image using graphite powder, pencil, water, paint and pen



The Great Hilbre Christmas Bake-Off!

Congratulations to the Year 9 winners of the recent Christmas Bake-Off. Pictured here with Mr McNamara are the winners: Jake Burns, William Oakley and Thomas Robinson.



TOTAL OF 1,272 BOOKS DONATED TO THE INTERNATIONAL BOOK-CYCLE CHARITY: ONE WAY IN WHICH HILBRE STAFF AND STUDENTS ARE HELPING TO IMPROVE LIVES ACROSS THE THIRD WORLD.

Towards the end of the Summer Term, I realised that we would have a large amount of good quality books destined for the skip, to make way for new texts due to the changes in the national curriculum and exam structure. Unfortunately, they were not the type of books charity shops take, so I decided to research into charities that send books abroad to disadvantaged schools and communities.

I came across Book-Cycle and was really impressed with what they are achieving, and as they have a collection warehouse in Wigan, decided to organise a collection of unwanted books from all departments.

To the great relief of staff with bulging cupboards, it was the opportunity to have a good clean out and make room for new resources. I also asked if any other local secondary schools had books to donate – Upton Hall sent us 127 books to add to the collection. The Library became the collection point and I soon became inundated with donations.



Before school closed for the summer break the Student School Council and Community Action Team members took on the task of sorting through the books into subjects, boxing and labelling them up. On Tuesday 8 December, Dan Taylor with the help from members of the School Student Council and Community Action loaded up the minibus with 1,272 books and we delivered the books to the Book-Cycle warehouse in Wigan.

Book-Cycle work in partnership with Thrive Africa UK and Book Relief UK to provide educational facilities for rural communities in Ghana; our donated books are destined for the school libraries in the Ashanti region where literacy levels can be as low as 57.9% for children.

What really drew me to the charity is the way they track the donations from collection to delivery to the children who will be benefitting from them and will be sent photographs of the children receiving the books.

By School Librarian Mrs Phelan



Book-Cycle
From tree to book and back again

Sending books changes lives...
Providing opportunities for children in developing countries by redistributing unwanted educational books from the UK

www.book-cycle.org
Charity No: 1127078

Year 9 History Visit to see Suffragette

On Tuesday 15th December, a group of 40 Year 9 pupils, accompanied by Mr. Hellier, Ms Manning and Mrs. Tesseyman visited the Light Cinema in New Brighton to see the film 'Suffragette'. Staff and pupils found the film interesting, thought provoking and informative; all very helpful when opting for GCSE History next year.

A 'Christmaths' Celebration

In mid-December, Mrs Marshall and pupils in Year 10 welcomed parents and carers to the very first Christmaths event at Hilbre; an evening that celebrated the amazing talents of Year 10 pupils in Maths. Pupils showed off just how challenging their Maths lessons are and, using a range of mathematical skills, guests tried their hand at getting involved in the range of exciting activities that were devised especially for the evening, including using a great piece of software called Desmos to design graphs and helping Santa to look for great deals by taking into account the best percentage discounts.

Pupils were able to share with guests that having an ability to solve problems, use a whole range of skills and to think outside the box, are all qualities that you need to get a really good job.

They demonstrated that it really is okay to be good at Maths and they even taught our guests a few new things as well! One parent commented, 'I had a great time... quite challenging and a good laugh. Wow...the students work so hard!!!'

With this event being such a positive experience for pupils and parents and carers, look out for other mathematically themed events in the coming months.

Helen Daly (HLTA)



Pupils who took part were:
Olivia Haslem, Elle Lewis, Josh McBeth, Nick Halliday, Saul Turner, Cameron Boyd, Louis Norton and Blu Howell



Now That's What We Call Hilbre Music!

With our GCSE compositions from last year being so good, we decided that with the compositions being such a high standard, it would be perfect to make a CD.

This became part of a BTEC project that saw Adam Gasienic select the songs; make the CD and all the art work that goes with it.

The tracks can be downloaded from the school website. www.hilbre.wirral.sch.uk/music

It contains a selection of GCSE compositions from June 2015.



Gospel Workshop with Tyndale Thomas MBE

Music students from all years were invited to attend a Gospel singing workshop at Liverpool Hope University given by Tyndale Thomas. Tyndale is one of the key figures in the development of Gospel music in Britain and is a choir leader and educator. He has supported and performed nationally and internationally with acclaimed artists such as Stevie Wonder, Nina Simone, Rick Wakeman and Gospel legends Andrae Crouch, Richard Smallwood and Edwin Hawkins.

Students participated in the workshop singing original Gospel music written by Tyndale as well as a Christmas carol with a Gospel twist. Even the torrential rain couldn't dampen the spirit, singing such uplifting music. A number of schools took part and the sound made by this choir was amazing. We have some very talented singers at Hilbre!

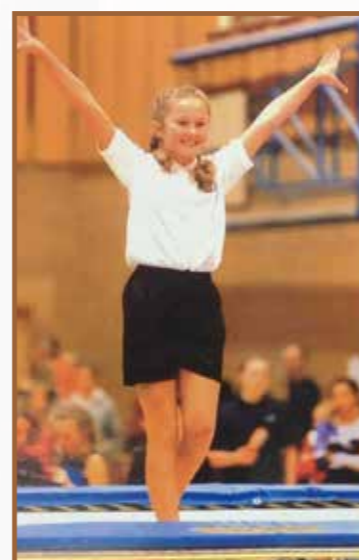


Bouncing Into Regional Trampolining

On Sunday 6th December, the following pupils participated in the Regional Schools Trampoline Championships at Robin Park Sports Centre in Wigan: Amy Cowell, Aimee Welsbury, Annie Kearns, Charlotte Clark, Rachel Birch, Ellie Tunstill and Katie Woodier.

All pupils tried extremely hard, represented the school well and should be really proud of themselves.

This was the first time the school had entered the competition and so we now look to build on the experience gained for the Championships next year.



Sixth Formers Show Real Character As They Participate in the National Citizenship Award (NCS)

I first heard about the NCS from some of my friends who had been on the trip the previous year.

My friends told me what an experience it was and their reviews were excellent. They also said if they had the chance they would do it again.

I signed up for NCS when one of the representatives on the programme came into school to give a talk explaining all about it. One of the reasons why I signed up for the course was because I wanted to experience what my friends had experienced the previous year, and I also wanted to go with my other friends who had signed up. It was really well worth it...

When we arrived the course was explained to us: the first 4 days would be spent at Kingswood Colomendy. This would be our residential, focusing on outdoor brain puzzles, trust exercises, team building and just taking a leap of faith. This was quite literally jumping off a 7m wobbly podium with just one uneasy rope securing you in place.

We divided into rooms. It was four to a room; the beds being bunk beds.

Our days consisted of getting up at 7.30am then going for breakfast, which included a wide range of hot and cold food before being split up into our groups. The group consisted of Matt Napier, Mark McKenna, Hannah Caldwell, Elliott Montieth, Liam Dale, Scott Lynch, Adam Gasieniec and myself. Our days were action packed and lasted around 13 hours with lunch in between. We were on our feet non-stop.

After our residential we spent three days at Liverpool Community College taking part in workshops; some included having group discussions about controversial issues such as what was happening around the world. We also had an interesting talk from a paramedic who showed us how to give CPR.

During the next two weeks, we had to complete our Social Action which consisted of four things; raising money for our chosen charity, to organize a social event, raising awareness for that charity and lastly we had to get our hands dirty by helping out in the community.

Our group had chosen The Royal Air Force Association (RAFA) as our chosen charity. We raised money by walking over 7 miles; we organised a fair for our social event which consisted of a cake, tea and coffee stand, a raffle, a craft table and a bouncy castle. Total money raised was over £3000. To raise awareness, we made a series of posters and flyers which we gave out to shops in our local community. Finally getting our hands dirty consisted of working on the Bootle Canal in Liverpool and an old cobble stone coal yard with the help of the National River Trust. The day was fun kayaking along the canal, picking up rubbish as we went.

At the end of the programme you got to graduate. You had to dress up smartly and receive your reward. You then had to explain to the other groups who had taken part, what you had done in order to graduate. If I had the chance to do it again I would, without a shadow of a doubt. *By Rob Barnard 6CLO*

Apprenticeship Evening

On Thursday 28th January 2015, Hilbre High will be running an Apprenticeship Evening between 6.00pm and 8.00pm in the Sixth Form building for pupils in Years 11, 12 and 13. The aim of the event is to raise the profile of apprenticeships as a realistic option for appropriate students, to allow them to explore this career option further and to make informed decisions.

Many Sixth Form pupils are considering high level apprenticeships as a possible alternative to university and should attend this event in order to speak directly to companies and training organisations. We are expecting representatives from a broad range of training providers; a selection of whom are detailed below:

Vauxhall Motors –
Manufacturing and maintenance engineering
Maritime And Engineering College North West –
Engineering & metal fabrication

Capenhurst Nuclear Services – Engineering training
Wirral Metropolitan College – Broad range of training provision
JM Sports – Sports coaching and teaching assistant training
Little League Sports – Football & multi sports coaching training
Kaplan – Accountancy training
Carillion Construction – Broad range of construction training
TTE - Chemical Engineering training

The event will be of particular relevance to Year 11 students who are not planning to progress onto academic study in the Sixth Form at Hilbre High School Humanities College and who wish to explore employment and training options further.

If you have any questions regarding the Apprenticeship Evening please do not hesitate to contact:

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