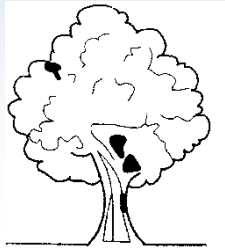


# OAK TREE NEWS

The official newsletter of

**Grangefield School**  
A Specialist Technology College



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## ***A message from the Headteacher***

This summer has seen another good set of examination results for our year 11 students. As we prepare to print this special edition of the Oak Tree News, the provisional results are still to be confirmed. Although not quite at the level of last year's record results, we do know they will be above the 2007 levels and maintain the standards of recent years.

At least 68% of students will have achieved at least 5 higher grade passes and at least 45% will have gained at least 5 including English and mathematics GCSE. We shall be asking examination boards to look again at some exam papers – each year the remarking of papers leads to changes in the results and we believe our final figures will be close to those of 2008. Almost 100% of our students leave with at least one qualification. 94% have at least five GCSE certificates. It is very pleasing to see our young people taking such good results forward with them.

We wish all of our 2009 leavers the very best fortune in their future careers. They should be proud of their achievements and can look forward with confidence.

A gift from a former student has provided a reminder for students of Grangefield's history.

Professor Peter Coupe attended the school in the 1960s and was a successful student in many subjects subsequently he went on to study at Imperial College and a career in Civil Engineering. He was the founding Director General of the University of Technology in Mauritius.

While at Grangefield, Professor Coupe was awarded the C. G Armstrong Memorial Prize for History. He has now made a gift to the school of the two books he received as part of that award. Both have a bookplate signed by the headmaster and indicating the prize for which they were awarded. The two works – an edition of Shakespeare's Complete Works and a copy of No Latitude for error by Sir Edmund Hilary – will now be part of our library collection. In donating the books, Professor Coupe expressed a wish that they be used regularly by our students.

***David Litchfield***

# Start the day the right way....

Having a healthy breakfast with friends is a good way to prepare for the day ahead, improving energy and concentration levels and developing social skills.

Our Breakfast Club is now open daily to students from 8.00am. Operating in the dining hall, we are serving a range of items in a safe and welcoming environment. All students are most welcome to come along.

## MENU

### *Monday to Friday*

Cereal	30p
Toast	10p
Yoghurt	40p
Fresh fruit pot	50p
Fruit squash	10p
Fruit juice carton	40p
Hot chocolate	20p

### ***Wednesday special***

Sausage bun 70p

### ***Friday specials***

Croissant 40p

Teacake 40p

Arts and  
Crafts

Quizzes  
puzzles and  
competitions

Board  
games

Wii™

Books,  
comics and  
magazines

Music

Homework &  
coursework  
support

Even if you don't want breakfast why not come and join the fun ?!

# Learning for All

We were delighted with the response from parents to our recent questionnaire about adult and family learning. In partnership with Stockton Borough Council we are delighted to be able to offer the following fun opportunities for the coming term.

These are completely **free of charge** and open to all. For more information or to reserve your places please contact Jackie McPike, Adult Education Worker, on 01642 528819 or Caroline McHale, Director of Community Services, on 01642 353637.

## CRAFTS TOGETHER

*starts*

Monday 21 September

6.00pm – 8.00pm

10 week course

*This course offers an opportunity for parents and children to learn together and develop their creative skills. The course offers a range of craft activities including card making, trinket box design and much more.*

Children of all ages welcome with  
an adult.

Why not bring granny too !?  
**Free of charge**

## CHILL OUT

*starts*

Wednesday 23 September

6.30pm – 8.30pm

10 week course

*This course provides an introduction to a range of alternative therapies including Indian head massage, aromatherapy, reflexology, meditation, colour therapy and assertiveness/positive thinking. This programme provides a stepping stone to learners who may wish to direct their learning to a specific alternative therapy in the future.*

**Adults only**  
**Free of charge**

Stockton Riverside College are once again offering their popular guitar class at Grangefield School from September.

## ROCK GUITAR

*This course is recommended for anyone who would like to improve their guitar skills. You will have the chance to work with the drum machine to help develop your timing and work with others to “jam”. You must be able to play basic major, minor and dominant seventh chords and have your own electric guitar and amplifier.*

Further details, including the cost and concessions, are available from Stockton Riverside College.

You can apply to join this course on line at [www.stockton.ac.uk](http://www.stockton.ac.uk) or by contacting Information and Guidance on 01642 865566.

# Parents as Partners

Many thanks to those parents who took part in our annual perceptions survey during the Spring Term. The findings are very encouraging and are helping us to shape our provision for young people, their families and the local community.

## ***What you said.....***

*The top priority for improvement is school communication.*

## ***What we're doing.....***

We have introduced half-termly mailings to parents. These include a copy of the school newsletter, Oak Tree News, as well as other information. The school website has been restructured and will be regularly updated. The school Virtual Learning Environment, Fronter, will be introduced from September 2009 and will give parents on-line access to information about school and also their child's learning. A small group of enthusiastic parents are working with school staff to establish a Parents' Forum which will meet regularly to share views and inform school improvement in addition to hosting a range of information sessions.

*Community spirit could be further improved.*

A Director of Community Services has been appointed to develop our relationship with the wider world and provide more opportunities for all members of the school community. Her work includes ensuring that the voice of students, parents and others is clearly heard. Working with the newly formed Parents' Forum we will focus on ensuring parents are true partners in all aspects of school life.

Our links with the local community are many and varied. Work with our primary schools continues to grow, with a wide range of joint activities in many subject areas for younger children. We hope that, as well as providing access to our specialist facilities, early working with our staff will ease the transition to secondary education. Work in the international community continues to develop with links to schools in China, France, Dubai and the Czech Republic. The Community Policing team have recently opened an office on the school site and in September we become home to Stockton Police Cadets. The new term will also see the introduction of further out-of-hours learning opportunities adults and families, some of which will be free of charge.

*Careers advice is a priority.*

This year we introduced our Futures Evening, a careers and further education event with key employers, colleges and other agencies offering advice to students in Years 9, 10 and 11. The evening also included subject choice guidance for younger students, aiming to ensure that course choices were relevant to career plans. This was linked to a review of our process for GCSE option choices, with students guided towards courses best suited to their likes, needs and aspirations.

Our CV mentoring, practice interviews and work experience programme have been very successful but provision will be further reviewed in the coming term to ensure that we meet the needs of all students as they prepare for the world of work. Students gave the most positive responses to questions about the quality of careers advice provision.

In 2009 we trialled a qualification called the Certificate of Career Planning qualification with a small number of Year 11 students. This qualification recognises skills associated with planning to meet career aspirations and manage self-development needs, and is equivalent to a GCSE grade B. This was very successful and will be offered to more students in the coming year.