

2011/12 Manchester Communication Academy Parent/ Carer Newsletter 1

Dear Parent,

We are delighted with the excellent start that the students have made to their first term of the new academic year. The year 7 students have particularly settled down quickly and made new friends. We have also welcomed a large number of new staff who have already made a significant contribution to academy life and the learning of your children. In this newsletter we will focus on the work of our 'Health and Wellbeing' area as well as providing you with other relevant information.

Learning outside of the Academy – Spotlight on 'Outward Bounds Residential'

Whilst most of the country toiled through 'one of the wettest weeks of the year', around 100 students and staff from MCA embraced it, on Outward Bound 2011! After experiencing a thoroughly enjoyable programme last December, the feeling from staff and students alike was that year's trip was bigger better and even more packed with challenge and adventure.

Holding the trip earlier in the year enhanced its value as a fantastic induction activity for our new year sevens, allowing students interact and form new relationships with others from around the academy. As well as being an adventure challenge in itself, the bespoke course aimed to promote confidence, communication skills and the holistic development of each



student who attended. In addition to participating in the activities, students set personal targets which they addressed throughout the course. Our academy values were used to drive this process, with a particular focus on 'being straightforward' and 'showing heart'.

Students were split into teams of 10 (along with a dedicated instructor and MCA staff member) and remained with this group for the duration of the course. Bonding as a team; and taking collective responsibility for each other's equipment, enjoyment and general wellbeing throughout the programme; was a key element and helped to promote the attributes and values that we hold dear as an academy. All activities are designed to challenge students physically, psychologically and emotionally. Help and encouragement from their team mates was essential to enable all students to

reach their targets and push themselves to the limit of their abilities and beyond.

Fully packed days saw students active from 9am until 8.30pm, stopping only for meals. Upon arrival, after leaving their bags in their rooms, the tone was set for things to come with all students participating in a 'jog and dip' (a team jog down the coast followed by plunging themselves into the sea). Throughout the three days students enjoyed further water activities (such as canoeing, raft building, gorge scrambling and a pier jump) as well as climbing activities (the leap of faith, trapeze, the log ladder and rock climbing) and 'dark' activities (cave exploring, night-lining and an evening gorge scramble).

The year eights who attended also enjoyed a bespoke programme that was designed to be a step-up from the induction course they completed last year. Their activities involved full day excursions off-site to more demanding locations. A pier jump into the Irish sea was followed by a full days rock climbing at Barmouth, caving at Dolgoch Falls and rope activities (such as the leap of faith and log ladder) in the evenings. The year eights were superb role models and acted as mentors for any year seven who needed a helping hand. The students who attended acquitted themselves exceptionally and their behaviour and general attitude was commented on by the group instructors and course director. They were a credit to the academy and themselves and all contributed to turning a cloudy and damp 5 days into one of the most enjoyable weeks of the year!



Curriculum Focus – Spotlight on Physical Information



Cross Country

Students of MCA have impressed the PE staff already this year with their effort in the Cross Country Competitions and giving up their Friday afternoons to go and compete against other schools. Special mention goes to Caitlin Ward and Melissa Bates who in both races have finish in the top 10, an excellent achievement.

Sophie Shone and Bill Karuga have consistently finished first for the MCA team in their races, competing against tough competition from other schools as they are running in a Year8 and 9 Competition.

Table Tennis

Sophie Shone is currently competition in Table Tennis again this year and is looking to qualify to go to London once again. The Health and Wellbeing Department wish her luck for her upcoming matches.

News Flash! The year seven football team are off to a flying start! They won the match against Cedar Mount on Thursday 19th October - 10 – 5. The trophy surely will be within our reach. The team consists of - Steven Southern (GK), Jack Bats, Bailey Moth, Ryan Tormey, Kane Fitzpatrick, Richmond Bamfo, Jay Marquee, Brandon Richard, Carl Cain, Keir Farnell, Christian Cook, Mark Duncan, Jack Rogers, Lewis Koranteng and Michael Clark. The team's behaviour was as outstanding as their performance.

Gifted and Talented Art Trip

On Monday 17th October Year 8 art G & T students attended a workshop at the City Learning Centre where



they used their own drawings of fish and manipulated them on Photoshop. The mixed media artist Laura Lein-Svencner was the inspiration for the work created. Students selected a piece of their work to be produced onto fabric which will be displayed in the Academy. The CLC were very impressed with the students' knowledge and high quality work they produced. Well done to all the students involved. Year 7 art G & T students will also be attending a similar workshop in January.

Visit to Africa - Brainhouse Academy

Back in August several of the Academy teaching and support staff visited the Brainhouse Academy in Kenya. The purpose of the visit was to provide resources for the school and the children who attend, and support the Kenyan teachers to develop learning materials. Our staff were able to take over a significant amount of equipment and funds to buy grain for the children's school meals. This was possible due to a number of fundraising activities that MCA learners organised together with support from Manchester FA and



associated local football clubs. The trip was a resounding success for all involved; as the following extract from a thank you letter clearly demonstrates: **You clearly loved every minute whilst you were at Brainhouse, whether it was walking through the slums, visiting our teachers homes, sitting talking to the kids, teaching a new game or arranging and leading our party on the last day. You have a**

natural talent for getting folk involved and for understanding their needs. Thank you for pulling everything together so well and making our last day such a wonderful day for everyone – the students, the parents, the teachers and of course ourselves. You made it all happen, remaining calm, despite all the challenges thrown your way. Thank you.'

We will continue to support the Brainhouse Academy.

Academy Impresses Scrutiny Committee

The Academy was recently visited by Manchester City Council's Scrutiny Committee. The committee members were able to tour the academy and see your children learning. Councillor Mark Carmody reported:

We were extremely impressed with the Academy. The building was very striking and the equipment and resources available to the students were clearly of a very high quality. But more than this, we were struck by the atmosphere in the school and the learning environment. It was unlike anything we had seen before and it was clear that the methods used were having a very positive effect on the students.'

He went on to write, **'It is clear that your staff have the enthusiasm and energy to ensure the Manchester Communication Academy is a success'**.

We were delighted with this positive feedback.

Healthy Lifestyle

One of the Academy's objectives is to promote a healthy lifestyle for our students. All of the meals served at school are nutritionally balanced and recently some of our students have been designing healthy meals that will be cooked by our students and caterers to be served at lunchtime. All of our children have regular cooking lessons which teach them to cook, encourages them to try new foods and teaches them about nutrition.

We have recently decided to ban fizzy sugary drinks and energy drinks on campus. The reason for this is that they do not contain any nutrition value and can be potentially harmful to growing children. They can increase heart rate and fill the body with simple sugars giving an energy burst at a time when it is not needed. In ski resorts, for example, students under 16 years of age are not permitted to drink energy drinks due to the negative effects on health.

Spotlight on Cookery

It's been a great start to the year in the cookery department. Year 7 students have settled in fantastically and have begun to demonstrate their cooking flair in a number of tasty dishes. So far, stir fry, chicken and vegetable kebabs, scones and Jamaican Jerk curry have featured on the menu!



Opposite is a picture of Caitlin Ward's fantastic presentation of her Jamaican Jerk curry, you can find the recipe for this on the academy website (there is a link on the Health and Wellbeing page of RealSmart

cloud).The year 8 students continue to go from strength to strength and have been tackling some more complex dishes such as Lasagne, Paella and carrot cake! Mr Hale has joined a gym to combat the extra intake of food he has been enjoying as a result of the year seven students joining the school.

Dates for your diary – The School Production

This year MCA are putting on a school show called "A Shakespeare Production." There is a strong team of 45 cast and crew who are rehearsing solidly to put on a real show stopping



performance. 'A Shakespeare Production' is a comedy and a play within a play, in which drama students try to put on a performance of A Midsummer Night's Dream. The play focuses on one boy who dreams of becoming a huge star and isn't happy when his pals cast him as the 'donkey'...As revenge, he and his friends shrewdly sabotage the entire performance by rehearsing a different play altogether on the night...

Dates of show: **Monday 12th December,**
Tuesday 13th December

Tickets Cost: £2.50

Time: Show starts at 6:30pm

Stop Press – MCA wins Key 103 'Safe for Autumn' competition!

We can proudly announce that six of our students have created the winning advert for this year's campaign. Students from MCA attended a full day at Key 103 studios with representatives from the fire service. Together they discussed the dangers children face around 'Bonfire' night and then created an advert. Assistant Chief Executive from Manchester Fire Service, Peter O'Reilly, presented the children with their winning certificates. The adverts will be played on Key 103 over the next 2 weeks.

Super Students!

In each newsletter we will celebrate some students who have really excelled, tried hard or achieved something beyond the expected!

English – Callum Duffy has been really focused and is working hard. During the 1984 lessons, he produced a wonderful poem and a speech. His knowledge and insight into the novel was incredible, especially as he had studied it for such a short time.

Rhianna Stokes and Lynette Sibanda – their attitude to learning is a very positive one; both girls are producing excellent work and are extremely motivated to do well.

Maths – Jana Gabcova, Jess Price, Imogen Green – effort is excellent, extension activities always attempted and super in class discussions.

Luke Kirkham and Dylan Wooldridge – Always attempts every activity with enthusiasm and are developing their numeracy skills.

Alisha Prendergast – Completes all activities, always works well independently and contributes well to group activities.

Creative and Aesthetic – Linh Hoang – representing the school by playing the violin and singing, **Carl Cain** – exceptional effort in Drama, **Jason Li** – exceptional effort and taking a leading role in all group work, **Ethan Smith** – representing school by playing the trombone, **Jack Riley** – excellent progress in every area, **Anna Howse** – exceptional effort and work in art and music.

Global Understanding – Kaden O’Donnell – brilliant effort in Humanities, **Linh Hoang** – outstanding progress in French, **Wiktorija Ochino** – fantastic effort in French and Humanities, **Georgia Sweeney-McKay** – fantastic effort in French – brilliant progress made, **Ibrahim Quayyum** - brilliant effort in Humanities and French and **Jake Schofield** – producing an amazing essay on the significance of medicine.

Key Dates for Next Term

Monday 31 st October	Students return to school
Monday 12 th December	Academy production @6.30pm
Tuesday 13 th December	Academy production @6.30pm
Friday 16 th December	End of Term Report 2.

We hope that you have found this newsletter useful and thank you for your continued support. We hope that you and your family enjoy the break.

For more information on any of the above visit the website www.manchestercommunicationacademy.com or phone 0161 202 0161.