

# UCS

April 2011



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## End of Term Newsletter

### Richard Hand

Many UCS students and families will have been deeply saddened to hear of the tragically sudden death of Richard Hand. Richard taught guitar at UCS for over twenty years, and had a most distinguished career as a soloist. He was loved and respected by students and colleagues throughout the school. Our deepest sympathies have been passed to his family. His funeral will take place at 1.30 pm on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> April. Further details are available from the School Office.

### News from Oxford & Cambridge

Congratulations to the 19 UCS students who are currently holding conditional or firm offers of places to study at the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. This is exactly in line with our recent experience. It is satisfying to note that, over the past two years, UCS students have gained entry to Oxford and Cambridge to read: Anthropology, Art History, Chemistry, Classics, Computing, Engineering, English, Geography, History, Mathematics, Medicine, Modern Languages, Music, Natural Science, Oriental Languages, Physics, Philosophy, Politics & Economics, and Politics, Psychology & Sociology. We are able to boast of all-round success.

### Higher Education News

Planned changes to the funding arrangements for students in Higher Education in England and Wales are surely set to have a significant impact. Applications this year have been more competitive than ever. We have been relieved to note that applicants from UCS have, in general, experienced a good response from the universities to which they have applied. The proportion of offers is actually slightly higher than usual.

We are watching the sector with great interest and doing our best to learn from the contacts that we have at UK universities. We have also reviewed the advice and guidance that we offer to our own students. Transitus students and their parents attended a remodelled evening devoted to HE application before the end of term. This was followed by our most ambitious ever HE Conference. UCS students were joined by their contemporaries from other local schools to hear presentations from universities in the UK and overseas and to learn from the experience of a large number of UCS alumni who were good enough to return for the day.

### Speech Day

Speech Day & Prize-Giving this year will be held at 7.30 pm on the evening of Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> May. Our Guest of Honour will be Sir Nicholas Hytner, Artistic Director of the National Theatre. There will be a Reception before the event for all Sixth Formers and their parents.

Attendance at the Prize-Giving ceremony is compulsory for students in the Lower Remove and the Remove. Transitus students, who will be on exam leave at that time, are warmly invited.

All UCS parents are most welcome to attend. Explanatory letters are included with this mailing. Please let us know if you would like to come so that we can plan the seating.

## **Public Examination Timetables**

Final personalised timetables for students involved in public examinations next term are included with this mailing. Candidates should examine them closely for any errors or omissions (incorrect subjects, missing modules etc.), which must be communicated to Mrs Lisa Powley (Exams Administrator) as soon as possible. The most efficient means will be by email to [lisa.powley@ucs.org.uk](mailto:lisa.powley@ucs.org.uk).

## **Study Leave & Post-Exam Arrangements**

Study leave for GCSE and AS-level candidates (Upper Remove & Transitus) begins on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> May.

Transitus students return to school after their exams on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> June. We have prepared a personalised programme for each of them. This will focus on preparation for Higher Education choice and application. All students must attend on 10<sup>th</sup> June and for the other sessions designed and planned for them. They do not need to attend school at other times.

## **Public Examination Results**

AS and A-level results will be published on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> August. We plan to e-mail results individually to each candidate early on that morning. Paper copies of the results will be available from the School Office from 9.00 am and will be posted to all candidates later in the morning. Staff will be available from 9.00 am at School to discuss any queries regarding results and to support and advise students regarding future plans.

GCSE results will be published on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> August. We plan to e-mail results individually to each candidate early on that morning. Once again, paper copies will be posted to families. Staff will be available at School to follow up queries and to offer advice.

## **Summer Term Activities Week**

Last year's Activities Week was a great success. We will be repeating it. Activities Week will occupy the last full week of the term, beginning on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> June and running until Friday 1<sup>st</sup> July. All students in the Entry, Shell, Lower Remove and Remove years will be occupied in a programme of educational activities, trips and visits of a kind we are unable to accommodate in the normal school week. Draft arrangements are included with this mailing. None of the activities will involve any further financial charge to parents.

## **Term Dates & Holidays**

Included with this mailing, you will find notice of term dates until the end of the SummerTerm 2012. Please be sure to arrange family holidays and other trips to fall within the published holiday periods.

## **Beginning of Year Arrangements: Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2011**

There is a large amount of essential preparatory work that we must complete with students in certain year-groups at the very start of the school year. We have reviewed our arrangements, and, for September 2011:

Boys currently in the Shell (next year's Lower Remove) must attend at school (in uniform) on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> September from 11.00 am until 2.30 pm. Lunch will be provided.

Boys currently in the Upper Remove (next year's Transitus) must attend at school on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> September at 9.30 for a briefing followed by a day of induction activities.

Students currently in the Transitus who are intending to apply to Oxford or Cambridge next year must attend school on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> September and must make appointments to see Mr Chapman between 11.30 am and 4.00 pm.

For these students, this is an important school day. The sessions are necessary and practical. All students must attend. Unavoidable absence should, therefore, be reported (or requested) as on any other school day.

## Sport

The weather meant that the football season got off to a slow start, but it picked up most successfully. Across all year-groups, this was one of our most successful seasons. The 1<sup>st</sup> XI had a disappointing year (though famously defeated Highgate). The 2<sup>nd</sup> XI were far more successful, losing only two matches out of eleven. The U14s were our star year-group, with a successful A team and an undefeated B team.

Hockey is becoming increasingly popular and an increasingly serious part of UCS sport. We had over 40 fixtures this season. Our Middle School sides hold their own. Our current senior squad deserve much of the credit for the growth of the game at UCS. Together for seven years, they are a formidable team. They competed this year at the Bath Festival where they acquitted themselves very well against some of the country's great hockey schools.

Basketball remains popular and successful. Our senior team has done well (once again beating Highgate twice) but it is the U15s who really stand out, reaching the London finals for the age-group for the second year running, where they lost to a strong team from Alleyn's School.

## Music & Drama

The Spring Term is always a busy one for the Music and Drama Departments. Our annual Spring Concert was outstanding with memorable performances from the Symphony Orchestra (including a movement of Elgar's Cello Concerto with Jeremy Walker as soloist), the Chamber Orchestra and Concert Band. This was followed by a grand Choral Concert featuring choirs and singers from all levels of the UCS Foundation. In between these events, the UCS Centenary Choir gave a most popular concert of works by Faure and Rutter. Many thanks to John Bradbury, Ian Gibson and Simon Walton.

The Lund Theatre has seen three full productions too. The girls of the Transitus performed *Be My Baby*, a moving and thoughtful piece. Stephen Powell of the Sixth Form directed a most enjoyable production of Noel Coward's *Hay Fever* and we finished the term with Allan Steven's intense and powerful production of Dennis Potter's *Son of Man* which translated remarkably well from TV to the stage with memorable performances from Gus Mitchell and Louis Glucksmann Cheslaw.

## Holiday Trips

There are a number of school trips over the coming holiday: Spanish students will study in Salamanca; German students are off to Freiburg; our Further Mathematicians have their regular trip to Barcelona; Transitus and Sixth Form Art Historians will travel to Florence and Rome; tennis-players of all ages are off to play in Spain; and Upper School skiers will surely enjoy their break in Whistler.

## Fund-Raising for Charities

Thanks to the initiative and enterprise of Nigel Peace, the school devoted a full day of games and activities in March to fund-raising for The Disability Foundation. We welcomed visitors from the Foundation, there were various sporting competitions designed to show our able-bodied youngsters the true significance of disability. It was enjoyable and it raised our consciousness of such an important issue. It also raised over £3000 for the Foundation.

Earlier in the term, Chris Reynolds and others organised an evening of salsa for India. It featured the marvellous UCS Salsa Band. It was extremely well-attended and most enjoyable. Even more important, the evening raised over £17,000 for the children's home in Goa, which UCS Sixth Form students have visited over the past two years. This will enable them to buy a minibus for the children.

Altogether, UCS students have raised over £40,000 for charitable causes this year. It is a record and one of which we should be proud.

## Anne Frank Tree

Thanks to the initiative and generosity of Cindy Lass, a UCS parent, we hosted a most moving tree-planting ceremony in March. The sapling is from the seed of the chestnut tree that grew outside the building in Amsterdam in which Anne and her family hid from the Nazis. She referred often to the tree in her diary, her only evidence of the changing seasons. Our tree, planted in the gardens at the rear of the school site, will be an important reminder for future UCS generations. It was planted by Eva Schloss, Anne Frank's step-sister and an Auschwitz survivor.

## Staff News

UCS families will join me in giving our best wishes to Laura Cheng whose maternity leave begins at the end of this term. Mrs Anne Thompstone will be joining the Maths Department in May to cover some of Laura's classes.

I am also pleased to announce that Tom Allen of the Classics Department will take over as Deme Warden of Evans in September 2011, when Tom Underwood takes up his new responsibility as Head of the Modern Languages Department.

## Points for Parents

### *Requests for Absence from School*

With a late Easter, extra bank holidays and international football competitions, I have received an irritatingly large number of requests for absence from school at the end of this term and the beginning of next. I sincerely ask parents to avoid this in future. UCS term dates are published well in advance and are set with the educational interests of our pupils in mind. Please respect them and organise family life around them. I will never give permission for students to miss school in order to travel to professional football matches (or equivalent events).

## Important Dates for the Holidays, the Summer Term and Beyond

- The School Library will be open between from Monday 11th April to Friday 15th April 2011 between 10 am to noon and 1pm to 4 pm for public examination candidates who would like to use the library for quiet private study.
- Study leave for GCSE candidates begins on Monday 16th May 2011.
- Study leave for AS candidates begins on Monday 16th May 2011. Normal school for these pupils resumes again on Friday 10th June 2011.
- Shell Internal Exams commence Monday 23rd May 2011.
- Entry Internal Exams commence Tuesday 25th May 2011.
- Speech Day will be on Thursday 26th May 2011 at 7.30 pm in the Great Hall. Our Guest of Honour this year will be Sir Nicholas Hytner, Artistic Director of the National Theatre.
- The school will be closed for staff training on the Friday 27th May 2011.
- Lower Remove & Remove Internal exams commence Monday 6th June 2011.
- Tea-Time Concert in the Great Hall on Thursday 16th June 2011 at 5.00 pm.
- A Summer's Evening with The Music Department in the Great Hall on Thursday 23rd June 2011 at 7.30 pm.
- Deme Drama will be in the Lund Theatre on Wednesday 22nd June 2011 at 7.00 pm.
- AS & A2 Level results will be emailed on Thursday 18th August 2011 Paper copies will also be available at school from 9.00 am.
- GCSE results will be sent by emailed early on Thursday 25th August 2011. Paper copies will also be available at school from 9.00 am.
- All potential Oxbridge applicants (current Transitus) must make appointments to see Mr Chapman on Friday 2nd September 2011 for interviews from 11.30 am to 4.00 pm