

UCS

July 2011



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# End of Term Newsletter

## End-of-Term Letter Summer 2011

As well as containing information about the achievements of the past term, this Newsletter also includes important information about the publication of examination results in the summer and the start of the new school year in September. Please be sure to note all of these points.

## Activities Week

Once again, we have ended the school year with a week of cultural, intellectual, creative and recreational activities for all students in Years 7 – 10.

The range has been wide. Following Lower School Sports Day, the Entry Year have enjoyed an activity holiday at Skern Lodge in Devon. The programme for the Shell has been more varied: a Finance Road Show, Bassistry Music Workshop, WeRead Children's Book Festival, and visits to Thorpe Park and Stubbers Adventure Centre. Lower Remove spent most of the week visiting the First World War battlefields in Belgium. They returned to participate in WeRead and to visit Greenwich, the environmental education centre at Veolia Water and the RAF Museum. A number of members of the Remove have been practising for their Duke of Edinburgh Award expedition in the Peak District. Others have gone sailing, have visited the Natural History Museum, the Holocaust Exhibition at the Imperial War Museum, the National Portrait Gallery and National Theatre, the National Space Museum and Hillingdon Outdoor Activities Centre.

We are convinced that this is just the right way in which to round off the school year. Of course, each student will prefer some elements to others but the diet is genuinely varied and pretty imaginative. We will continue to develop and amend it from year to year, but the principle of embracing such a wide range of

## Other Events of the Term

Dominated as it is by exams – both external and internal – the character of the Summer Term is rather different from the Autumn and the Spring. There is a risk that it can become diffuse. I think that we avoided that. Speech Day this year was a particular success. Sir Nicholas Hytner was far more than just an entertaining Guest of Honour. His contribution was thought-provoking and brilliantly presented. Arthur Gallimore, as Captain of Monitors, also did a brilliant job. The evening was excellently attended by the leaving Sixth Form and their families and, just as it should, had an air of affectionate leave-taking. Less than a week before, a large number of Sixth Form boys and girls and their guests had attended the UCS Ball in the Great Hall and Refectory – which was widely believed to be one of the best events we have hosted for a long while.

Despite the difficulties imposed by exams, music and drama manage to thrive in the Summer Term too. We held an excellent Tea-Time Concert soon after the internal exams which gave the opportunity for some excellent Middle and Lower School instrumentalists and ensembles to shine. There was a Beatles Tribute Concert in the Lund Theatre towards the end of term and a really excellent UCS Folk Festival in the amphitheatre, bringing together some really talented singers and song-writers from the Transitus and Sixth. We ended with Jazz at the Field on the last evening of term – another excellent showpiece for the talents of UCS jazz musicians and ensembles of all ages, and consistently impressive talent. The Deme Drama Competition was a hit too. Won by Flocks with an excellent version of The Three Musketeers, the standard was particularly high and (as ever) revealed the remarkable resource and assurance of so many UCS students.

I hope that many of you were able to visit the displays of work by UCS students of Art and Design & Technology that were held at various points in the term. The standard of work from these departments is exceptionally high at the moment – certainly justifying our investment in the new Art & Design Centre a few years ago. There will be a further exhibition early next term – details are included later in this Newsletter.

## **Sport**

It is good to report on the best UCS cricket season – particularly at senior level – for many years. After a slow start, the 1<sup>st</sup> XI have won the vast majority of their games, and might have won even more. They will compete in an inter-school festival on the Wirral after the end of term. Younger sides have also enjoyed some encouraging success.

Tennis is also thriving. A number of our players enjoyed a training camp in Spain over Easter. It certainly paid off for our U15s who were our strongest age-group this year. Along with the U13s and the seniors they are currently competing in the ISFA tournament at Eton College.

It is not just cricket and tennis in the summer. For the second year running, the UCS pairing of James Scott and Felix Cleverdon of the Entry Year have won a national inter-school sailing competition organised by the Prep Schools' Association. This is a tremendous achievement, competing against schools with a far firmer sailing tradition than UCS. Congratulations to them!

## **Partnerships & Outreach**

For the fourth year running, UCS and Highgate School will join together in July to provide a Summer School for gifted and talented youngsters from Primary Schools in Camden and Haringey. It is sure to be a success again. It is not our only Primary School event this year. On the first day of Activities Week, UCS joined with Kentish Town Primary School to offer a day of learning and fun to all of their pupils. It was an ambitious project masterminded by UCS Transitus students. Over 70 volunteered to help. The older pupils (numbering over 100) from Kentish Town came up to UCS to join with our students and staff in sessions devoted to Science, Music & Drama, Swimming, Art and Cake Decorating (& cake eating!). Meanwhile, 30 UCS students and some teachers travelled to the Primary School to offer similar sessions to the younger children. The whole venture was a brilliant success – just as educational and enjoyable for us as for the Primary School children.

The WeRead Festival is an outreach project too. As well as involving UCS students in Years 8 and 9, students from seven local state schools also attended the day, contributing their own book reviews, meeting the authors and voting for their favourites. Westminster Academy were involved in that, building on the partnership that we already have with them.

Our overseas partnerships are buoyant too – with Equatorial College School in Uganda and, through Lighthouse International Ministries, with children's homes in Romania and Goa, India. UCS students will be working in Romania over this summer and in Goa at half-term in October.

## **Building Development at Froggnal**

You will probably have seen that we are set to complete our latest building project over the summer. By extending a pedestrian colonnade along the front of the Theatre block, we will create two new teaching spaces, designed to be especially flexible for use with new technologies, an enlarged foyer space for the Lund Theatre, a new centre for our IT Services Department and some additional storage space for the Drama Department.

The development should be completed by September, but this will mean that parking space at Froggnal will be severely restricted over the summer.

## **Vietnam & Cambodia**

The first ever UCS trip to South East Asia leaves soon after the end of term. A party of nineteen boys and girls, led by Andrew Wilkes and the Headmaster, will travel from Hanoi through Vietnam to Ho Chi Minh City before flying on to Angkor Wat in Cambodia.

## **Enrichment Week**

We are regularly told that the educational curriculum in the UK suffers from being unduly exam-focused and is limited by the narrowness of exam specifications. We firmly believe at UCS that it is our duty to overcome that through the way in which we teach, through embellishments to the curriculum and through continual efforts to enrich the diet of our students. To that end, we plan to designate the week beginning Monday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2011 as UCS Enrichment Week. This will not involve trips, excursions or out-of-school activities. That is catered for in the Summer Term Activities Week. Rather, the aim in this week will be to bring visiting specialists, practitioners, writers and experts into the classroom and the laboratory. So the curriculum will remain intact, but will offer a new, wider and more imaginative experience for our students. It is a new and experimental venture for UCS. We hope that it will be a success.

## Staff

### Leaving Staff

David Rance retires after nearly fifty years at UCS as both student and teacher. It is impossible to exaggerate his contribution to the school. Beginning his career at the Junior Branch, he has ended it as tutor to a form of Sixth Form girls. His willingness to take on new tasks and new challenges is outstanding. His success at each one of them is equally impressive. He was the founding Head of the Lower School at Frognal. He has taught Maths, Design & Technology, PSHE and more. He has directed countless plays and musicals. He masterminded this year's Activities Week. Above all, he has been the most loyal, equable, generous and wise of friends to colleagues and students alike. We will miss him enormously.

Barry Bateman has been here over twenty years. He has been a stalwart of the Design & Technology Department, helping students to develop skill and to exercise imagination and enthusiasm in a manner that is quite unique to that subject. Barry has also been our Senior Examinations Officer, organising and managing the entire public examination programme. This has grown from a small administrative duty focused in the Summer Term into a year-long management role. Barry's level head and strong sense of proportion suits him well for it. As he steps back from the classroom, he will continue to help us in that capacity over the coming year.

Nigel Peace retires this summer too. He has been a rigorous Maths teacher and a keen sportsman (particularly leading UCS badminton for many years) and was, for many years, Head of the Careers Department. Proving that his interests are far broader than that, this year he has also organised a Fun Day in aid of The Disability Foundation and a Beatles Tribute Concert. He has had a fine UCS career and we wish him well for the future.

Robyn Spencer created the Learning Support Department at UCS just fourteen years ago. It has grown to be a key part of our educational provision, touching the experience of a high proportion of our students. It is also integrated into our academic life in a manner that is rare in schools of our kind. That is due to Robyn's intelligence, sensitivity and wisdom. She leaves a big gap to fill.

Tom Jenkin leaves UCS to be Head of Middle School at Merchant Taylors'. His contribution has been huge: English teacher, form-master, sports patron, leader of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, Coordinator of PSHE and much more besides. We shall miss him hugely, though it is right that he develops his own career in this way. We wish him the very best of luck, safe in the knowledge that he will be as successful at MTs as at UCS.

Like Tom, Gareth Parker-Jones is developing his career too, with a move to be Head of History at Sevenoaks School. This is a great step for him, though very sad for us. In his brief three-year stay, Gareth has been a great teacher and form teacher, has led our Enrichment initiative and has been a popular and highly valued member of Common Room. We wish him a happy time in his new job.

Catherine McCormack was the pioneer of Art History Department at UCS just three years ago. She leaves at the end of term to take the opportunity for further post-graduate study. She also leaves a popular, dynamic and well-established Department behind her. She has led overseas trips to the cultural centres of Europe and should be proud of the number of UCS boys and girls who see this area of study as one of the most fulfilling in their lives.

Arthur Brammer's stay at UCS has been cruelly short. Leaving after just one year to return to the PE Department at Dulwich College, Arthur will leave many friends and admirers. He has fitted in brilliantly and has proved himself an excellent coach (particularly of football), an astute form-teacher and a truly popular colleague. We wish him every success at Dulwich, and trust that he will remember us with affection.

Ben Wells leaves us this term too. We were immensely lucky that Ben was available to join the History Department after Fasal Khan was taken suddenly ill in November. He has been an excellent colleague: a most flexible and hard-working teacher and a real enthusiast for school life. He joins Highgate School to cover a maternity leave next term. He leaves with our most sincere thanks.

It is good to know that the experience of UCS is a positive one for our staff: both Davinia Sebe-Ankra (our Design & Technology Technician) and Mat Doran (Learning Support Assistant) will leave UCS this year with the aim of training as teachers. Maria Demetriou-Cherrat and Hannah Mitchell also leave the School Office staff this term. We are particularly grateful to Hannah for helping to establish our new Reception Office as a warm, efficient and friendly introduction to the school.

### **New Staff**

Clearly we will welcome a number of new teachers next term:

William Alter (History & Politics); Laura Bishop (English); Stuart Cork (Maths); Michael Cloke (Design & Technology); Carol Jacobi (Art History); Holly O'Connell (History & Politics); Katie Reeves (Chemistry); Adam Spensley (Learning Support Assistant); Susan Thale (Head of Learning Support); Greg Thurstans (PE); Shane Williams (Maths).

Julian Hind will join the Maths Department to cover Laura Cheng's maternity leave. Nicola Christie will do the same for Jennifer Kung in the History Department.

### **New Responsibilities**

Tom Underwood will take over as Head of Modern Languages next term. Tom Allen will succeed him as Deme Warden of Evans.

Rachel Gudger will succeed Gareth Parker-Jones as enrichment Coordinator. Tracey O'Neill will take over responsibility for PSHE from Tom Jenkin.

Michaela Hudson will join Lisa Jenkins as Deme Warden of Olders while Jennifer Kung is on maternity leave.

### **Public Examination Results**

AS and A-level results will be published on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> August. Results will be e-mailed individually to each candidate by 8.00 a.m. on that morning. Paper copies of the results will be available from the School Office from 9.30 a.m. and will be posted on if they have not been collected by 11.30 a.m. 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. Results will be e-mailed individually to each candidate by 8.00 a.m. on that morning. Once again, paper copies of the results will be available from the School Office from 9.30 a.m. and will be posted on if they have not been collected by 11.30 am.

Pupils and parents who have queries or who require advice should contact their Deme Warden directly by email to arrange a meeting.

It is very important that we have accurate and reliable e-mail addresses for each candidate. If you need to inform us of a change of e-mail address, please contact [lisa.powley@ucs.org.uk](mailto:lisa.powley@ucs.org.uk) as soon as possible.

### **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 a.m. until 2.30 p.m. 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 from 9.30 a.m.
- Students currently in the Transitus who are intending to apply for Oxford or Cambridge next year must attend at school on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2011 for meetings that will begin at 11.30 a.m.

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.

## Meetings for Parents for next term

Transitus Parents Meeting	18.30	Monday 12 September 2011	Great Hall
Entry Year Parents Meeting	18.30	Wednesday 14 September 2011	Great Hall
Lower Remove Parents Meeting	18.30	Thursday 15 September 2011	Great Hall
Shell Parents Evening (A-K)	16.20	Thursday 17 November 2011	Refectory
Shell Parents Evening (L-Z)	16.20	Thursday 24 November 2011	Refectory
Transitus Parents Evening	16.20	Monday 28 November 2011	Great Hall
Sixth Form Parents Evening	16.20	Monday 12 December 2011	Great Hall

## Other Dates for Next Term

- Richard Hand Memorial Concert Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2011 at 4pm
- Coffee Morning in aid of Macmillan Nurses Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2011 from 8.30am
- UCS Art Exhibition  
The Music Room,  
South Molton Street Mayfair, W1 From 27<sup>th</sup> September 2011 to 1<sup>st</sup> October 2011
- A Night of Confusion 'The Comedy of Errors' & 'A Servant to Two Masters' Tuesday 11 October 2011 & Wednesday 12 October 2011 7pm  
Lund Theatre
- SS & JB Fireworks Evening Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2011 from 4.30pm
- Tea Time Concert Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2011 at 5pm
- Chamber & Instrumental Concert Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2011 at 7pm
- Autumn Concert Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2011 at 7.30pm
- 'Cabaret' directed by Gillian Rabie  
Lund Theatre 5<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> December 2011 from 7pm
- Centenary Choir Concert Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2011 from 7.30pm
- UCS Carol Service Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> December 5pm at St John's Parish Church

## Points for Parents

- Please do not drive your children to and from school unless it is absolutely necessary. Congestion in Frognal is an increasing problem. Alternatives involving public transport are widely available.
- We have been alerted to the fact that traffic wardens will be more than usually vigilant if cars are parked illegally in Frognal when delivering or collecting children from school. Stopping too near the pedestrian crossing will be a particular target.
- UCS is sure to be inspected next term. When this happens, the inspectors will send you a questionnaire to complete. Please do your best to return it. The greater the response rate, the more valuable the data.
- A charity bike ride from London to Cambridge is scheduled to start from UCS Playing Fields on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> September. It is in aid of the *One to One* children's charity. Further information is included with this mailing. Please encourage your children, you family and friends to support such a good cause.

## Chairman of HMC

Next year, I will be serving as Chairman of the Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference, the association of the leading independent schools in the UK and overseas. This is bound to involve meetings and duties that will take me away from UCS rather more than usual. I could only consider taking on such a role because I am lucky to have such a strong team of senior staff at UCS. Chris Reynolds, as Vice Master, will deputise for me when I am away. Parents should be entirely happy to contact Chris over urgent matters. He has my complete confidence.







