



# AGS NEWSLETTER



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## OFSTED Success

Our first OFSTED report since 1999 has just been published. The school was inspected under the new regulations, whereby schools are given just a few days notice and inspectors are in school for only two days. We were delighted that overall we were graded as 'good' (Grade 2 out of 4) and that the main section of the report describes Gell as 'an effective and inclusive school with a high profile in the local community'. The inspectors were impressed with our Specialist Sports College status saying that it has 'had a significant impact on standards of attainment in PE and considerably enhanced provision and participation in the community'.

Whilst in school, the inspectors visited lessons, assemblies, lunchtime activities and watched the world's strongest man pull a bus – a first for them we were told! They also met with a group of parents, groups of three students from various year groups and a number of the outside agencies with whom we work. They said that the way we worked with our outside partners was outstanding.

Of course, the main purpose of inspections is to see how we can improve. The inspectors left us with three main points for improvement. The first is to improve the attainment of boys at Key Stage 4. We are aware that this is a national issue and many parents will know of the increased opportunities we have already started to provide in our links with colleges and our new options structure. We will be building on this work in the next few years. The second point is to develop a new management structure for the school. This was inevitably going to be necessary following the appointment of a new Headteacher. The final area for development was the monitoring of teaching in the classroom. We already observe lessons on a regular basis but we will put plans in place to develop this further.

As part of the new inspection system, the inspectors write a letter to students. In this, they acknowledge how hard the teachers work to prepare stimulating and challenging work and note how well students and teachers get on with each other. They also praise the number of students who are involved in leadership courses, especially in sport. The inspection team also said to the students that 'you behaved well in and around school and were a credit to your school'.

The inspectors liked the school and its atmosphere and were very positive about its future. Care, guidance and support, teaching and learning and the curriculum were all graded as 'good' as was personal development and well-being. Inspections are inevitably a stressful time but we feel that we now have a good agenda for further improvement.

If you would like to read the full report, you can get a copy from the OFSTED website at [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). Type Anthony Gell School into the search box at the top of the page and you will get our report. If you would like a printed copy, please contact the school.

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**A great big  
thank you to  
all of them for  
their hard  
work.**

# Choral works School Council Forum

Five students from Anthony Gell, Charis Good-year, Harriet Neal, Simon Humphris, Lizzie Brownsey, and Kim Boothroyd have been practising on Sunday afternoons at Highfields School with school choirs from Friesland, Highfields, St Mary's Chesterfield and Lady Manners Bakewell, to take part in a concert at the Albert Hall in Nottingham.

The Concert which took place on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> March, was a resounding success.



The works they sang were Zadok The Priest by Handel and The Armed Man by Karl Jenkins. The Derbyshire Schools Orchestra played the music.

On March 9th three members of the School Council attended a residential Peak 11 conference at Losehill Hall with students from all the other local secondary schools. The main aim of the conference was to 'Get your voice heard'. The students worked with drama specialists in workshops where they had to use their voices to get their feelings across. Students then joined small groups to look at issues facing young people living in the Peak District such as 'should all types of recreation be allowed in the Peak Park?' and 'Living in the Peak District is boring'. Presentations from this work were to be given the next morning.

The following morning the groups gave their presentations which ranged from drama sketches through to songs. All the students were really supportive of the work of others and went to lunch looking forward to having the opportunity to question local councillors and National Park managers about how to meet the needs of young people living in the Park. The main point of discussion was questioning why children are so easily stereotyped and students' opinions varied about how much they felt they had been heard by the panel.

Our students came back having had a 'great time' and believed that 'everyone should have the opportunity to go to something this good'.

## Students shine on the slopes

For 38 lucky students and 9 eager teachers the February half-term holiday meant an exciting trip to Villach in Austria where the slopes of the Gerlitz Mountain hosted six days of ski and snowboard action.

As is the way with skiing/boarding each student had their own moments of glory, but the jumping skills of the Extreme Team attracted a crowd of admirers across the slopes. Perhaps one of the most memorable moments was the Beginners descent of the Gerlizen on the final day with typical AGS style grace and finesse! Not only was there fun on the slopes, other events included; a visit to Italy to dine in a Pizza restaurant, a bowling tournament heroically won by Mr Whittall's team, a visit to the swimming baths, and the last night disco. Indeed, the dancing skills exhibited by the snowboarders led many to comment that they could join in with the school Dance Trip in Germany!

The annual event was particularly special this year as the school celebrated 12 years of visits to Villach. To recognise the close partnership and ties between the school and the town of Feldkirchen Mrs Boden received a special presentation from the Mayor – the keys to the town! She was also treated to a celebratory waltz with a variety of Austrian dancing men!!

Throughout the trip, students were complimented many times on their wonderful behaviour and attitude which ensured safety, fun and many happy memories.



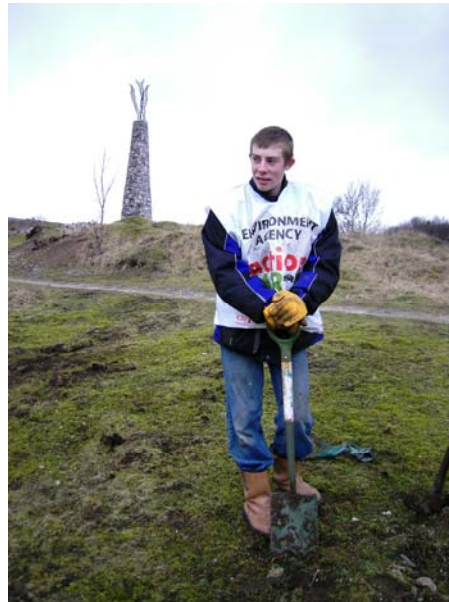
# Strong Man Bloomin' Lovely

The World's Strongest Man 1998, Dave Gauder demonstrated his strength, with the help of some extra loud cheering, by pulling a double decker bus in front of Y8. He then spoke to a very attentive audience for an hour about inner strength: coping with bullies, saying 'no' to drugs and the importance of self-discipline. All Y8 were then given a signed poster by Dave Gauder to remind them to 'be extra strong'.



The event drew the attention of Derby Evening Telegraph and one of our Ofsted inspectors, who was impressed not only by the welcome given to him by Y8, but also how well they listened to his message. Let's hope they remember his message in years to come.

On Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> March five students from Year 11 Youth Award participated in a project called "From Scrub to Blooming Lovely" at the National Stone Centre with funding from the Environment Agency Action Earth.



Craig Ward (pictured), Shaun Wain, Sarah Julian, John Johnston and Robin Webster took part. Despite the rain and cold wind we managed to clear the scrub and plant 50 wild flower plug plants with the help of volunteers from British Trust of Conservation Volun-

teers. We really needed and deserved a cup of tea and a chocolate biscuit at the end!

## Eco-schools Enterprising Y8

As part of the Anthony Gell School bid to become an EcoSchool, a conservation project will be taking place every Thursday between now and July. Students from Year 8, with staff from the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, are working on tasks to make the school grounds more attractive to look at and more attractive to wildlife. The aim is to create a path along the top of the bank above the brook. Around the path will be areas of wildflowers,

and plants that attract butterflies, as well as some seating.



The students involved have already begun marking out the path and have started to plant groups of wildflowers.

As a follow up to a PSE unit on Careers Y8 took part in an Enterprise Day – students were able to work with advisors from local businesses and employers to look at their dream lifestyle ...and the reality of budgeting on the money they could earn in a selected job! Balancing the figures proved easier for some students than others and many worked out they just didn't have enough income to have all the things they'd like in life ...not straight away ..... and to earn a good income you really needed qualifications or the skills to run your own business.

Later in the day students interviewed each other to find out who would be offered the job and who would not, and why. And in the final practical session students were given a Dragon's Den challenge to produce prototypes, complete with marketing plans and advertising posters. Lots of inventive products were made with marketing including websites, special offers, free phone contacts, demonstrations and even an advertising jingle sung by one team!

# Sport Report

## South African Dance Success

A huge well-done! to all who took part in the South African Dance workshops with Pae Pae & Tshego. The sessions were extremely well received and enjoyed by all, including Mr. Pover who took great pleasure in joining in!



A showcase of the work was shared on the final afternoon, in which most of the students who had taken part performed to the whole of year 8.

Thank you to all of you for bringing such enthusiasm and energy to the sessions, as well as conducting yourselves in a mature and welcoming manner to the visiting artists. We hope that both Pae Pae & Tshego are able to return next year to work with more of you.

## Sports College Redesignation

We are delighted to announce that the Department for Education and Skills has redesignated AGS as a Specialist Sports College. All specialist schools must go through this redesignation process every four years; this process involves a detailed report on the progress made over the last four years and the vision for the future.

Since we were designated as a Sports College in 2001 the school has been very successful in engaging students in a wide variety of sports and leadership qualifications. The PE curriculum has undergone a transformation at both Key Stages 3 and 4, with new sports such as climbing, trampolining, martial arts, dance and orienteering being introduced. . The development of community sport and links between AGS and local sports clubs is seen as a national model of best practice.

In addition to this resignation news the school has also had the Sportsmark Gold Status extended to 2009. Sportsmark Gold is awarded in recognition of the school's commitment to promoting the

benefits of physical activity and school sport.

Thank you to all the staff, students and members of the local community who have helped to bring this double success to Anthony Gell.

## AGS Girls Basketball

This year was set to be a very challenging but hopefully very successful and enjoyable time for the girls. After the success of last year, winning the Under 14 B division National title, the girls aspired to continue their winning ways in the Under 15 A division.

Practice started and the girls quickly realised that the level of performance had to be much higher than the previous year if they were to be challenging for another title. We entered two leagues to give the girls more basketball at a higher level, a junior (Under19) and a senior league. By Christmas we had won the junior league and placed 5<sup>th</sup> (out of 10) in the senior league and our initial aim had been achieved. The team then went on to become East Midland champions defeating Moulton School by more than 20 points.

The final's week of the U15s and U16s competition was where all our hard work was about to come to its crescendo. Unfortunately we didn't win these competitions this time but Mr Ford says the improvement of the team has been immeasurable. Well done to all the girls and a huge thanks to Mr Ford for his continued hard work with the team.

## Dates for your diary - Summer term 2006

**Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> – Friday 21<sup>st</sup> April:** Easter holidays.

**Friday 7<sup>th</sup> April:** Staff training day.

**Monday 1<sup>st</sup> May:** School closed for Bank holiday

**Tues 2<sup>nd</sup> to Fri 5<sup>th</sup> May:** Y9 National Curriculum Tests

**Monday 15<sup>th</sup> –Friday 19<sup>th</sup> May:** Y10 exams

**Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> May to Friday 30<sup>th</sup> June:** Y11 GCSE exams

**Monday 29<sup>th</sup> May to Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> June:**

School closed for half term

**Monday 12<sup>th</sup> June to Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> June:**

Y10 work Experience

**Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> July:** Y6 Induction evening

**Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> July:** Y6 Parents evening

**Wed 19<sup>th</sup> to Fri 21<sup>st</sup> July:** Activity days.