



Excelsior News

The Excelsior Academy Newsletter

Issue 6 – April 2009

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What we have been up to



An overview of just some of the jam-packed activities that we have organised here at Excelsior since opening back in September.

What the pupils think of Excelsior



We ask the pupils their thoughts on the first term at Excelsior and what aspirations they have for the future.

Uniform Guide



Helpful guide to the Excelsior uniform code.

FIRST TERM AT EXCELSIOR

Since opening in September 2008, the pupils at Excelsior Academy have had a very successful year so far.

Our focus is clearly on academic attainment. Excelsior's first set of external examination results have been received for Year 10 pupils who sat the first module of their GCSE Mathematics during our first term. Pupils and staff were very pleased with the high number of those who achieved or exceeded their target grade and delighted with the 25 pupils who gained an A or A* Grade.

Excelsior pupils have adapted well to the new environment. They have been pleased to welcome a number of visitors since opening. Guests have included parents, representatives from services of the City Council, visitors from other local and national schools.



Excelsior Executive Principal
Mrs Philomena Marshall MA

Visitors have consistently commented favourably on the pleasant and positive atmosphere of Excelsior, the quality of the learning environment and the attitude, behaviour and good standard of uniform of the pupils.

The overall specialism of Excelsior is Business Enterprise with each of the four 11 – 16 schools leading the development of arts, health, business and the environment.

Pupils still learn traditional academic subjects and through building on these, they also receive a wide range of learning experiences and new skills in preparation for their future.

The excellent facilities within Excelsior have enabled pupils to progress in areas of education that had not previously been available to them.

Excelsior staff have responded in a highly professional manner to the challenge of establishing a new Academy, with a new structure and different ways of working. They have set high expectations of themselves and their pupils in terms of work and behaviour. The positive response from almost everybody has been very encouraging.

Parents have also been very supportive and involved with their children's educational wellbeing. Excelsior is not just a school that has moved to a new building with a different name. It is a brand new Academy which has a new approach to teaching. Parents responded very well to our first Student Review Day in the Autumn Term, which was attended by around 70% of parents.

SIXTH FORMERS ARE PUTTING ART & SOUL INTO DESIGN

Year 12 BTEC Art and Design students have taken part in a competition set by the Managing Director of a leading local Creative Design Agency.

They were asked to come up with designs for packaging which were not only creative, but also able to meet professional standards. Blue Kangaroo's Design Ltd's Managing Director Jason Knights, who has been working with the students, has also invited them to visit the company's studio to see the professionals at work. Mrs Anne-Marie Ellison-Wardlaw, 6th Form College Director, said: "We are really appreciative of this kind of support. I can't thank Blue Kangaroo enough for demonstrating the quality that the industry world expects. We have already seen some really positive designs from the students and this project has been a valuable experience to them. "Excelsior is a business and enterprise-focused Academy so these practical experiences are a perfect way for the students to learn about the industry they are studying towards."



Budding designers of the future: 6th Form students with Jason Knights of Blue Kangaroo Design Ltd.



BUSINESS BREAKFAST IS SERVED

Pupils invited local business people to enjoy a hearty breakfast at the Academy and get down to business.

The open Business Breakfast, led and managed by pupils and staff from the Armstrong Business School, took place in the Academy's main restaurant where guests enjoyed a selection of cooked favourites such as a good old "full English" and Eggs Benedict, served up by the pupils. Excelsior hosted the business breakfast to demonstrate to the business community its spirit of enterprise. It was also useful for pupils to meet business people. This was the first of a number of similar events to encourage partnerships between the Academy and local businesses. Peter Snowdon, Excelsior's Business Manager said: "Excelsior is an enterprise-focused Academy; we wanted our pupils to meet local business people to learn some business basics from them."



A hearty breakfast was served by the pupils

DANCING DOWN TO A TEA

Local senior citizens were invited to the Academy by the Jefferson Art School pupils for a spot of afternoon tea and a dance.

Pupils and staff worked together to organise the tea dance for more than 40 people. As well as providing an entertaining event, it also gave the pupils experience of planning, event management and working with the community. Treats on offer at the dance included sandwiches, savoury delights and mini cakes, which were served to guests by the pupils. After a light bite, visitors got into the swing of things with a selection of dances, accompanied by a live band. The dances were led by Excelsior's dance coach, Maureen Wilkinson, who guided the dancers through the steps. She said: "As part of our alternative education programme, we wanted to let the pupils organise something for the senior citizens in the community. They came up with the idea of a tea dance and helped by contacting community groups and organisations, arranging the food and drinks through the school's catering service, as well as helping to set up and serve guests on the day. Judith Futers, Principal of the Jefferson Arts School, said: "The afternoon was a great success and I am extremely proud of the pupils who organised and took part in the event. The tea dance was a new and exciting challenge for the pupils."



Dance the afternoon away: Excelsior College pupil Michael Turnbull (16), guests John Hogg, Elsie Slater and Ethel and Russell Elliott, with Excelsior dance coach Maureen Wilkinson enjoy a few dances and a cup of tea with the pupils.

COOKING UP SOMETHING SPECIAL

The Milburn Health School stirred things up with a cook-off competition between two of the Academy's chefs.

Academy's chefs Robin Clough and Lee Bowser were nominated to take on the challenge. Unaware of what ingredients they were going to be given, Head Chef Robin and his opponent, Second Chef Lee, had only 20 minutes to prepare and cook the dishes. Pupils, teachers and parents watched as the chefs went to work, some even giving them a helping hand. They cast their votes to choose who was to be crowned the school's "King of the Kitchen". The title was narrowly won by Lee with his aromatic vegetarian curry, beating Robin's delicious plate of chicken jambalaya. Kay Murray, Development Leader for Health at Excelsior said: "We are hosting several events at the Milburn School, all relating to health and enterprise. We predominately want to encourage enterprise and introduce the pupils to an entrepreneurial environment."



Chef Robin Clough, pupils Sanyia Kauser (15) and Ryan Bates (13), with chef Lee Bowser.

POLICE ACADEMY

PC Donna Ferguson has joined Excelsior Academy and will work with school staff, pupils, parents and other partners to promote positive attitudes to community safety.

The Academy joined forces with Northumbria Police to be the first in the area to have a dedicated PC based on school grounds. The move is in keeping with the national "Safer Schools" initiative and aims to develop a positive working partnership to promote a responsible attitude to community safety, security and behaviour amongst young people. PC Ed Ward, worked closely with Excelsior's Executive Principal, Mrs Philomena Marshall, to develop the role based on the successful work he's already undertaken with schools across Newcastle. The partnership between Excelsior and Northumbria Police will serve to enhance and expand the Academy's sense of community responsibility. PC Ferguson said: "I'm enjoying the new challenge. It is a good opportunity for further positive approaches to community safety and will help to enhance our relationship with young people in the area. I'm working with pupils and parents and I'm confident that this role will have a positive impact on the young people at the Academy and the community as a whole."



PC Donna Ferguson meets with the pupils at Excelsior

PUPILS TAKING OFF AT EXCELSIOR

The opening of Excelsior Academy has also been a significant change for the pupils. We wanted to find out how their first term at Excelsior had been and how they were settling in so we caught up with some of the pupils to find out.

We wanted to find out what pupils think of Excelsior so far, so we spoke with three Year 9 pupils. Anis Mohd Sohaimi, joined the Hadrian Environment School and has already noticed a considerable difference in the way she is learning and gaining new experiences. Anis is delighted to be in Hadrian Environment School. She is quite interested in becoming an engineer, like her mother, so she enrolled onto the Academy's Young Engineers programme. Anis said: "I have noticed a difference since moving from West Gate Community College to Excelsior. The facilities are much better and the projects we do are really interesting. "The move was hard at first as a lot of my friends went into other Excelsior schools, but this has given me the opportunity to meet new friends who share the same interests."



Anis Mohd Sohaimi with friends, and fellow Hadrian School pupils, Attiya Iqbal and Brithany Atilano.

Attiya Iqbal and Brithany Atilano also joined Anis at the Hadrian Environment School. They teamed up to take part in a rocket launch competition with other schools in the North East. Not only did they have to design and make a rocket that would launch as high as possible, they also had to ensure the egg – being carried as a "passenger" – did not break. The girls' rocket not only went the highest but it was also one of only two not to break the egg, making them the winners of the competition. Attiya said: "It was a real challenge but we really enjoyed it. Mr Shaw and Mr Brekke gave us a basic design and the rest was down to us. This is just one of the unique projects we have been able to do here at Excelsior. Every lesson is completely different and I like that." Brithany said "We definitely have the best school and the best Principal - but I am sure pupils at the other schools say the same thing about their Principals! The teachers at Hadrian are really friendly and Mr Taylor always has a big grin on his face. It definitely creates a very positive atmosphere in the school." Anis added: "I really like all the charity days and fun days we do too. It is good that we get to organise and take part in something really different to a normal school day, whilst raising money for charity."

UNIFORM

New pupils who will be joining Excelsior Academy in September will need to purchase the compulsory uniform.

It consists of a green Excelsior Academy blazer, black trousers, black shoes, a plain grey jumper and white shirt for both boys and girls. Pupils will also need the appropriate coloured tie that corresponds to the school they are attending:

The Hadrian Environment School



The Armstrong Business School



The Milburn Health School



The Jefferson Arts School



Parents of pupils who will join Excelsior in September will be notified of their son or daughter's Academy School during the summer term. Excelsior College (6th Form) students do not have a compulsory uniform but are required to wear business attire.

AND THE RESULTS ARE IN...

The staff of Excelsior would like to say a big "well done" to all the pupils who took the first module examination for their GCSE Mathematics. The results were very promising as 12 pupils gained A* grades and 13 won A grades. Congratulations! The team here at Excelsior is confident that there are many more positive results on their way.

ABOUT US OUR MISSION

Excelsior Academy prepares pupils to value and respect themselves and others as citizens who will make a contribution to the development of tomorrow's world. We are committed to providing the best possible learning opportunities for all pupils through high quality teaching and a wide curriculum. We offer courses and qualifications to meet the diverse interests and skills of all our young people as well as a wide range of extra curricular activities including residential opportunities.



CONTACT US:

If you're interested in finding out more about Excelsior please visit our website www.excelsiornewcastle.org.uk or contact us on 0191 22 88 400. For any written queries please email info@excelsiornewcastle.org.uk or write to: Excelsior Academy, Denton Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE15 6AF