



*Farewell Miss Levenson
and thank you for seventeen
years of dedicated leadership*



Hilbre

ENDEAVOUR

INSIDE:
PARIS, POLAND, CAPE TOWN,
CHINA, SPAIN, AND MUCH, MUCH MORE!

INTRODUCTION

With the end of this academic year almost upon us, it gives me great pleasure to reflect upon our many achievements of 2014/15.

At the heart of everything we do at Hilbre lies the quality of teaching; nothing is more important than our students' learning experience and our passion and commitment to improving this aspect of our work has never been more evident. Walking around the school I see so many examples of staff inspiring our young peoples' curiosity in the world around them, and I have been most impressed by our teachers' enthusiasm to continue to develop their skilful and innovative classroom practice, both by their engagement in training and development opportunities but also their willingness to share examples of best practice with others. A major development this year has been the filming of teachers in action to promote self-reflection and capture excellence across the curriculum. One of our investments has been the purchase of a 'tracking camera' which will facilitate a better and more accurate record of the classroom experience; I am sure that this will ensure that this aspect of our work will continue to develop and improve as we look towards the new academic year.

Another facet of our school improvement strategy has been a relentless focus on the quality of marking. The establishment of Learner Journals for all students throughout the school has been a new initiative, one that has been welcomed and appreciated by our learners, who have commented almost universally, that the Journals have been very helpful in assisting them to make progress. They are also very useful in helping middle and senior leaders make judgements about whether students are making appropriate progress over time, thus enabling timely and effective interventions to be put into place when students show signs of falling behind. The addition of teachers' email addresses to Monitoring Review reports and the implementation of 'Show My Homework' have been initiatives which have been welcomed by parents and carers, and we have been pleased to receive such positive feedback about these aspects of our service.

The academic year 2014/15 has seen international education operating at an unprecedented level; our partnership with Steenberg High School remains strong, with reciprocal visits conducted during the course of this term, and our first Duke of Edinburgh Gold expedition to Cape Town was an amazing success. Our emerging links with Mingde Junior High School are looking both promising and exciting; Mr Lu, their Principal, is very keen to begin student exchanges in 2016 and we already have some significant student interest from those who have been studying extra-curricular Mandarin. With school trips to France and Spain and the 6th Form visit to New York too, our students have many rich and varied opportunities to broaden their experiences of new cultures, languages and to learn more about the 'global village' in which we live. Improving technology will also play a critical role as we endeavour to bring student experience from around the world into our Hilbre classrooms, as demonstrated by our recent Student Council 'Skype' video conference with their Steenberg counterparts in South Africa.

One of the things that we have been focusing on more closely this year has been students' readiness and preparedness for learning. I am grateful to our Form Tutors for their commitment through activities like morning equipment checks which ensure that students do not waste precious learning time whilst seeking to borrow pens or rulers. Uniform has been very good this year but we must not rest on our laurels - your role in helping us to maintain high standards at Hilbre is much appreciated and we thank you for your contribution in supporting our values.

At this point of the school year I would like to pay tribute to our Year 11 cohort who had a particularly difficult few months after Easter, grieving for the loss of one of their peers and friends, whilst preparing for the rigours of their GCSE and other level 2 examinations. Their behaviour during the examination season was absolutely exemplary and they faced the challenge of these external tests with resilience and determination. It was great to see them relaxed and happy at our recent Prom night, and I truly wish them the results that their hard work deserves. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank our staff for the incredible levels of support offered to students in the run up to the exams; there is no doubt that our students' confidence in the exam hall was due to the exceptional level of preparation provided by teachers across the curriculum, after school, at lunchtimes, at weekends and during holiday times. There are very few schools that offer such a comprehensive package of support, and I am sure that parents would wish to join with me in expressing our appreciation to both teachers and support staff for the wonderful dedication and commitment demonstrated in helping students to achieve the best possible outcomes.

We were extremely upset to hear that sadly, one of our 6th Form students, Matthew Tijon, had passed away following complications arising from surgery. Matthew was a real Hilbre character, a much loved student who will be a great loss to our community. We wish his family and friends our deepest and most sincere condolences. This has been a very sad few months for us, as we come to terms with the deaths of two special and unique young people. Sometimes, life's challenges can be hard.

Finally, we say farewell to a number of staff at the end of this term, and we wish all the very best to Wendy Ward, Jacqueline Hudson-Kirkham, Kathryn O'Hara, Jim Garland and Dani Hudson as they take on new roles and responsibilities in new schools. Farewell also to Lisa Kilgariff who is returning to Ireland and Sian Willett who is leaving for family reasons.

Also we take this opportunity to wish Anne Poste a long, happy and healthy retirement.

As you will know from my letter to you earlier this term, this is my final introduction to a Hilbre Endeavour as I retire from Headship and look forward to new challenges within education and beyond. Once again, I thank you all for the fantastic support I have received over the years; Hilbre is a wonderful school and I have been honoured and proud to be part of its evolution and development. Who would have believed that those dilapidated, pre-fabricated blue blocks that I inherited back in September 1998 would have transformed into the attractive, popular, over subscribed and thriving school it is today? Thanks too, to those of you who have written or emailed me with your good wishes, which I have appreciated hugely. There is no doubt that I will miss 'The Purple Palace' more than you could ever know, but I leave in the knowledge that the Governors and Senior Leadership team will continue to benefit from your ongoing interest, involvement and contribution to life at Hilbre. I wish the school every success for the future as it continues on its journey.

With my very best wishes,



Jan Levenson
Principal



PRINCIPAL RETIRES AFTER 17 YEARS OF LOYAL SERVICE

The end of this summer term marks the retirement of Principal Jan Levenson after 17 years of loyal and committed service to the school. The school is barely recognisable to the one she joined in September 1998. Under her leadership the school has been re-designed, re-built, converted to an academy and totally transformed.

As Principal she has driven up academic standards, crafted and developed a dedicated and hardworking staff, created opportunities for students beyond their wildest dreams and ensured that Hilbre is the school of choice for West Wirral families.

Her passion for inclusive education, for creating global citizens and her belief in the motto 'Progress through Endeavour' has resulted in thousands of students being well prepared for life beyond Hilbre and students whose successes are based on the values instilled in them during their time at school.

At the end of the 2013/2014 academic year she wrote our school pledge in an effort to ensure all members of the school community

were united in terms of our vision and core purpose. Never have 31 words encapsulated the heart of a school so well:

'To ensure that every student, whatever their starting point, makes rapid and sustained progress through effective, high quality teaching, in order to achieve good outcomes within a caring and supportive environment.'

These words reflect her commitment, dedication, passion and enthusiasm for the education of Hilbre's students. They will live on at Hilbre well into the future, well after she has left and they will represent part of her incredible legacy.

It is testament to her outstanding achievements over the past 17 years, that she leaves Hilbre as an over-subscribed, vibrant, popular and happy school.

I would like to wish Jan, on behalf of the Governors, Staff, Students and Parents a very happy retirement and take this opportunity to thank her for all that she has done to enhance the lives of the students at Hilbre High School Humanities College.

Mark Bellamy
Vice Principal

Head Boy Tom Jackson Tells Us of His Past Year at Hilbre: Farewell Tom and Good Luck

I can truly say that the past year as Head Boy of Hilbre High School has been the best year of my time at Hilbre. It has been an eventful year ranging from giving my first major speech along with Holly (Head Girl) at Open Evening and then the Floral Pavilion for Prize Giving to welcoming our partners in China to our school community.

It has been a challenging year managing my A-Levels with my Head Boy duties but one in which I have learnt so much and thoroughly enjoyed. My favourite part of this past year was hosting, alongside Holly, a 'Question Time' style event where we invited our former MP Esther McVey in along with our new, current MP Margaret Greenwood and the Liberal Democrat candidate Peter Reisdorf. Sixth form students scrutinised the candidates really well and it turned out to be a really successful event.

I would like to thank Hilbre for all of the support it has given me over the past seven years. Sixth Form has been a great experience under Mrs Whisker and Mrs Devonport and I can't thank them enough for the support they have provided over the past two years.

Recently, I helped select a new Sixth Form Leadership Team for the academic year 2015/16. It was a difficult application process with the candidates having to be interviewed by Miss Levenson, Mrs Whisker, Mrs Devonport, Holly and myself. However, we compiled a strong team of ten students with Mark Porschke and Liz Wilkinson being the new Head Boy and Head Girl. I wish them and the team all of the luck for the future.

I have had an amazing time at Hilbre. However, it is time to move on to university and start the next chapter of my life. Farewell Hilbre!



Head Boy Tom far left.

BIOLOGY OLYMPIAD!

As part of Edge Hill University 25th Anniversary celebrations for Biological Science, Hilbre Year 12 students were invited to take part in a 'Biology Olympiad'. Teams of 5 students entered the biological based science quiz with a series of different rounds, which included extracting DNA from saliva, insect identification and using microscopes to look at their own cheek cells.

Hilbre entered 3 teams who showed a high level of expertise in all the scientific techniques used within the science quiz. One of the teams proved they had what it takes with achieving the highest score out of all schools in the Cheshire and Merseyside area to which they came 4th place overall out of 29 teams who entered.

All students who attended had a very enjoyable day and were fantastic representatives of the school. Well done Year 12 Biologists.

Adele Jones
Jane Whisker

OUR YEAR 11 PROM 2015

Pictured here are some of our debonair young men, just after they have stepped off the coach, taking them to the Hilbre High School Year 11 Prom in Liverpool.

All those who attended had an excellent evening. Congratulations to Will Chisholm and Mel Bennett on becoming Prom King and Queen. Thanks also to Mrs Dixon and Mr White for their organisation of such an excellent evening.



Physics is Booming at Hilbre!

In April, a lucky group of Year 8 students were rewarded for all their hard work with an all expenses paid trip to Alton Towers with a single brief; they must investigate and report back on the forces experienced when on a roller-coaster.

An early start meant the coach to Alton Towers was quiet but they soon made up for this with a full day experiencing the thrills of everything that the park offers. Not even the poor weather could dampen the enthusiasm of our students. As for the reports, I'm not convinced that Sir Isaac Newton ever used the word "Awesome" in any of his presentations to the Royal Society!



Not to be left out, in June, eleven Year 9 students represented the school in a rocket workshop, hosted by Neston High School. The aim of the day was simple; design and build various rockets and then fire them in competition against the other schools at the workshop.

Our students certainly enjoyed the experience and displayed remarkable team working skills as they went from drawing board to finished product without any hitches.

Unfortunately, our rockets weren't selected by the judges to be first in either category (design and distance fired) but we can hold our heads high with a respectable second place in the distance fired category!

Thanks to everyone involved with these trips, in particular the Ogden Trust who provided the funding for transport and materials.



Challenge Academy Tour: Destination Paris 2015!

On Wednesday 10th June, the Year 8 Challenge Academy set off on their visit to Paris. The pupils involved had all worked extremely hard throughout the year, completing additional work in different subject areas to prepare them for the visit.

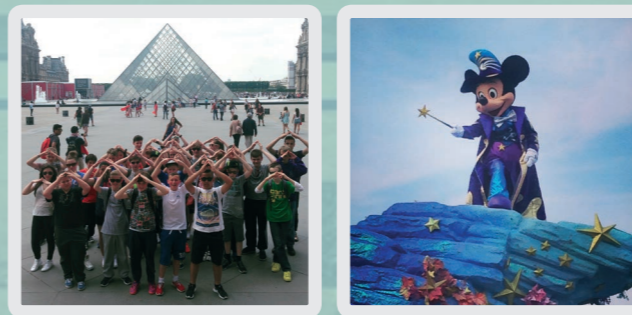
Many of the pupils had studied French in addition to Spanish during the year, and all pupils aimed to use French speaking skills as much as possible throughout the visit. After a tour of Paris on our coach, we headed to Notre Dame Cathedral, where we admired the architecture and beauty of the famous landmark. We enjoyed lunch outside in the sunshine before walking along the River Seine to the Louvre museum. There, we were all excited to see famous works of art such as the Mona Lisa and the Venus de Milo. We then travelled to our hotel, checked in, and enjoyed our evening meal.

On our second day in Paris we visited the Eiffel Tower, and the more adventurous of us ascended all the way to the top. The views of Paris were spectacular, and this visit was definitely the highlight of the trip for many pupils; something to tick off the bucket list! After lunch, we thoroughly enjoyed a cruise along the River Seine, taking in many of the wonderful Parisian sights and soaking up the sunshine. To cool off afterwards, we headed to Aquaboulevard, Europe's largest indoor water park. The slides, pools and waves were all fantastic, and the pupils spent an amazing couple of hours enjoying the many facilities, lazing around on the beach, or sliding down chutes in rubber rings.

On Saturday, we set off early for Disneyland Paris for a day of fun and adventures. We were certainly not disappointed – the park lived up to everyone's expectations, and we all managed to get on all of the rides we had hoped to. The Disney parades were stunning, and the shops provided plenty of souvenirs to take home for family and friends. To end the day, we stayed late to watch Disney Dreams, the spectacular fireworks display.

We were all sad to pack our bags and set off for home on Sunday morning, as it had been such an incredible trip and both pupils and staff had had a fantastic few days. It was a pleasure to take such a delightful group of pupils; they were a credit to the school and are now fully fledged members of the Challenge Academy! Special thanks must also go to Mr Lloyd, Miss Walters and Miss Humphreys for all of their help throughout the trip.

Miss Jardine



7SFL's Review of the Year

Looking back to the beginning of September, We started together, to make progress through endeavour! The first step on our journey through secondary school, We met our form and thought it was cool!

Our first adventure was to Barnstondale, Where we learned to climb and abseil. It helped us get to know each other, And now we're a team like no other.

We helped on Open Evening, And performed at Prize Giving, We joined the sports teams, Playing on Hilbre's field of dreams.

We learnt how our school connects to Steenberg High, When Mr Taylor came to visit in July. He came into our English lesson, Where we asked him lots of questions.

We've achieved some special awards as well, But we're not bragging, we're just proud as hell! Form of the Term, most ILPs and IRIS points, The Attendance Champions League six times.

We've done all sorts of things together, Having fun, no matter the weather. Our Chester trip, and Awesome Walls, And the Thurstaston Walk where we had a ball.

Our form is like a family, Which Miya told everyone in assembly, We'll miss each other over the summer break, But we're ready to come back and be great in Year 8.

The collected efforts of 7SFL and Miss Fleming



Sixth Formers Organise and Host Outstanding 'Question Time' Debate

Reported by Tom Jackson

On Friday 20th March, I organised a 'Question Time' style debate with the help of Holly Carr, Mrs Whisker and the Sixth Form Leadership Team. Initially, it was Mr Wallis and Mrs Devonport's idea and it carried on from this point. We invited our MP and Employment Minister Esther McVey, the Labour candidate for Wirral West, Margaret Greenwood and the Liberal Democrat candidate, Peter Reisdorf. Holly and I chaired the debate with the questions coming from keen Sixth Formers.

The candidates answered controversial questions about topics ranging from fracking, immigration and whether the glass ceiling for women has been smashed! The event enabled students to gain an understanding of politics and topics that are readily discussed in parliament. We have seen, through the avid debates held by the students in the Sixth Form block, that many of us have developed further political interest from the day and the topics that hold together today's society.

Tom Jackson, Head Boy
Holly Carr, Head Girl

SIXTH FORM NEWS

Students have completed a variety of activities this term to prepare them for life after Sixth Form. A "Mock Interview" Day was arranged and local Training Providers were invited to come into school and conduct interviews with the students, each of whom had to complete an application form and apply for a specific role.

Representatives from JD Education, Wirral Metropolitan College, Carillion, Liverpool Chamber of Commerce and Progress to Excellence Ltd gave detailed feedback and suggested areas for improvement to each student. The morning was a great success with many of the employers commenting that our students were the best they had interviewed for some time! The following pupils received an excellent report for all areas of the interview ; Hannah Marriott 6APO, John Gore 6APO, Lewis Crawford 6CWH, Abbey Todd 6FTE, Tom Keight 6HTU, Steph Smith 6HTU and Hollie Miller 6AWA.

A "Next Steps" evening was hosted for Year 12 parents and students with advice for applying to University and gaining an Apprenticeship. Parents were given a UCAS guide and invited representatives from the University of Liverpool, University of Chester and Edge Hill University to give a short presentation regarding University life and the range of courses available. Hilbre's Careers Advisor, Fran Trought also gave information regarding Apprenticeships to enable students to make informed decisions about their future.

In June, students visited a Higher Education Conference at the University of Liverpool where they attended various lectures to find out more information about specific courses in areas such as Healthcare, Education, Engineering and Biological Sciences. They were able to speak to student representatives from many universities in a large "Market Place" and obtain help and advice regarding courses. Students visited Edge Hill University for the day where they had a detailed itinerary that included a Personal Statement Workshop and full Campus Tour as well as a tour of current student accommodation. Students also attended a Budgeting Workshop and a presentation about Student Finance. Edge Hill University also provided a complimentary lunch for all staff and students. We would like to thank Sophie Barrett-Kai who is the Student Recruitment Officer for arranging the visit for our school and making the day such a memorable and valuable experience for our students.

Finally we have recently appointed our new Sixth Form Leadership Team to roles that will offer them the opportunity to gain relevant experience for their chosen careers. The Head boy will be Mark Porsche, with Deputy Tom Keight and Assistants Robert Webster, Zak Houghton and Niall Hannah. The Head Girl will be Elizabeth Wilkinson, with Deputy Amber Bannon and Assistants Emily Nolan, Georgia Rowan and Rachel Quaille. The standard of applications and interviews was exceptionally high and all students who applied were very enthusiastic about the educational experience they have enjoyed at Hilbre and are looking forward to working with staff in the next academic year. The Leadership Team have already assisted in the "Welcome to Hilbre Evening" and "Induction Day" and many staff have commented that they are a welcome addition to our successful Sixth Form at Hilbre!



SIXTH FORM VISIT TO KRAKÓW, POLAND

On Thursday 26th of March, a group of Sixth Form students, led by Miss Fleming and Mr Hellier, went on a trip to Kraków, Poland to visit the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum and Oskar Schindler's Enamel Factory Museum. We left after school on the Thursday and arrived late in the evening. The following day we woke early and headed off to our first stop; the Museum at Auschwitz-Birkenau.

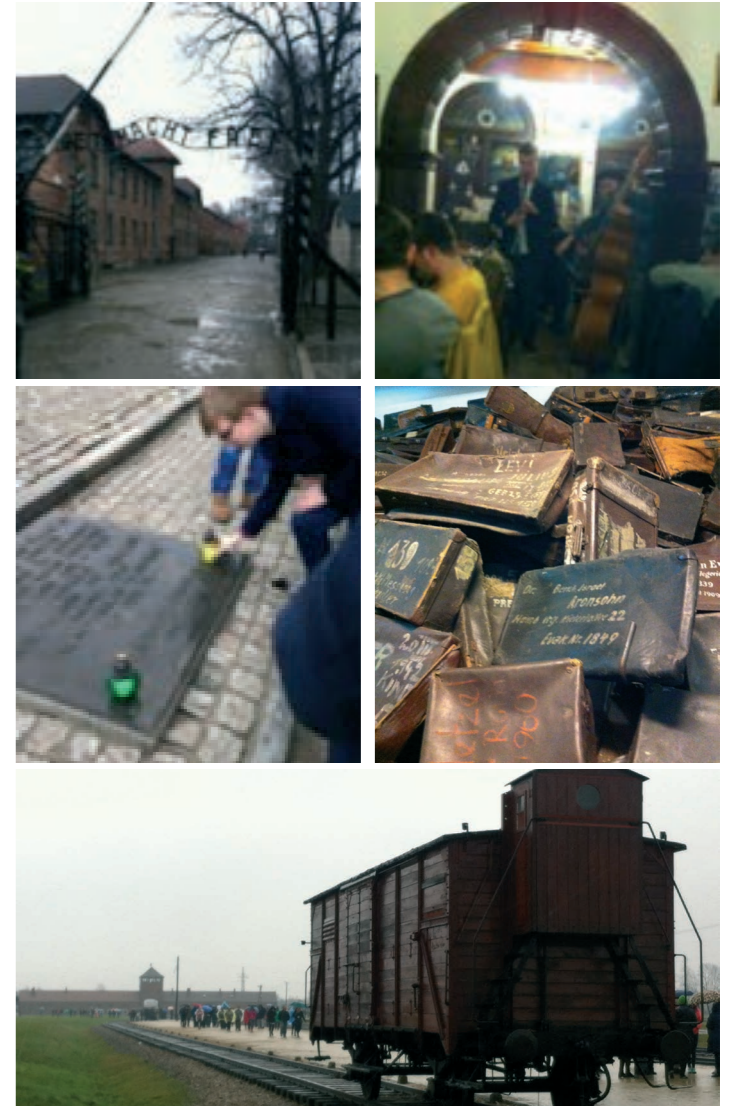
Visiting the site was a staggering experience, seeing the piles of suitcases, shoes and hair really brought home the horror of the atrocities that had been committed in this place in a way that simply reading about them never could.

After returning to the hotel in Kraków, we walked down through the city to the central square; this was an opportunity for sightseeing as well as buying gifts for friends and family. From there we walked down to the Jewish quarter of the city, located in old Kazimierz, where we ate a traditional Jewish meal that went down well with everyone, whilst being serenaded by a live Klezmer band which played traditional Jewish Ashkenazi music.

On the final day we went on a walking tour of the City, more specifically the Jewish quarter and the sight of the Kraków Ghetto. Our guide told us of the fate of the Krakovian Jews after the City became the Capital of General Government during the war. As the final part of our trip, we visited Schindler's Factory Museum, a huge building that told the story of life in occupied Poland for Jews from the day of invasion, through the creation and liquidation of the Ghettos, deportation to Concentration Camps and finally liberation in 1945.

The trip was most definitely an experience, both a shock and horror at the events that took place there not even a hundred years ago, and an enjoyable look at an ancient European City rich in history.

Tom Chisholm
Year 13 RS and History Student



Xhavier from Steenberg Visits Hilbre

Following Miss Jardine's Connecting Classrooms visit to Steenberg High, we have been delighted to host Mr Xavier Taylor from Steenberg for a week.

Xhavier worked intensely with our students on similar projects to Miss Jardine and we look forward to the results appearing on a film to be produced shortly. Xhavier was an absolute pleasure to have with us and a great ambassador for Steenberg.



DESTINATION STEENBERG! MISS JARDINE'S WEEK IN CAPE TOWN

Recently, Miss Jardine went on a visit to Steenberg High School to continue our partnership work. Here she tells us about her visit:

My journey began on Saturday afternoon, and after two long flights and a short stop in Dubai, I eventually arrived in Cape Town at 4.30pm on Sunday 24th June.

The following morning I arrived at Steenberg High School at 7.45am, just in time for staff briefing. I met with Principal Mr Kraak, and was told that by the end of the day I would feel part of the Steenberg family. That certainly turned out to be true. I received a very warm welcome from the staff during their morning meeting, and then headed straight to junior assembly, where I received an equally warm welcome from the learners.

After assembly, I was off to teach some English lessons. The learners were all keen to discuss their views on local issues, and to find out more about Hilbre. There is so much potential for our learners to work together on local issues – through Skype, through email conversations, and hopefully through future pupil exchanges. I was surprised there were so many similarities in issues affecting young people, and it became apparent that no matter the location or geography, kids are kids; they all face similar issues and concerns.

I was then whisked off on our first adventure: Robben Island. The boat was extremely choppy over to the island - it was a long 45 minutes for many of the passengers, who felt quite sick! The views of the scenery and especially Table Mountain were breath-taking.

Robben Island was a humbling, emotional experience. An expert, an ex-inmate named Sparks, took us on a tour of the prison itself, which was a particularly moving part of the day. Having recapped A Long Walk To Freedom on the plane just the day before, Mandela's experiences were fresh in my mind. Seeing his cell with my own eyes, along with the quarries and yards that he spent so many years working in, was particularly emotive and something I will never forget. I know that experiencing these things for myself will influence the delivery of my lessons, and hopefully have a more profound effect on the pupils I teach.

On Tuesday, I attended a planning meeting with the RLC (student council) about this year's film project. Learners watched some of the films that I had made for the visit, and then broke into groups to plan what they may do for the task in Steenberg. We planned to meet again later in the week to commence filming.

On Wednesday, I worked with Ms Burger and her Grade 11s, and delivered a presentation about Hilbre before holding a Q&A session. Next, I visited Mr Arendse's Grade 8 History class, where two learners delivered a spectacular presentation about Steenberg High School and I gained insight into the running of their school from the learner's perspective.

In the afternoon, Mr Botha and Ms Burger took me on a fun and enjoyable adventure, journeying to the summit of the seventh wonder of the natural world, Table Mountain. The cloud was thick and visibility very poor as we explored the top of the mountain. It was an incredible, magical experience, and one I will never forget. I cannot believe I have been to such a magnificent place, and one that many people can only hope to visit at some point in their lifetimes.

After a lesson talking to classes about Hilbre and life in England on Thursday, and answering some very funny questions about Beyoncé and Steven Gerrard, I met with Ms Volkwyn and her group of Environmental Project learners. We discussed their recent Environment Camp, in which 31 learners had spent three nights studying their local environment. It was clear this had had a huge impact on their knowledge and understanding of their local environment, and the problems in ensuring the wildlife, plants and waters are cared for and protected. They performed some dances and plays that they had created to teach other learners about plants and creatures that must be cared for, particularly those that are endangered. The learners were passionate about their local environment, and extremely knowledgeable about the plant and animal life. Their garden project aims to encourage birds and other creatures to return to the local area, and find safe places to feed and nest. They have reintroduced plant life that was previously endangered or had disappeared from the local area, and the garden is a real success story, and something of which the learners and educators should be incredibly proud.

Next, I met with the RCL to work on our film project. The group had divided into smaller groups, and had each chosen an issue about life in Cape Town that they would change if they could. Each group created mind maps about how that issue effects life for young people, and what they believe could be done to change things in their local community. After interval, the groups delivered presentations outlining their work and thoughts, and did so with such confidence I was extremely impressed. Their ideas and suggestions for improving their local communities involved working with others in their community - primary schools, high school drop-outs, and less educated adults, in an attempt to teach them about these issues and highlight alternative ways of living. Issues centred around gangsterism and the violence connected with this unfortunate way of life.

It was a pleasure working with such confident and passionate young people, who all want to make a positive change in their community. I firmly believe they have the knowledge and capability to do so, and hope they have the opportunity to work with other members of their community to really make a difference.

On Friday morning, Mr Kraak collected me from the guest house at 7.45 and we headed towards Pollsmoor prison, where he explained to me the time of Mandela's imprisonment and the protests and marches of the people outside, as they campaigned for his release from incarceration. Mr Kraak is very passionate about the political history of his country, and the effect it has had on his life, and the lives of his family and friends. He is grateful for the peace and relative equality all South Africans experience today, but feels it is important that the past is not forgotten, and that learners today understand and appreciate the struggle that was endured for the freedom they experience today. It was a privilege to gain insight into Mr Kraak's views on such a matter.

When we returned to school, we had a short staff meeting, in which Mr Taylor and Mr Kraak sent their love and best wishes to all staff in Hilbre, and hoped that our partnership will continue long into the future. I then had an opportunity to speak to the staff, and thank them for their kindness, hospitality, and efforts in ensuring this week was so incredible for me. I sincerely could not have hoped for a more amazing experience in South Africa, and feel privileged to have spent a week with such wonderful people.

I cannot begin to express how grateful I am to the kindness and friendship I received from the amazing staff at Steenberg, and how much I hope to return one day. I hope that our partnership continues and develops in the future, and more teachers and pupils have the opportunity to take part in the life-changing experience I was so privileged to participate in.



Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award 2015: Destination South Africa!

By Zak Houghton

At 11am the 4th of April ten students, including myself, from year 12 along with Mr Blackstock and Mrs Randles left Hilbre in the minibus and headed for Manchester airport to embark on our Gold Duke of Edinburgh expedition that would see us flown half way across the world to Cape Town in South Africa.

We took a British Airways shuttle flight from Manchester to Heathrow and from there a 12 hour flight to sunny Cape Town arriving early morning where we were met by our driver Lazelle, who was lovely but had slightly questionable driving skills. We then drove to our B&B named Little Orchard which would become our second home for our stay and immediately the divide between the affluent, built up and predominantly white area and the poor, tin housed predominantly black area became apparent just from the journey there. New football stadia for the World cup, new cricket facilities and golf courses of lush greenery backed onto the vast sea of corrugated metal houses that laid home to the majority of Cape Town's residents. To us this was shocking, we couldn't believe that these shacks were actually people's homes, and this made us all question what we take for granted back home and we hadn't even been in this beautiful part of the world for more than an hour!

First day we ventured around where we were staying in Constantia and visited the shopping mall where we bought the obligatory supply of fizzy drinks and sweets that would see us through our next few days. The next day we took our bus into the vibrant township of Gugulethu that is home to around 100,000 people and covers an area of 6.49km², where we met Rob the representative of the charity we would be volunteering for named Abalimi Bezekhaya which helps the disadvantaged in the townships set up local gardens to grow crops to supply them with food and an income from the sale of these crops.

We were introduced to the three old ladies we would be helping and another local gardener named Manelisi who were quick to assign us jobs. For the next 4 days as a team we worked extremely hard with some of us moving (because they hadn't dropped it off in the right place) and digging in the 1 tonne of manure we bought with money raised through cake sales and back packing back home; whilst some of us put up barbed wire to stop thieves that had broken in on a previous night.

After our hard work we also spent many a night eating out at local restaurants and visiting local attractions such as the Monkey and Bird World, an open bus tour of the Cape, going to the penguin beach, a boat trip to Robben Island and finishing our journey with fish and chips at Hout Bay.

However these luxuries were a complete contrast to the endurance that the team had to face when walking from Cape Point, the most south-westerly point of the continent, for 5 days up the coast in 32oC heat, along a rocky mountainous 'pathway' named Hoerikwaggo Trail that was hardly there, all the while with us hauling our cumbersome backpacks. Admittedly, the views were enough to inspire anyone to complete the monstrous walk that we did as to our left we were shadowed by rolling hills covered in extravagant flora exclusive to the National Park and that are home to numerous animals which I had never seen; to our right was a glistening picture-postcard view of the Pacific Ocean (which became the header of many Facebook profiles).

Overall, and I think I can speak for everyone on the trip, the amazing expedition that we all set off on was a truly inspiring life experience, and we will all cherish the memories we made together dearly.

I would highly recommend that anyone in Hilbre with the chance to do this should grab it with both hands as I personally am so glad I opted to do this. I also feel lucky to be a member of Hilbre and to have been offered this experience and would like to say a big thank you to Mr Blackstock and Mrs Randles for making this an experience of a lifetime that none of us will ever forget.



Our Next Fantastic Hilbre Production: 'The Boy in the Dress'

Written by: Charlotte Bagley

The cast of 'The Boy in the Dress' have been working hard to produce an amazing play based on the book by David Walliams. The play is being directed by our Drama teachers and currently includes 50 Year 7 actors with three older students playing the adult roles.

To take part in the play, Year 7 pupils were all invited to an after-school audition in the Drama studio. The auditions were amazing; I had such a good time. We had to improvise various characters, such as squabbling narrators and the main roles such as a stylish girl and two brothers arguing. The atmosphere in the studio was electric, as everyone was acting with lots of enthusiasm so that they would get chosen to be in the play. At the beginning of the audition I felt nervous...what if I didn't get a part? However, as we got into the swing of things and into characters I began to feel at home and forgot about my nerves.

The original book revolves around the lives of just six characters, but our play version has been scripted to include 50 actors. I think Mrs Madden has written it this way because she wanted to include everyone that came to the audition, so no-one felt left out!

My favourite part that has been directed so far is Scene 6, due to the awesome choreography of Mrs Walker! Let us just hint that 'twerking' is involved! My character, Evie, is a bubbly narrator, although her and the character Martha get a bit mad at the boys in the play, she definitely has an amazing personality and her lines are comical.

Seeing the play take shape has been an amazing experience and seeing the range of people who take part is spectacular. I have got to work with people in the play that I have never had a chance to speak to before and watch amazing older actors perform and learn from them.

Our play is set to occur in the Autumn term. Please come and watch!!! Information about where to purchase tickets will be available next term. In the meantime, me and all the other actors will be preparing and learning lines to ensure our play is... (in the words from our script) F-A-B-U-L-O-U-S!

Photography by: Libby Boddy



WIRRAL PAPERBACK CHALLENGE

Back in September 2014, the start of this academic year, we launched the new Wirral Paperback of the Year Challenge.

This is a competition for authors, which is judged by students across Wirral Schools. It brings together students from a wide range of schools across Wirral, to discuss their thoughts and responses to a broad range of fiction texts. The participants get to meet authors and question them about their inspirations and processes, which inspires our budding writers to pursue their ambition.

This year's students have read a range of texts from Graphic Novels by Julian and Marcus Sedgwick, fantasy novels by the esteemed Edward Carey to thrillers by E. Lockhart and Berlie Doherty. Highlights have included meeting four of the writers at an event which focused on encouraging the readers to try something new. The students responded warmly to Catherine Bruton ('I Predict a Riot') and to Alan Gibbons ('Hate') among others.

The culmination of their efforts and their input to the Challenge was seen in June, when the students cast their final votes for the Wirral Paperback of the Year. They presented a range of artistic displays in response to their favourite texts, sharing them with students from other schools. The winner will be announced officially in September at the launch of next year's Shortlist.

Mrs Phelan and I would like to thank the students who took part this year, for their intelligent input and their commitment to reading such a broad range of texts from a variety of genres. They have been an inspiration themselves. We would also like to invite avid readers to join the challenge in the next academic year. It is open to students from years 7 to 10.

Mrs K Miller



Hilbre Welcomes Educators from Taicang Province in China

We are very excited about our emerging partnership with Mingde Junior High School in China. Recently, we were delighted to host a delegation of Chinese educators, including Mr Lu, the school's Principal.

Delegates saw a number of Hilbre lessons, including Mr Armstrong's fabulous frothing-coke experiment in science. As Miss Levenson has mentioned in her introduction, we are now very keen to begin student exchanges in 2016!

A Spanish Perspective of Hilbre: What Do Our Visitors Think?

In recent weeks, we have been delighted to have two Spanish students staying with us. Here they tell us of their Hilbre experience. One of our guests had the pleasure of staying with Hilbre Year 9 student Chloe Greensmith. Chloe also tells us of her experience and how she is looking forward to future Spanish encounters...



Hi, I'm Javier, I'm 13 years old and this is my first time at Hilbre High School.

Coming here to England has made me try for the first time in my life some interesting things.

For example, my first sport day with the javelin throw, the 100m or my first real tennis match.

I also went on my first camping holiday, and saw some really beautiful scenes in Wales, much better than in a TV documentary! This week I also made my first cake in Food Technology as we don't study that in Spain.

So far, England has opened lots of possibilities for me in the future. I hope that I can come here again next year to see my friends again who have been so welcoming.

Hi, I'm Chloe, I have had Laura staying with me for 1 week now and she will be staying for another week. So far she seems to be enjoying herself, she has met lots of new friends and got to see her old ones too, I will be going over there and staying at her house, and will spend two weeks with her. She is a very nice girl and has been a pleasure to have with us, my family and I will be happy to have her again in the future. Not only does this give Laura the opportunity to explore her English further but it gives us the opportunity to explore our Spanish as well.

Hi, I'm Laura, I'm 15 years old and this is my second time at Hilbre High School.

I'm so glad to be here again and see my old friends again but I have made a lot of new friends that are very nice and have made this very enjoyable. As Javi said coming here made me try new things like, making my first cookies, going on my first camping holiday in Wales and I had my first "Dove Day" that I really enjoyed. This school is very different to the one I go in Madrid because there the teacher moves from one class to another and here the students are the ones who move. Also we have different subjects and a different timetable.

I'm really enjoying these three weeks, I can say that these are so far the best weeks of my life. I hope to come soon and see my new and old friends again, and of course my new and old family as I will really miss them.

Destination Barcelona!

In May 2015 Mrs Hudson, Mrs Morrell, Mr Morris, Mrs Cundall and Mr Taylor took a group of 43 Year 9 and 10 students to Vilanova, Barcelona. Here, Mrs Hudson tells us more about the trip:

We had the opportunity to visit many of the most popular tourist destinations in Barcelona including La Sagrada Familia, Gaudi's unfinished masterpiece, Parc Guell, the Science Museum, Las Ramblas and of course no visit to Barcelona would be complete without a trip to see FC Barcelona's stadium Camp Nou. On the Saturday evening we were even treated to a 'surprise' meal in the Hard Rock Café. Sunday was spent in Port Aventura theme park where all the pupils (and even some of the teachers!) enjoyed the most exhilarating rides. Once back at the chalets, we also were treated to a variety of traditional Spanish cultures including paella tasting, Spanish dancing and of course we had many opportunities to try out our Spanish language skills when buying our 'tuck' from our rep Miguel. Miguel made sure the kids started their day with the 4 'S's when going out into the hot sun....sun cream, sun hat, sun glasses and slurping water!

The aim of the trip was to enable our students to experience different cultures and immerse themselves into the Spanish way of life. I really do hope that they came away from the experience with long lasting memories and a passion for Spain and the Spanish language.

Throughout my 5 years at Hilbre, I have been fortunate enough to take part in trips abroad to Barcelona, Madrid and California and I have always been so proud of the way in which our students conduct themselves. Seeing the enjoyment and long term benefits that foreign travel can bring to the students makes all the hard work and preparation so worthwhile. This year was the last opportunity for me to take part in an excursion as part of Hilbre High School as I will be starting a new post as Head of Year in a new school in September. I am sure that in the years to come, the MFL department will continue to provide these wonderful trips abroad that our students will remember forever, as part of their time here at Hilbre High School. I know I will.

And good luck in your new school Mrs Hudson - you will be missed by all of us (editor).

Mrs D Hudson



Year 9 Girl's Dove Day

By Miss Asson Deputy Head of Dee House

On Tuesday the 7th July, Hilbre held its annual Year 9 Girls Dove Day, a workshop which aims to promote self-esteem as well as providing an opportunity for our girls to work together, exploring current issues affecting young people.

After spending some time looking at how we are often given a distorted image of what beauty is, due to airbrushing, photo-shopping and cosmetic surgery, the girls then created 'the perfect female'. This involved collating together different body parts from a range of celebrity magazines to demonstrate that perfection is extremely difficult to achieve and that an individual's perception of beauty can be very different.

This year we were fortunate enough to have 'The Brook' (young people's health service) come into school to deliver sessions on self-esteem and body image, 'Great Expectations' about their future and Relationships. Wirral Youth for Christ also worked with our girls on promoting a positive body image and valuing themselves as individuals.

Mrs Hudson treated the girls to a 'Beyonce Hour' in which the girls looked at what makes a successful person and then worked in groups to produce a poster promoting positive body image and self-worth. The winning entry was designed by Hannah Hughes, Millie Johnson and Niamh Mannix and will be displayed around school as a message of encouragement to all pupils in Hilbre.

Miss Jardine delivered a session on skin care/skin conditions and how make up can be used in a subtle way to help improve self-esteem and confidence when it comes to appearance. The girls were then given the opportunity to experiment with make-up, with some of our students demonstrating their artistic side by giving their friends a make-over.

The day was brought to a close with each girl receiving an envelope containing positive comments written by the other girls in their group.

Both staff and students really enjoyed the day and it was nice to see the girls working together in such a positive way.

'We enjoyed Dove Day because we learned about ourselves and how to view ourselves as individual people. We liked doing the different activities. Our favourite part was when the Brook came in and taught us how we should feel about our own qualities and abilities. We now feel better about ourselves and how we are in comparison to others.'

Faye Ewan (9KAR) and Grace Woods (9JCL)

'Dove Day was a day made for young teens to show them it's okay not to be perfect. It was to help to lift our self-confidence and make us feel proud of who we are. It was a very inspirational day because it showed us that all women have imperfections and all have inner beauty no matter what shape or form. During the day, we spoke about body image and were asked to create an ideal woman by cutting out body parts of models and famous women from magazines. The Brook came in and spoke to us about imperfections and how to be proud of who you are. We feel that Dove Day has boosted our self-esteem and given us more confidence to be ourselves and be happy in our own skin.'

Niamh Acton (9NAR) and Olivia Haslem (9JCL)



MEDIA MOGULS – COMPETE FOR AIR TIME

A group of year 10 students spent time with a creative producer from 'Juice FM' in writing and recording an advert for health and well-being awareness for the Wirral NHS trust.

The students: Jay Barham, Tom Clark, Lauren Eccles, Amber Gittins, Daniel Leonard and Tom Montgomery learned about the nature of radio advertising and used this knowledge to compose their own 'Ad'. The finished edited result will be entered for a competition where the winning entry will be the Ad used on Juice FM every day. Well done to the students and good luck in the competition!!!

Mrs Whiteley



Year 7s Experience History in Chester

On the 30th June and 1st July we had our annual visit to Chester with Year 7. Pupils did a walking tour of Chester and its city walls, exploring its history from the Romans to the modern day. We also visited the Cathedral and had our lunch by the River Dee (with chips and ice-cream on the menu!). The weather was fabulous! A great time was had by all staff and pupils.

Mr. A. Wallis



Rare Bee Orchid Found on School Site

At the time of going to press, we have a Bee Orchid in flower in the area between the Tech Block and the Main Building. This is a very rare plant for this part of the world:

Bee orchids are fascinating and beautiful plants that certainly live up to their name: each flower looks like it has a female bee or wasp resting on it.

Thank you to Mr Baddeley for spotting this rare plant and pointing it out to us.

Peer Mentor Programme

By Kate Hawksett

This year, the new Peer Mentor Programme was launched, including volunteers from years 8-14. Our Peer Mentors are very passionate about supporting and caring for one another. They have worked alongside our pastoral staff to offer guidance, advice and support to students in the years below them, to ensure that they feel happy, safe and settled.

Their roles have included: Equipment Mentor, Literacy Mentor, One-to-one Mentor and Y7 Mentor. All of these roles have been carried out with enthusiasm, maturity and dedication by each Mentor.

In particular, Olivia Cattrall 11EGU and Emily Paul 6JCH have been fantastic in working with year 7 tutor groups, devising activities and games to engage with students and encourage them to bond with one another.

The Peer Mentors have offered students equipment during morning registration to ensure those who have forgotten pens, pencils etc, are equipped for the day ahead. In addition, our Literacy Peer Mentors, Eloise Nelson 9JCL and Chloe Greensmith 9KAR, have delivered bespoke literacy support in the Library during lunch, for any needs students may have.

In July, ten of the Peer Mentors attended a new training session in Leadership and will deliver this to the new Peer Mentors in September.

All of the Peer Mentors have worked exceptionally hard in their role and I would like to thank them for their effort and commitment. I look forward to working with them, and the new Peer Mentors, in September, where there are new ideas and plans already taking shape to drive the success of the Peer Mentoring Programme even further forward.

Laughter AFRICA 7SFL Helping with Humour!

Together with form teacher Miss Fleming and Miss Joyce, the students of 7SFL started the day with a laugh and a joke on Monday 26th June, as they told jokes and made cards to help a brand new charity, 'Laughter Africa', in Sierra Leone.

Set up by local man, James Tyrrell, after many years of fundraising with schools and other organisations across Merseyside, 'Laughter Africa' opened its doors in Sierra Leone for the first time at the beginning of May. Their aim is to work with street children to fulfil their aspirations and to help them to bring about positive change in their lives, by trying to reunite them with their families if it is safe and secure, finding long term homes and foster care, enabling them to finish their education, establishing a hostel and providing food, education, counselling, support, healthcare and other essentials.

Over the weekend, James set a challenge for school children in the UK to make cards and share jokes with the street children, which they will use to create a 'Laughter Wall' to help brighten their hostel. 7SFL really got into the spirit of the task, sharing their jokes in a Tutorial fuelled by fun and laughter.

Here's are few of their best rib ticklers!

Q: What's the difference between a guitar and a fish?
A: You can't tuna fish!!!

I wrote a song about a tortilla ... actually, it was more of a wrap!

Q: Why can't you give Elsa a balloon?
A: Because she'd LET IT GO, LET IT GO...

Doctor, Doctor, I've got a strawberry in my ear.
Don't worry, I've got cream for that!

Q: Where do sheep go to get their hair cut?
A: The baa-bers shop!



Mrs Phelan Experiences the e-Book Revolution

Nervously hovering over the send button full of excitement, I finally click. Almost instantaneously 44 books appear on the e-library shelf. This was my first venture into the world of e-libraries.

Personally I've been using e-books for several years and love the flexibility and ease of use, but committing a percentage of the school's Library budget is an entirely different matter. Following many hours of research and talking to other school librarians I presented my findings to the Senior Leadership Team who agreed the project deserved a trail run.

Here are just a few of the main reasons why we should add e-books to our Library resources:-

- It will empower students by giving them quick and easy access to fiction and non-fiction texts.
- e-libraries are used extensively in colleges and universities so it will give our students useful experience and benefit them in their on-going studies.
- e-books can be read on-line via the school's website or downloaded onto most laptops and mobile devices. The on-line catalogue is fully compatible with Moodle and can be accessed from home.
- There is a large selection of e-books now available with more titles being added.
- Students can create their own library bookshelves and customise the screen they are using to read the book.
- Teachers can add and share notes to class reads.

- Students can add book reviews, reserve books and make book purchase suggestions.
- Books automatically returned to e-library shelf on due date, so no more overdue notices, and no more lost or damaged books!

During my research I took into account a study completed by The National Literacy Trust on "The Impact of ebooks on the Reading Motivation and Reading Skills of Children & Young People", published in September 2014 in which thousands of children and young people aged between 8 and 16 years old were questioned about their literacy behaviours. The following is a summary of their findings:

- Tablet use at home by children aged 5-15 years almost tripled between 2012 and 2013, rising from 14% to 42%.
- In 2012, children reported reading more on computers and other electronic devices than in print form for the first time, confirming the central role of technology in young people's literacy lives.
- Other studies have shown reading on screen may offer particular benefits for some children and young people, for example, those in groups less likely to be reading at the expected level for their age.

September will see the launch of this service with students and staff receiving full training. We will also be arranging parent/carer information sessions to enable them to assist their children whilst using this resource.

This trial will be continually monitored and we would welcome any feedback from staff, students and parents/carers. This will allow us to build an informed picture of how best to direct our future resources.

Finally, the new e-library catalogue will be an exciting addition to our resources, which will complement our printed books, but certainly will not replace them.

By Sandra Phelan, Learning Resource Centre Manager



COMMUNITY COFFEE MORNING HELD ON THURSDAY 14 MAY

On Thursday 14 May, the School Student Council played host to local residents at our inaugural Community Coffee Morning to build on our community links. They themed the event around Fairtrade and Christain Aid week and served Fairtrade tea, coffee, biscuits and cakes. The students thoroughly enjoyed talking to their visitors and are eager to organise another one. The event was supported by our local church and Captain Phil Brown (CA), St Michaels' and All Angels Church, Newton said, "Brilliant - pupils interacted really well and they were all lovely. From a nervous start, within minutes all the pupils were engaged. Really well entertained by a great singing talent. So happy about the good ending and developing relationship between the Church and School. When are we having another one?"

Year 8 and at University Already!

Recently, 31 Year 8 pupils attended a fun packed trip to universities in Liverpool this week. The pupils were taken on a guided tour between four City university campuses and took part in exciting interactive sessions. From practical sessions creating still images of celebrities and huge dragons at LIPA to playing Family Fortunes across a boardroom at The City of Liverpool College.

Pupils were intrigued to learn about gaming development courses and were given an in-depth insight into the industry by an ex Sony game designer. They also learnt about student life and what to expect as they make their learning journey through to further education and beyond at Liverpool John Moores University. Of the 31 pupils who attended, all are now inspired and keen to continue their studies to a higher level post Hilbre, and have a greater understanding of the varying pathways leading to a successful higher education. A special thank you to Ben Toleman and his student advocates at Liverpool University who organised a wonderfully motivating day for our pupils.



After School Circuits and Fitness Training

The school provides an after school fitness facility for Years 10 and above.

The gym and fitness suite are open and led by staff from 3.30 until 4.30 every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Activities on offer are circuit training, bootcamps, and use of the fitness suite.

This summer term we have been training with circuits to try and achieve the perfect beach body! The school fitness suite is equipped with 5 rowing machines, 2 treadmills, 3 bikes, 2 cross trainers, free weights and many more things for the healthy fit student!

Mr Wall

Year 7 Cricket Team

Our Year 7 Boys Cricket Team has been training each Monday night since the start of the year.

Training involves catching, batting and fielding drills. These skills gained have enabled them to enjoy and take part in two Wirral school tournaments. Well done to all boys who have attended!

Mr Wall



Congratulations to all the Year 11 Silver D of E Group who successfully completed their Final Silver Expedition in Llangollen.

Well Done!



Helping our Younger Neighbours

Blackhorse Hill infants were very thankful to the year 10 BTEC sport class who helped run their sports day. The event ran smoothly with sunshine, fun and excitement!

Wirral School Athletics at the Oval

Congratulations to all the Hilbre Competitors who represented our school and finished 7th out of 14 schools.

Bronze D.of.E Final Assessment Group 2

Congratulations to all participants in group 2 who successfully completed their expedition.



A special thanks to Mrs Hogan, Miss Jones, Mrs Penman and Mrs Yauds who worked hard to help the students complete their venture up Moel Famau.

Rugby Development: We Are World Cup Ready!

As we approach the end of the school year we can look back on another successful season of rugby development and forward to the Rugby World Cup, which begins in the autumn.

At Hilbre we now have active boy's rugby teams in all year groups and a thriving girl's team that spans years 7 and 8 (and which will now start to move up the age

groups). All our teams are very competitive in Merseyside, Cheshire and Wirral emerging schools competitions and we have established a reputation as being one of the strongest and most rapidly developing schools in the region. One of the frustrations of the season was that, despite some outstanding performances, we have yet to bring home the silverware which our all-round strengths merit. In the past season our Year 7 and 10 boy's teams and our junior girl's teams all came frustratingly close to tournament wins.

Whilst our aim is of course to get students to participate in and enjoy the game, we make no apologies for setting out with the intention of bringing home some trophies next season. With the World Cup imminent, the Rugby Football Union and other organising bodies have brought forwards all the major competitions to coincide with the tournament. In addition, a number of our players have been nominated for county trials in late September. All-in-all, this means a busy autumn for our teams and a hectic training schedule, which will begin as soon as we come back to school.

The season ahead will see two other major developments. Firstly, years 8,9,11 and 1st XV are entered for the Cheshire Shield competition. This will give us the chance to match ourselves in full-length games against other schools at a similar developmental stage and we shall set out with serious ambitions for every team. The second significant step comes with the formation of a First XV. As with most schools, the team will consist of a combination of our strong Year 11 team, who will join forces with, what is shaping up to be, an equally strong Sixth Form contingent. Given the all-round attitude and commitment that exists within both groups of players, we are looking forward to seeing what our elite team can do.

We already have a significant number of games already set in stone for next season. These fixtures can be found on our school sports website, www.hilbrehighsports.co.uk. This can be bookmarked to any smart phone and is a really useful tool to see when the next fixture is to be played.

We hope to see you on the touchline next season!

Mr Hodson, Mrs Myers, Mr Evans, Mr Smith and Mr Hellier.

