

OLCHFA SCHOOL—YSGOL YR OLCHFA

www.olchfaschool.org.uk

GOWER ROAD, SKETTY, SWANSEA SA2 7AB.

SWITCHBOARD—01792 534300

FAX—01792 534307 / PE DEPT—534316 /

COMMUNITY EDUCATION - 534350

EMAIL : OLCHFA.SCHOOL@SWANSEA-EDUNET.GOV.UK



29TH  
SEPTEMBER

## AUTUMN TERM NEWSLETTER

Dear Parents/Guardians

Despite the awful weather at the beginning of term, we have had a very successful and energetic start to the new school year at Olchfa.

Firstly, some pupil news. We have been spellbound as a school by the extraordinary success of Ellie Simmonds at the Paralympics in Beijing. Two gold medals in the 100 and 400 metres freestyle, the second in a new world record a full seven seconds better than the existing mark, have confirmed Ellie as a real star! At the age of 13, she is surely in place for even greater success at the London Paralympics in 2012, when she will be at her true peak.

As you have probably seen from the news coverage and your child (ren) the school celebrations went extremely well and were thoroughly enjoyed by all concerned. Photographs of the celebrations can

be seen on our website. Well done Ellie!

Our GCSE exam results equalled last year's best-ever performance and saw 82% of our Year 11 pupils gaining at least 5 GCSE passes at A\*-C, which is the main national indicator of performance. All of our other indices hit record peaks as well, including entry level statistics and the performance of boys which, at Olchfa, was almost on a par with the girls and certainly much better than local or national statistics. Well done to all of our pupils, but maybe particularly to the boys in terms of the way in which they bucked the national trend.

Our new staffing structure, which I outlined in the last newsletter, has taken effect from September 1<sup>st</sup> and we are beginning to see it in action. We feel that an improved service is the result, and we hope that parents will find our procedures and

structures more user-friendly. Please refer to my previous information in relation to the precise details of the relevant personnel.

On a more general level, we have been struck by the calm and productive start to the term. The overwhelming impression as I walk around the school is of a purposeful and orderly environment, with a real emphasis on learning and on the desire to learn. This is very exciting, with teachers increasingly inclined to innovate and push the boundaries of learning and pupils increasingly inclined to take risks, make mistakes and learn from them as they build their skills and knowledge. It is a real privilege for me to feel that I am part of this partnership and I can really see at first hand the progress the school has made over the last few years.

Hugh Davies  
Headteacher

Our sincere thanks to the following sponsors for their kind donations in supporting Ellie's return to school and presentations:

Mr Paul Murray of William Presdee, Funeral Directors, Mumbles for providing and driving the limousine

Bay Tree Florists for the flower arrangements and bouquets

Lewis Pies for the 2,000 cupcakes!

Mr Andrew Cutforth of Marneon Signs Limited for the banner

### IMPROVING GCSE RESULTS THROUGH PARENTAL PARTNERSHIP

Parental involvement in a child’s education can mean the difference between an A\* and an ‘also-ran’ at GCSE. Research shows that parental involvement in their child’s education is by far the most important determinant of success. Most parents would love to help their child, but lack the information or confidence to do so. Now you can help support your child throughout Years 10 and 11 and at the same time improve their results significantly. “GCSEs—What Can a Parent Do? 10 Tips to Ensure Success” is an invaluable resource to offering parents and their children a comprehensive, accessible and practical guide to each stage of the GCSE process. Written by an educational psychologist with four children who have all undertaken GCSEs with varying degrees of motivation, the book includes a wealth of tried, practical and ‘do-able’ tips and ideas to support parents in supporting their children through GCSE years. Booklets cost £3.00 per copy and are available through the Key Stage 4 Office.

Miss J Riley, Learning Leader.

#### FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACTION

Attached is information from the City and County of Swansea regarding what the school, Local Education Authority and Government do with information they hold on pupils, about which we are required to advise you.

**All vacancies, teaching and non-teaching,  
are routinely advertised on  
[www.eteach.com](http://www.eteach.com)  
and via the City and County of Swansea website  
[www.swansea.gov.uk](http://www.swansea.gov.uk)**

**Pupil Welfare Officer**—you may recall that we reported in the previous Newsletter that Miss Kate Hopkins had been appointed as our new Pupil Welfare Officer. Miss Hopkins went to pastures new during the summer holidays and we are pleased to advise that Mrs Julie Jenkins has rejoined us as our P.W.O.

#### **P.E DEPARTMENT—EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES PROGRAMME**

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<b>GIRLS - Lunchtime</b>		Year 7 Netball Sports Hall	Yrs 7 & 8 Hockey Sports Hall	Year 11 Hockey Sports Hall	
<b>After school</b>	Post-16 & exam class clinic  Cross Country (all years)  6th Form Hockey  Yrs 10&11 Netball		Yrs 8 & 9 Netball  Yrs 7 & 8 Hockey	Netball matches 6th Form Netball  Yrs 9 & 10 Hockey	GCSE & A Level night
<b>BOYS - Lunchtime</b>				Year 7 Rugby	Senior Rugby
<b>After school</b>	Post 16 & exam class clinic  Cross Country (all years)  Year 8 Football  Yrs 8 & 9 Rugby	Year 10 Rugby  Year 9 Football  Year 7 Rugby	Year 11 Football  Yrs 12/13 football	Yrs 11, 12 & 13 Rugby  Year 7Football	

**Saturday mornings—Boys’ Senior Rugby, Welsh**

Competitive matches will be arranged separately

## CIRCUS ERUPTION @ OLCHFA

Circus Eruption recently came in to school and gave pupils an opportunity to try various circus skills. Activities included juggling, poi, stilt walking, devil sticks, plate spinning, unicycling and rola bola!

Even though one third of its members have special needs, all are treated equally when circus time begins—this means anyone and everyone can have

a go! Monday nights during September and October are “Try out Nights” where those interested can go along and join in the team. If you are interested please call 474004 or long on to:

[www.circuseruption.co.uk](http://www.circuseruption.co.uk)

Much fun was had by all including a number of staff—watch this space for future careers in the circus!

## Ski/Snowboard Trip

There are a small number of spaces left on this school year's ski / snowboard trips. The two trips are at New Year 2008/2009 and February half-term. The cost of the trips are £635 for skiing and £660 for snowboarding. This is on a half-board basis and includes coach and ferry travel, all equipment, lessons and evening activities. The trip is open to all year groups. Skiing/snowboarding experience is not necessary but this is an activity holiday. For more information, please see Mr Steadman in Room 36.

## Selection of Pupil Achievements

Brandon Davies, Year 10 has been signed with Cardiff City. He has played for Wales Under 16s. His first international friendly fixture was away in Slovakia in April. He has also played in Belfast in May for the Tri Nations cup against Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland. Brandon has again been re-selected to play an international friendly against France at home. Very well done Brandon and we wish you continued success.

Josh Gallagher and Louise Bashford were selected to compete in the UK Schools Games in Bath and Bristol at the end of the summer holidays. Josh competed in gymnastics and Louise in athletics, with Louise winning a silver medal. Many congratulations to both.

A number of pupils competed in the Orienteering Junior Home Internationals held in the North West Coast of England last weekend. Congratulations to the following Kris Jones (Y13) who won first place, Katie Reynolds (Yr10) 2nd place, Ben Doherty (Yr 13) and Ben Mitchell (Yr 10) 9th place, Sam Mitchell (Yr 9) 12th place and Stephen Reynolds (Yr 9) 13th place. Kris has been selected to represent Great Britain in the European Youth Championships in Switzerland early in October.

Ruby Maddox achieved one of the highest overall marks in the UK in her GCSE Drama exam. Out of the 60,878 students who took the exam, Ruby was one of the top ten students in the country. Mr Head, Learning Co-ordinator for Drama said that “Ruby was really thrilled by the news of her success. Her full marks performance clearly reflected her attitude and ability in Drama. She was particularly appreciative of what success in Drama has given her.” Ruby commented “doing Drama at Olchfa has really helped my confidence. I feel now that I have a range of skills that I can take into any area of my life.” Congratulations to Ruby on her remarkable achievement which is well-deserved.

The following pupils have had success in sporting events: County Athletics - Christian Williams, Jamie Fletcher, Cerys Williams, Rhiannon Williams, Emily Morris, Ben Jenkins, Sian Lowe and Rebecca King. Isaac Hare and Joseph Tucker have represented Welsh Schools in swimming. Taylor Waters and Steffan Chelley competed in the Welsh and British Skiing Championships, gaining 2nd in the Welsh Championship and 3rd in the British Championship.

**PLEASE NOTE—FOR THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF ALL PUPILS, PARENTS ARE REMINDED THAT THEY MUST NOT COME ONTO THE SCHOOL SITE TO DROP OFF OR COLLECT PUPILS. SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES / PERMISSION SHOULD BE SOUGHT FROM THE LEARNING LEADER.**

SCHOOL STAFF ARE ON DUTY DURING DISMISSAL TO ENSURE THE SAFE DISMISSAL OF YOUR CHILDREN AND WILL APPROACH PARENTS IF THEY FEEL THAT SAFETY IS COMPROMISED.

SHOULD IT BE THE CASE THAT PARENTS DO NOT ADHERE TO OUR REQUEST, THE SCHOOL WILL NEED TO REVERT TO THE PRACTICE OF LOCKING THE SCHOOL GATES FROM 2.50 UNTIL 3.15 P.M.

WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION.

## LOST PROPERTY

Can we remind pupils and parents to make every effort to collect lost property items from the Pupil Welfare Officer. As usual this accumulates to a vast amount of clothing, trainers, shoes and jewellery which has to be disposed of at the end of every term due to lack of storage.

WE MAKE A PLEA—PLEASE PUT YOUR CHILD'S NAME ON UNIFORM!

## Routine Vacancies

If you are interested in becoming a Dining Room Assistant, please contact Mrs Baglow on 534304 for further details.

If you are interested in becoming an exam invigilator please contact Mr Helliwell, Exams Officer on 534309. Training will be provided.

## Charity Walk—Summer 2008

We are delighted to report that pupils and staff raised a total of £7,975 for their chosen charities through the charity walk in the summer term. Year 8 raised an amazing £3680 for Maggie's fund based at Singleton hospital. Local co-ordinator Vicki Jones received a cheque for £4941 (combined with current year 10). 15 pupils in year 8 raised more than £50 individually. A special mention to Aaron Kazemi and Simon Lung who individually raised £117 and £116 respectively. One mystery pupil raised a staggering £141 - if you know who you are, see Ms Carroll in the KS3 office!!!!

■ A copy of the Parental Calendar is attached for parents' information, together with School Terms and Holiday Dates for 2009/2010.

**Evening Classes**—All classes started w/c 22nd September except Yoga which starts on 8th October. **All enquiries, please contact Mrs Jones on 01792 534317.**

Monday	Men's Keep Fit	7p.m.-9p.m.		
	Art	7p.m.-9p.m.		
Tuesday	Art	7p.m.-9p.m.		
Wednesday	Yoga	7p.m.-9p.m.		
Thursday	Line Dancing	Beginners 7p.m.—8p.m.	Intermediates	8p.m.—9.30p.m.

## SCHOOL TERMS AND HOLIDAY DATES 2008-2009

SCHOOL TERMS AND HOLIDAYS			Mid Term Holidays		2008-2009	
Term	Term Begins	Term ends	Begins	Ends	Term begins	Term ends
<b>Autumn 2008</b>	Tuesday 2 September	Friday 24 October	Monday 27 October	Friday 31 October	Monday 3 November	Friday 19 December
<b>Spring 2009</b>	Tuesday 6 January	Friday 13 February	Monday 16 February	Friday 20 February	Monday 23 February	Friday 3 April
<b>Summer 2009</b>	Monday 20 April	Friday 22 May	Monday 25 May	Friday 29 May	Monday 1 June	Wednesday 22 July
<b>BANK HOLIDAYS</b>	10th April — Good Friday / 13th April — Easter Monday / 4th May—May Day / 25th May —Spring Bank Holiday					
<b>INSET DAYS</b>	2nd and 3rd September / 24th October / 6th January 2009 / 6th March 2009 The dates for the other two INSET days will be confirmed in due course.					