

Commonweal Matters

Ability Follows Enthusiasm - A Centre of Excellence - October 2011



Academy status!

Dear All,

It seems a little late in the day to be welcoming in a new academic year, but nevertheless it is important to acknowledge the key developments for Commonweal since the end of what was a highly successful 2010 - 2011.

In addition to our collective satisfaction in being adjudged Outstanding by Ofsted in the June 2011 inspection, we were delighted with the outstanding performance of our Year 11

leavers, who recorded the school's best ever GCSE results. With 65% of students achieving 5 or more good GCSE grades, including English and Maths, and with nearly 80% obtaining 5 or more good grades, we exceeded the challenging targets set for this cohort two years ago. Whilst this reflects tremendously well on the Year 11 students I would like to express my sincere thanks to all the staff who made it possible – their expertise and commitment is vital in all that we do !

Community Carols For Prospect Hospice

**Ask your friends and neighbours to go
carol singing in your street on
Wednesday 21st December from 6 - 7pm
and raise funds for the Prospect Hospice
(Street licences will be provided)**



**Further info tel Josie 01793 427860 email
josie@commonweal.co.uk or tel Daniel McNally
Community Fundraiser at Prospect Hospice
Tel 01793 815142**

Swindon Advertiser
The Commonweal
A Performing Arts Academy
School



Front page picture: Jordan Williams and Lousie Hunt, ex student and school patron, at the recent Prize Giving Ceremony. Louise started 2011 by winning the women's tennis singles titles at both of Britain's first two world ranking tournaments of the season.

Commonweal Matters is edited and compiled by Josie Williams, Community Arts Development Officer. If you have a story you would like considered for publication please email josie@commonweal.co.uk.

As is inevitable we said goodbye to a number of teaching staff in the Summer, but I am delighted to welcome the following new teaching staff, and wish them well in their Commonweal careers:

Graham Downer – ICT & Business Studies. **Malachi Spaulding & Claire Bowden** – who together will complete the maternity cover in Dance.

Charlotte Rowe – who leads the RE Department during Mrs Bracher’s maternity cover.

Alice Ballard & Leo Barker – both of whom join the English Faculty

The third significant event of the Summer was our conversion to Academy status, which was successfully completed on August 1st. Thanks are due to Tor Johnson, Business Manager, and her team who worked tirelessly over the holiday period to ensure that everything went smoothly.

Other than the subtle change of signage – we are now known as The Commonweal School – a Performing Arts Academy – I would hope that on a day to day basis you would not notice any discernible difference to the way

we go about our business. In short, we are committed to using our greater freedoms to protect all that we hold dear and to explore ways of enhancing the learning for students yet further. Thus our Development Plan for this year focuses on exploring curriculum options at both pre and post 16, working more closely in partnership with our Cluster schools, responding strategically to the ever changing world of education and doing all we can to sustain high academic performance.

We have undoubtedly begun the new year on the front foot and events such as our Celebration Evening, Open Evening and Annual Prize Giving demonstrate just what talent, potential and ability our community possesses. With your continued support we are confident of another successful year.

Best wishes

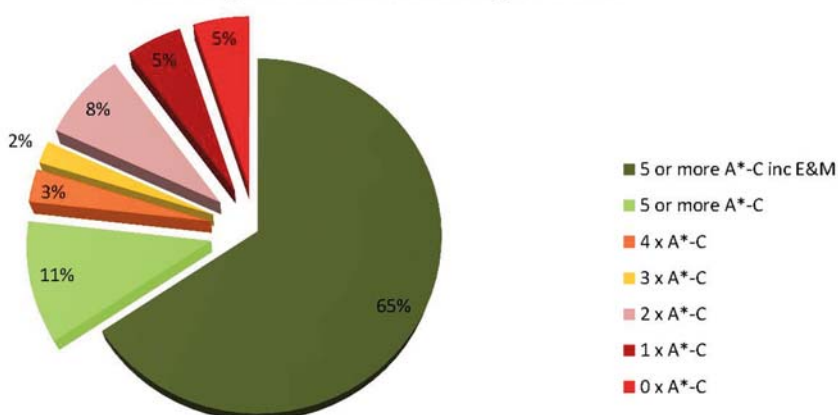
Keith Defter

Check out our web sites
www.commonweal.co.uk
www.commonwealarts.co.uk

The Commonweal School

Exam Results 2011

Percentage of Students achieving GCSE's 2011



Total % with 5 or more A* - C - 76%

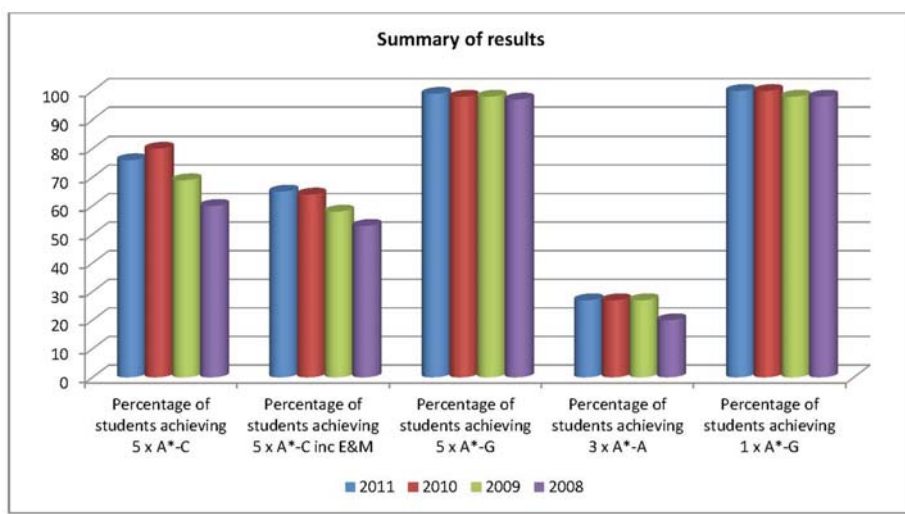
Outline School Development Plan: 2011 - 2012

1. Academy Status: completion of conversion process; governance; funding; partnership with Lethbridge and Cluster schools.

2. Futures Thinking: Education Act implications; SEN Green Paper; Wolf Report; Traded & Extended Services; Admissions; out of school provision

3. Post 16 opportunities: Continuing Professional Development; exploring options; resources – including financial; facilities.

	2011 Target	2011 results	2010 results	2009 results	2008 results
All Students		208	208	208	210
Percentage of students achieving 5 x A*-C	75%	76%	80%	69%	60%
Percentage of students achieving 5 x A*-C inc E&M	63%	65%	64%	58%	53%
Percentage of students achieving 5 x A*-G	98%	99%	98%	98%	97%
Percentage of students achieving 3 x A*-A		27%	27%	27%	20%
Percentage of students achieving 1 x A*-G		100%	100%	98%	98%
Average Points per student		446	428	420	380
Capped Points per student		339	336	329	315



4. Curriculum Review: Teaching & Learning Review in 2012; independent learning; work related learning; preparation for 2013 curriculum change.

5. Academic Performance: Year 11 focus; controlled assessments; interventions and support; mentoring; review days

6. Maintenance: Calendar – trips and events schedule;
Staffing – succession planning.

Faculty Curriculum Support – ongoing review, including of Teaching Assistant deployment;

Monitoring & Evaluation – subject/support area inspections/audits (including Pastoral);

ICT – see separate ICT development plan.

Dear Parents / Carers,

In order to raise money for a new school minibus we've recently joined 'Buy4schools', a school fundraising service which pays parents for everyday shopping.

Every parent gets a £5 welcome bonus when you register on our school page.

www.buy4schools.co.uk/thecommonweal580 which can be redeemed once you have earned £25 commission from the site.

The site allows you to do everyday shopping from 2000 of the UK's best known online retailers and earn cashback; buying Home Insurance gets you £20-£30 in cashback for example! All cashback is split 50/50 between each parent and the school. You can also use your registration to get cashback in store at a range of high street names (e.g. Halfords, Cineworld, Sports Direct & Homebase).

It's a win-win situation – parents get cashback on things that they would buy anyway and the school gets cashback too. Please register and help us to raise funds.

Victoria Johnson
Business Manager

Mobile Phones - a reminder to all

Students are respectfully reminded that mobile phones should not be used during the school day and should be turned off and secured safely whilst in lessons and moving around the school.

Parents/Carers are similarly reminded not to contact children via mobile phones during the school day .

Thank you for your anticipated co-operation.

**CAN YOU HELP US REDUCE
COMMONWEAL COMMUNITY'S CARBON
FOOTPRINT**



We are recycling

- Textiles
- Shoes
- Batteries
- Mobile phones
- Low energy light bulbs
- Used stamps
- Books
- Spectacles

There are bins for all of these outside room 130

Think about litter before you throw it into the bin
The UK sent 12.2 million tonnes of rubbish to landfill in 2010

News from the Governing Body

The new school year has opened with everyone feeling extremely positive about Commonweal. The outstanding assessment from Ofsted in July was further underlined by this summer's exam results (once again the best on record) and in August we formally completed the change to Academy status following a lot of very hard work by a lot of people. This has all led to a wonderful sense of achievement and success, reflected in a number of recent celebrations and in the day-to-day business of the school.

Within the governing body we are still working through the detailed implications of our new status as an Academy, although our key aims remain the same: to support the school in maintaining its success and in planning for its future. We have retained a so-called flat structure in which all governors have equal say in the major decisions about the school and all carry the same responsibilities to support the school.

We have also chosen to have a similar number of governors on

the governing body. In particular we are still keen to involve as many parent governors as before and we are now looking to recruit two new parent governors to join us. If your son or daughter is currently a student at Commonweal do consider whether you would like to become a governor. It is a great opportunity to understand more about how the school works and to help shape the way the school develops. There are many ways in which governors can contribute: formally through structured meetings and less formally through visits to the school, helping with trips and other events, or providing expertise and help on a whole range of matters.

If you are interested please see the information about how to get involved on the Commonweal website:

www.commonweal.co.uk

and contact me via the school, or let a member of staff at the school know. Many thanks.

Mari Williams
Chair of Governors

K2 Adventures with Mrs Hall

This year, the K2 teambuilding days were held at the County Ground and the weather was perfect. 220 Year 7s attended over the two days and worked on a variety of games and activities that allowed them to get to know each other, solve problems and work as a team, and for tutors and staff to get to know the students. There were climbing activities, team games and of course the water games– which were as popular as ever. K2 is an important part of the Transition Programme in Commonweal and allows students to excel in another area besides academically.

“The Sports Leaders ran some of the activities working alongside the K2 staff, gaining valuable work experience and opportunities to organise, communicate and develop their leadership skills. The Sports Leaders were: Evan Costello, Aiden Patterson, Maisy Wichall, Jack Kilby, Josh Watkins and James Warren. They really enjoyed the 2 days and were given excellent feedback from the K2 and Commonweal staff on their team building abilities.”
Polly Long Sports Coordinator



And The Sun Did Shine!



“Around the field were a series of teambuilding exercises and problem solving activities designed to help Year 7 improve their teamwork and communication skills as well as boost their confidence. We also developed our skills in these areas; leading and encouraging all the members in our groups. I absolutely loved the experience as I got along with the students and enjoyed all the activities, particularly the Caving Ladder challenge. The days also gave us the chance to make new friends and work with people we wouldn’t usually work with. I felt I was able to develop my leadership skills and help the Year 7s succeed in their challenges. K2 were lovely and welcoming; organising an amazing day out which we all really enjoyed,”
Aiden Patterson 10W2 - Peer Educator.

7SA1 won the tutor prize, by collecting all the relevant paperwork, donations and notes. The tutor group showed good teamwork even though not everyone knew everyone, and had only had the tutor day besides this term to get to know each other.

Prize Winners 2011

The Mortimer Prize for English		Lauren Nash
The Prize for French		Eve James
The Prize for Spanish		Charlotte Murphy
The Adams Prize for Science		Callum Nunnery
The Commonweal Cups for Science		Daisy Bellamy, Ella McCusker Alice Foster
The Prize for Geography		Bianca Prinzi
The Prize for History		Rhys Clyne
The Boon Cup for RE		Tom Penfold
The Bacchus Cup for Mathematics		Rhys Clyne
The Maths Progress Prize		Rebecca Liddell
The Beasant Prize for ICT		Charlotte Murphy
The Business Studies Prize		Jess Piatek
The Woodman-Harris Prize for D&T Food		Molly Gore
The Woodman-Harris Prize for Child Development		Larissa Ayris
The Jack Ackroyd Award for Artistic Excellence		Lauren Nash
The Alan Willies Cup for Art		Becky Sewell
The D/T Prize		Kemani Batt
The Alan Willies Cup for Technology		Louis Capitanchik
The Prize for Drama		Katie White
The Bishop Prize for Drama		Dominic Persinger
The Prize for Dance		Ronnie Hammond
The Performing Arts Prize		Jordan Williams
The Fairclough Prize for Music		Sam Cantlon
The Randell-Sly Cup for Service to the Band		Joshua Mulcock
Ian Mills Memorial Trophy		Henry Wakelam
The Cup for P.E.	Girls	Jess Salles
	Boys	Ben Fox
The Governors' Team Award		'Stamp It Out' – Sam Rosser, James Taylor, Babette Clark, Charlotte Wood, Alex Priest, Eve James, Charlotte Murphy, Rhys Clyne, Dominic Persinger, Sam Cantlon, Ella McCusker, Ben Walker, Neal Morris, Evan Costello
The Holder Prize for Endeavour		Larissa Ayris
The Fred. E. King Prize for Endeavour		Connor Wood
The School Prize for Service		Lillie Bellamy
The Marie Edwards Citizenship Prize		Haydon Flannagan
The Raymond Willies Memorial Trophy		Tallulah Lyons



House Prizes 2011

	Year		
Ridgeway	7	Madeleine Frost	Montana Walcott
	8	Holly Brien	Sam Jones
	9	Carli Green	Emily Fox
	10	Jessica Shimwell	Casey Hindon
	11	Grant White	Rebecca Liddell
Sarum	7	Freya Jamieson	Simone Lyons
	8	Vandna Odeara	Katie Covell
	9	Miles Frost	Hannah Wood
	10	Sarah Read	Isobel Merrison
	11	Aston Leaver	Emily Kellett
Stonchenge	7	Laura Ayre	Martha James
	8	Molly Craig	Michael Dowlman
	9	Lydia Browning	Tamsyn Smith
	10	Drew Grimes	Sian Francis-Cox
	11	Holly Little	Erin Coneron
Whitehorse	7	Daniel Woolhead	Anastasia Piatek
	8	Tom Hawk-Vango	James Moss
	9	Ben Park	Aiden Patterson
	10	Alice Baker	Mayra Jordan
	11	James Taylor	Freya Steele



Our guest of honour was ex-student and school patron, Louise Hunt. “ It was such a pleasure to meet so many talented students. It’s always so lovely to come back to Commonweal and being given the opportunity to give something back is great, as without the support of Mr Defter and my teachers I would not have been able to achieve all I have today!”

HOUSE POINT PRIZES 2011

Certificates for House Points are an important feature of our rewards policy, recognising positive effort, behaviour and achievement across all subjects, over a period of time. Certificates range from 100 points up to 500 points, with special awards given to those students who achieve beyond this.

Students who have reached the 200 point, 300 point and 400 point awards will be presented with their certificates in House Assemblies unless they have now left school, although they are recognised below. Students achieving beyond this mark will receive their awards tonight and are also listed below:

400 House Points:

Ridgeway

Isobel Hartley-Smyth, Keenan Witts, Laura Johnson, Miles Bailey, Rhys Clyne, Abi Bond

Sarum

Amina Ali, Phelan Spencer, Thomas Bain, Josh Goldfinch, Dan People

Stonehenge

Amara Anachebe, Jessica Ryan

Whitehorse

Rhiannon Teuten, Guilherme Gutierrez, Eda Torun, Alice Baker, Charlie Gardo, Bethan Hire, Stacey Brewer, Pavan Hakimzadah, Jessica Ayris, Abi Cameron, Megan Pidgeon

500 House points:

Ridgeway

Catia Pereira, Lucy Burton, Charlotte Murphy, Jeremy Van Der Sanden

Sarum

Stonehenge

Whitehorse

Shauna Fitzpatrick, Alexandra Veitch, Chloe Bartle, Ella McCusker, Karla Plaister, Bianca Prinzi

Special Prizes: 600 +

Ridgeway

Sarum

Frankie Lyons (600), Beth Parmenter (600), Sarah Read (800), Mitchell Hammett (600)

Stonehenge

Whitehorse

Abby Woods

If you are having an autumn clear out please can you think of the Home Economics Dept.

Do you have any spare pots, pans, kitchen equipment, or fabric?

We are always grateful for donations as we make items from recycled fabric and the more kitchen equipment the better.

Please give your donations to one of the following teachers
Mrs Walker, Miss Adams, Mr Soulsby or Miss Caudwell



To London, To London To Visit The Queen

It was a fantastic day in July despite showers and thunderstorms when Danuta Janicka – HLTA manager of the school’s specialist provision for students with physical impairments, was presented to the Queen at Buckingham Palace.

Along with three friends who started the charity “Pathfinders” 15 years ago in Swindon, Danuta was invited to Buckingham Palace to attend a Garden Party for people who had helped others in need through their charity work.

Little did Danuta know that she and her group would be approached by the Palace staff to be selected from the 10,000 members of the public present to meet the Queen. Not only to meet her but be the first person to be introduced to the Queen on the day!

Slightly stunned by this, Danuta with her friends were taken through the process of how to greet, what to say, how to pronounce “mam” as in “spam” after the first “Your Majesty.” We’re looking forward to seeing the official photographs and film



of the occasion – memories of a wonderful time, well deserved for the work Danuta and her friends put into running Pathfinders – where young people with a range of disabilities are challenged through outdoor activities which have included tall ship sailing around the Canary Islands, hang gliding, water skiing and activity centres in England and Ireland.

The Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service, the MBE for Volunteer Groups

Pathfinders (Swindon) are a local 100% voluntary charitable group, which was founded in 1997, by Jean Clifford, Margaret Tyson (both past Commonweal staff) and Danuta Janicka (HLTA of the SRP PI Unit).

Our aim is to encourage, young men and women with physical impairments to achieve independence, self confidence and self esteem by participating and experiencing a variety of sporting activities. Several students, past and present, from within the PI Unit, are members of Pathfinders.



The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service is the highest award given to volunteer groups across the UK for outstanding work done in their local communities. We feel very privileged that we were nominated and that Her Majesty the Queen, agreed to confer this unique National Honour upon the group (130 volunteer groups from around the UK, Channel Islands and the Isle of Man were awarded The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in 2011)

In recognition of this award, four volunteer members were invited, in July, to attend a Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace. We

had a wonderful time and were very surprised to to be presented to The Queen, where we talked about Pathfinders, it's volunteers and the achievements of it's members.

In August we were also presented with a certificate signed by The Queen and a commemorative piece of crystal, by the Lord-Lieutenant of Wiltshire.

We have throughly enjoyed working with our volunteers and members over the last 15 years and hope to continue for another 15 years and more.

News From The PTA By Chair Manil Brough

A plea for help!

The autumn term is a busy time for the PTA, as we have several events during this term. We particularly need lots of help with the Christmas Craft Market in November, to help run the café at this event and make the day run smoothly. If you're able to help, please let me know on the email below or on 432373.

Raffle and tombola prizes

We really need donations of good quality gift items, bottles of booze, boxes of chocolates, or

even goods, a service, or an activity, which we can use as raffle and tombola prizes at our upcoming events. Please bring anything you would like to donate into school and leave with Mrs James or contact me on manilb@virginmedia.com.

Legal Advice Clinic at the Christmas Craft Market

For the first time ever, Old Town solicitors Fullagar Brooks Millikin will be holding a Legal Advice Clinic at the Commonweal School Christmas Craft Market on Sunday 27th November, between 11 am and 4 pm. For a donation of £10 (tbc) to the Commonweal School PTA, they are offering 15 minutes of confidential advice from an experienced solicitor, on a range of legal issues, such as property matters, wills, probate and administration, powers of attorney, employment, business and matrimonial law. To book a 15 minute slot, please call 01793 777007 or email reception@fbmsolicitors.com for a confidential booking form. We're excited about this as it will provide a useful service to anyone who may be daunted by seeking legal advice, and it will raise much needed funds for the PTA.

Another new PTA venture...

We currently have a small committee looking into the possibility of a Commonweal race to complement other races in Swindon, like the Lethbridge 10K and the Swindon half marathon. The plans are going very well, with the hope to have the new race sometime in March. So watch this space!

Diary Dates

Friday 11th November – Quiz Night 7:30 pm start, £18 for a team of 6 or £3 per person. To reserve a space please email corina_o_keefe@hotmail.com

Sunday 27th November – Christmas Craft Market, 11 am – 4 pm. Please contact me on manilb@virginmedia.com for more information.

PTA Meeting Dates

All meetings start at 7pm and are held in the Staff Room.

Tuesday 1st November

Monday 9th December

(This one will be at The Pig on the Hill (tbc) at about 8:15 pm following the Carol Service at Bath Road church.!)



Success!!

That is the cry from onlookers lining the streets early in the morning as 45,000 participants from over 63 countries pass by. Our Year 9, 10, 11 and past students however did not require it. They proved they had the determination, mental strength and the discipline to succeed.

I am referring to the International Nijmegen Marches. An annual walking event which takes place in Nijmegen (pronounced Ny-may-gun), The Netherlands. The 4 Day March itself is always held on the Tuesday to Friday of the third full week in July. The event

itself requires that the younger/student participants walk a specified distance of 25 miles each day for four consecutive days. Once achieved they will be presented with their KNBLO medal, The Nijmegen Cross.

We stay in a sports hall 2km from the start each day and joining us were 2 teams of students from Colchester and Dorset and Wiltshire. Our Year 9s also walked as a team. Over the 4 days Colchester and Dorset and Wilts encountered dropouts. Supervised by family and friends our Year 9s soldiered on and with no dropouts, received their individual medal as well as the team medal.

Our Year 10 and 11 who walked as individuals were also successful in completing the event.

To give yourself a fighting chance of completing the event, training is provided starting in January on a fortnightly basis until students reach the required distance in July.

I would like to thank all of our students for their exemplary behaviour and positive attitude throughout the training and in Nijmegen.

If you think you have what it takes and would like to take part in next years' event, please contact Mr Boston in the staff room.

Our students

Yr 9, now Yr 10: Alan Eyles, Toby Humphries, Finn Baker-James, Poppy Marshall, Caleb Nankivell, Jack Pike, Beth Simmons and James Warren.

Yr 10 now Yr 11: Megan Bryan and Freya Thompson

Past students: Rose Smith, Ollie Thorne and Jacob Pollard, Elise Simmons, Lucy Eyles and Alex Thompson.

Mr Boston

News From PE With Mrs Drew

Year 7 Netball Tournament

The girls went along to an introduction to netball tournament held at Swindon Academy. The girls played really well, especially as for some of them this was their first experience of competitive netball, and came away with 2 wins and 2 losses. Well played to all involved.

Year 7 Netball

The Year 7 team went to Wootton Bassett with a player short, but this didn't stop them playing absolutely fantastically to secure a win of 7 goals to 3.

Well done girls.

Year 8 Netball

The Year 8 team have played 3 fixtures so far against Greendown, Bradon Forest and Wootton Bassett. They are still waiting for that win but are working well as a team and working hard. Keep going girls.

Year 9 Netball

The Year 9 team have had one game so far against Wootton Bassett. The girls unfortunately lost this game, but will go into their next game with high spirits looking for that win.

Year 10 Netball

The Year 10 team have started the season successfully with a win against Wootton Bassett. The score was 22-5. Well done girls.

Girls Fixtures Coming Up

U13 Girls Football, Swindon Town Tournament Tuesday 11 October @ Dorcan.

U14 and U16 Netball Tournament Thursday 13 October @ Dorcan.

Year 7 and Year 11 Netball Match Tuesday 18 October @ Nova Hreod.

Year 10 Netball Triangular Wednesday 19 October @ Greendown with Kingsdown.

Year 7 Netball Match Wednesday 2 November @ Swindon Academy.

Year 7 and Year 11 Netball Match Tuesday 8 November @ Croft against Churchfields.

Year 9 Netball Match Wednesday 9 November @ Greendown.

Year 7 and Year 8 Netball Match Thursday 10 November @ Ridgeway.

Year 11 Netball Match Tuesday 15 November @ Croft against Highworth.

Year 9 Netball Match Wednesday 16 November @ Bradon Forest.

Year 9 Netball Triangular Thursday 17 November @ Dorcan with Isambard.

Year 7 and Year 8 Netball Match Tuesday 22 November @ Isambard.

Year 10 Netball mini tournament Wednesday 23 November @ Dorcan with Kingsdown and Greendown.

Year 7 Netball Match Tuesday 29 November @ Dorcan.

Year 8 Netball Match Wednesday 30 November @ Croft against Kingsdown.

Year 9 Netball Match Thursday 1 December @ Kingsdown.

Sports Week Results

This years' Sports Week was held in the last week of term. Many students participated in the many events to gain points for their house. It was a very close competition throughout, but just piping Ridgeway to the post on the last event was Stonehenge. They retain the title from last year. Well done Stonehenge.



Girls PE Clubs

Monday After School
Year 7, 8 and 9 Netball
Club from 15:00-16:00.
Come along if you would
like to learn more about
netball, improve your
skills and get a chance
to play in the school
team.

Inter House Results.

This year the inter house
competitions were run a little
differently with most of the
competitions being held in
lessons. This led to Sarum being
the champions. Well done Sarum!

Monday Lunchtime

Year 8 Interhouse netball-
Check with your tutor to see
when your fixtures are.

Tuesday Lunchtime

Year 10/11 Interhouse netball-
Check with your tutor when
your fixtures are.

Wednesday Lunchtime

Year 7 Interhouse netball-
Check with your tutor when
your fixtures are.

Thursday Lunchtime

Year 9 Interhouse netball-
Check with your tutor when
your fixture are.

Friday Lunchtime

Year 7 & 8 Gymnastics club.
Come along and learn some
new skills, improve skills and
meet new people.



News From Performing Arts

with Josie Williams, Community Arts Development Officer

It has been a busy start to the year with our first event being the school's **Club Fair**. This was an opportunity for the students to sign up to a wide range of clubs, many of which feed into our community events.

We have just set up a new community partnership with the Swindon, '**Big Sing Thing**,' This community choir meets at school on a Monday evening from 7.30 - 9pm. The choir will be singing in various Commonweal community events. For further info on how you can be involved please email bigsingthing@yahoo.com

Salsa, Zumba and Belly Dancing are proving popular. Zumba takes place on a Tuesday evening in our dance studio from 6.30pm and Salsa and Belly Dancing are on a Thursday evening.

The Old Town Festival takes place from 16th - 23rd June and this year Commonweal will be high profile! We have three venue slots to fill, The Bowl, Town Gardens on 16th and 17th June and our usual slot, but moved to a prime position on Saturday June 23rd. I am once again on the

committee and will use my skills to help promote the festival. I have just redesigned their web site and new info is being added on a regular basis. Check it out

www.OLDTOWNFESTIVAL.CO.UK

If you would like to perform, or know of someone who would, then please email me:

josie@commonweal.co.uk

Blood Brothers Trip

The "Blood Brothers" trip was a great experience. The performance was absolutely amazing and a very moving show. I was completely impressed by the actors' performances. The actors portraying Mickey and Edward were very professional and highly entertaining. I would definitely recommend anyone doing GCSE Drama or otherwise to go and see this production.

Carli Green 10R1

Blood Brothers was an amazing experience. The show was put together very well and I was both shocked and excited to see the outcome of the story line. It was extremely enjoyable and I would highly recommend it!

Katie Covell 9SA2

Smile, Action! Miss Lewis Reports On Some Dramatic Events



Mrs Brown and I took over Yr 7 & Yr 9 drama clubs from Mrs Becket at Easter. We have thoroughly enjoyed every minute. In the summer the Yr 9s were introduced to Street Theatre; this was after a workshop by Mark Bishop from The Natural Theatre Company.

They were very keen to pass on this experience to the Yr 7 drama club and did this with boundless energy and commitment. They then took this knowledge with them to The Old Town Festival and performed this very successfully along and around Wood Street.

(Yr 7 Film Team pictured above)

The Yr 7s then decided to put a welcome film together for the new Yr 7s who started in September. Again they put this together with so much enthusiasm. The film was all about starting Commonweal and gave snippets of some lessons, clubs and where to find help if needed. The film, which was shown to the New Year 7s on their first day in September, was received well by staff and students.

“I thought the welcome film shown to the new Year sevens was both informative and entertaining. As a tutor group (7Sa1) we watched it several times and the students thought it

was brilliant. It was a great idea that was extremely well produced.” Mrs Clarke said.

We all enjoyed making it and would like to thank Josie Williams, Miss Birbeck and Nick Weaver for all their ideas and support.

This year we have seen an increase in the numbers attending the Yr 7 and 8 drama clubs. We have been very impressed by the amount of older students who have given up their lunch times to come and help out.

We have already started to work towards some new projects, including more Street Theatre. We are hoping to repeat their success at The Old Town Festival 2012 and a new Year 7 welcome film is definitely on the cards!

Mrs Brown and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all students and staff for their enthusiasm and dedication you are truly inspirational and **OUTSTANDING!**

“Thank you ladies for your hard work, the standard was very high.” Miss Birkbeck, Head of Drama.

The Music Department with Mrs Sutcliffe and Miss Zylinski

We are already busy performing in the community and rehearsing for school events later in the term.

Evening of Celebration:

As a way of celebrating the school becoming an Academy, and being deemed Outstanding by Ofsted last term, alongside a fantastic set of exam results, it was decided that we would host a cabaret style event on the 15th September. Performances were put together by both staff and students to provide the first half of the evening and then comedienne cabaret artist Lorraine Bowen took over for the second half. Commonwealth staff performances included the infamous ‘staff choir’ performing their signature song, ‘All That Jazz,’ Mrs Whittington and Miss Dodson both sang and Miss Zylinski wowed us all by performing a Chopin Prelude on the piano. Student items were of an equally high standard and we would like to thank Maddie Lee, Eliesha Kay-Dean, Henry Wakelam, Beth Fisher, Beth Simmons and Alice Baker for their contribution, along with the dance groups that performed a

new work dedicated to dance teacher – Jane Cunliffe. During the second half of the concert, the audience almost dissolved with laughter as Lorraine used her own vocal/keyboard compositions about everyday life to entertain the audience. It truly was an **OUTSTANDING** evening.

Christ Church Autumn Fair

On Saturday 17th September, Miss Zylinski took a number of talented piano students to Christ Church's Autumn Fair to entertain in the community. The students performed a variety of pieces that had been worked on in their own time over the Summer holidays and were a credit to the school. Well done all of you.

Concert for the Mayor

On the evening of September 30th, a selection of the most talented students at Commonweal were invited to perform for the Mayor of Swindon at Stratton Community Centre. The students were amazing in representing the talent of Commonweal and performed in a very professional manner.

Prize Giving

As is usual, the Music Department were asked to provide

musical entertainment during the annual prize giving ceremony. This year, it seemed right to invite last year's Yr 11 musicians to return to perform. Jazz trio: Henry Wakelam, Sam Cantlon and Blyth Bennett arranged a fabulous set to perform as people arrived at the event and then the band 'The Over & Outs' performed during the ceremony. As prize winners themselves, they were worthy recipients of the Music and Expressive Arts Awards and we wish them every success in the future.

Clubs

Music clubs are now up and running every day and we continue to welcome new members. Check out the performing arts website for more details. Rehearsals are now working towards the Evenings of Entertainment at the end of November as well as the many Christmas events.

Band Rooms

The 3 band rooms are now only available for student use after school. This is due to continued misuse when un-supervised at lunchtime. Students wishing to use the rooms must first sign up in the music office and understand

the rules of using the rooms. See Mrs Sutcliffe for more details.

Swindon Youth Piano Festival 2012

Calling all piano/keyboard players! We will be hosting the Swindon Youth Piano Festival again next April, and we are already on the hunt for piano players of all ages and abilities.

This year we will be offering a special piano workshop for Commonwealth students, a masterclass/talk with Paul Turner (local renowned concert pianist), as well as the concert with all participants performing at the Swindon Arts Centre on Devizes Road. If you would like to find out more, please get in touch with Josie Williams (CADO) or Miss Zylinski in the Music Department office.

Instrumental Lessons

If you are interested in learning to play an instrument, please come and find out more information from either Mrs Sutcliffe or Miss Zylinski in the Music Department office. As well as either 20 or 30 minute lessons, we are also pleased to be able to offer 30 minute group saxophone lessons at a much reduced rate!

16 Steps



The dance group, '16 Steps,' haven't been working together for long, so when we had the opportunity to dance in a professional show, we were thrilled! We'd previously done a dance for The Commonwealth Open Evening and we are part of Year 8 Dance Club, but we have done nothing in front of a paying audience!

'16 Steps' is made up of Simone, Saskia, Charlie, Ella, Brooklyn, Lucy and Lucie; not all of us dance outside of school but we all love dancing and that's all what counts. We only had three weeks to come up with a dance that was of a good standard as we performed alongside finalists from 'Got to Dance', so the

pressure levels were high! Rehearsals were every lunch time in various places from the gym to the drama rooms and we were helped by Bethan Hire and Tallulah Lyons (thanks guys!). Judging by the crowd's reaction we think we represented Commonweal well, so all the hard work paid off.

Once we arrived in Cheltenham, it was all very hectic! The first thing we did was practise on the stage as it was different than what we had imagined. Once that was out of the way and we were all confident that we knew what we were doing it was time for food! When we came back from the town, it was straight into hair and makeup! We all had our hair French plaited and either curled or straightened; we felt like celebrities as all the attention was on us!

We thought it was a great experience and we enjoyed every moment of it; we loved the dance and it was an amazing day and we would like to thank Tallulah Lyons for giving us the chance to do something like this and we can't wait to do more things in the future!

Simone Lyons Yr 8

Gifted & Talented Dance Day



Thirty one Year 8 and 9 students took part in an all day dance workshop at school on Thursday 6th October. The girls and boys were put through their paces throughout the day from both Mr Spaulding and myself.

After five hours of technique sessions, learning movement and choreographic tasks the students ended up producing small group dances and a whole group dance, with at one point all 31 on stage! It was a great atmosphere and the dance studio was buzzing with excitement and enthusiasm. All students worked hard and produced some great work, which we will hopefully get to see performed later this term.

Miss Bowden

School Radio - Back On The Air!



After having a break because of the school hall being re developed, we have found a new home for the radio, which is now sited in the lighting and sound control booth.

There is a highly enthusiastic group of Year 7 boys and girls who have been testing the system and honing their presenting skills. Some have visited the local community radio station, 105.5, for our monthly 'Schools Out' program, and the manager of the station, Shirley Ludford, who is also a patron of the school has been giving some introductory workshops.

The radio students have also shown a great interest in the technical side of the performing arts and we have now arranged a special Year 7 assembly next term, which they will run as a show with singing and dancing acts. There's no stopping them!

Nick Weaver

Boys Dance Day

15 boys from across the year groups had the opportunity this term to work on a day of Hip Hop and Street Dance. The day was delivered by Mr Spaulding who is one of our maternity cover dance teachers. Mr Spaulding comes

highly recommended and was once a member of the cast in the Lion King, in the West End. He is an inspirational teacher, along with Miss Bowden and both have been delivering dance out reach this term.



Peer Educator Training At Braeside

We didn't really know what to expect from Braeside, apart from the fact that it was our first step to becoming a Peer Educator. All nineteen of us arrived in the morning, and once we'd picked our rooms and looked around the campus Miss Gingell began our training on the reproductive system.

At lunch we met Year 3 & 4 students from a Wiltshire primary school and that were told we would be responsible for helping them at meal times over the following two days.

Back to the lecture room we participated in a host of trust building exercises; which included standing on a table and falling backwards into everyone's arms. Although scary and daunting, we worked really hard as a team and had a lot of fun. After our jammed packed day we were put into pairs and given a subject to research. We used books and our previous knowledge to help us plan a lesson, which we had to deliver to the rest of the Peer Educators. The topics looked at issues such as stress, bullying, drugs and alcohol. We were given the evening to research and prepare.

The next morning we had an hour to run through our lesson. At break we played games and did activities with the Year 3 & 4's. We really enjoyed this time as it gave us a chance to bond with each other and the younger ones. When we delivered our lessons, we were all scared and nervous, even though we knew everyone in the room. Miss Browning gave a few people some character cards, telling us how to behave during the lesson so we could experience what it would be like when we teach lessons in Year 7 & 8 and look at ways to cope with

different situations, which was really useful. We videoed our experiences and then looked at ways we could improve our teaching skills.

Overall, it was a really good experience for us and we hope Year 7 have settled into life at Commonweal.

**Maddie Lee 10R1
& Daisy Barnett 10W2**

A few words from Art.....

What a busy beginning of term its been.....

The clubs fair on 8th and 9th September was very well attended and the uptake of Art clubs has been brilliant. If you are interested in joining an Art club then please see your Art teacher (a full list of clubs offered is on the clubs board outside room 126)

Letters for the Year 10 visit to the National Gallery on 14th November will be sent out through parent mail/tutor trays shortly.

Commonweal '11, our annual showcase of work from Yr 11 students and staff, opened at the end of last term. Once again the

walls of the school have become a massive Art gallery and it looks fantastic. Well done to all last years' Year 11 – every year the work seems to get better and better!! The exhibition is up until November half term, so do come and have a look if you haven't already. Images are also on the school's Arts web site:

www.commonwealarts.co.uk

Each year five prizes are chosen and given. This year the prizes go to the following people:

The Mayors' Prize

Becky Sewell.

The Ken White Prize

Lauren Nash.

The PTA Progress Prize

Katie Elwell.

The PTA Best in Show

Gabby Steel.

The Commonweal Vote

Becky Sewell.

The Editor's Choice Award

Ellie Murphy

Yr 11 Art Prize Giving 2011



COLLEGE OPEN DAY/EVENING DATES 2011/2012

NEW COLLEGE

Saturday 8 th October	10.00 am – 2.00 pm
Thursday 2 nd February	5.00 pm – 7.00 pm

SWINDON COLLEGE

Thursday 10 th November	5.00 pm – 7.00 pm
Wednesday 8 th February	5.00 pm – 7.00 pm
Thursday 26 th April	5.00 pm – 7.00 pm

CIRENCESTER COLLEGE

Saturday 15 th October	10.00 am – 3.00 pm
Thursday 19 th January	5.00 pm – 8.00 pm

LACKHAM COLLEGE

Saturday 5 th November	9.30 am – 12.30 pm
Saturday 4 th February	9.30 am – 12.30 pm
Thursday 24 th May	4.00 pm – 7.00 pm



Detailed information about the individual colleges is available on the above dates. A College Representative will also be available at Year 11 Parents Evening at Commonweal School.

