

# GRAPEVINE



**SPRING 1981**



## Expenditure Cuts, Educational Standards and the ILEA

Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools have hit the headlines several times in the last few months. In November the DES published the report of the Inspectorate about the ILEA and then last month came a report about the effect of the government's expenditure cuts which made it quite clear that in some parts of the country successive rounds of cuts have badly affected educational standards.

It is at this point that we have to count ourselves lucky that our children attend an ILEA school. Pupil/teacher ratios in the ILEA are the lowest in the country with 15.2 pupils to each full time teacher ( compared to say Stockport with 26.8 ). In 1980 the ILEA spent £48 on books and equipment for each pupil in its secondary schools ( While Suffolk spent less than £18 ). And so it goes on ....whatever you look at the ILEA tops the list.

But high expenditure does not necessarily mean a high quality of education. The most critical part of the Inspectors' report on the ILEA was the section about secondary schools. They concluded that although some of the ILEA's secondary schools were good by any standard (Sydenham?), "too many secondary schools expect too little from their pupils at all levels and too much work lacks pace, variety and interest".

The ILEA has decided to flout government pressures and maintain - indeed even increase - its levels of expenditure next year. As a result it is losing all its government grant, and all we ratepayers are going to have to pay much more for the education part of our rates. As parents we can applaud the Authority's determination to maintain educational standards. Equally as ratepayers we want value for money. One reason why Sydenham is a good school is because it has traditionally been a school where parents have been involved and made their views known; and the staff have always been responsive to these views seeing them as a positive and helpful contribution to the success of the school. If more schools were like Sydenham in this respect, London would have a lot more good comprehensives.



COKE AND COFFEE EVENING We all had a very pleasant evening on January 22nd when the PTA invited all first year parents and their daughters to a coffee and coke evening. We had a good turnout with about 120 people attending. It gave the PTA officers a chance to get to know some of the new parents, and it gave our new parents a chance to meet their daughters' friends and other parents of the tutor group and house as well as quite a few members of staff. This was a new variant on the first year parents' evenings which have traditionally been held in October and which have not always been very successful. The attempt to make them more friendly and informal seems to have been a success and we shall repeat it next year.

PHYSICS OPEN EVENING On Tuesday March 24th Mr Shaw will be holding a physics open evening in the physics laboratory Room 315. There will be experiments and demonstrations on display, a chance to have a look at some of the modern textbooks ( and see how much you don't know! ) and to see the school's new mini-computer. Those of you who would like to know more about how this increasingly important subject is taught in Sydenham should make a point of coming along if you can. 7.30 p.m. in Room 315.

HANDICRAFT ROOM FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT COURSE The PTA is helping to equip one of the rooms underneath the main school building as a handicraft workshop for the child development course. We need to put up shelves and cupboards. Anyone who is prepared to give up part of a Saturday to do some carpentry or who has some spare timber which might be used for this purpose please get in touch with Mike Stone - 690-6996

GRUNDIG REMEDIAL CENTRE The new remedial centre in the old school building is now practically complete. It has all been re-modelled, redecorated and recarpeted and is now in use although the staff are still busy sorting out books and materials. Mrs Dixon is hoping to hold a house warming open evening sometime next term when parents will have a chance to see the good use to which the profits from the May Fayre have been put.

CHAIRMAN'S TELEPHONE NUMBER The last edition of Grapevine gave the wrong telephone number for Mike Stone our Chairman. The correct number is 690-6996.



# HEADMISTRESS' LETTER

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Dear Parents,

Having just interviewed all our 5th, 6th and 7th year girls, preparatory to putting them in for public examinations, we have been very sad to see how many girls have spoilt their chances of entry and/or success by continual absence from school.

As a general rule the girl's attendance remains fairly constant from the 1st year, so that poor attenders show up even at 11. In the interests of economy and of justice only girls whose attendance during the 4th and 5th years is 75% and over can be entered for a public examination, unless of course, there have been very special circumstances such as an operation or a spell in hospital. Obviously if a girl misses even one week out of every four, that is a quarter of her lessons, it is extremely difficult for her to keep up with her work and to reach a realistic standard for entry for a public examination. As the average bill for each girl is now in the region of £30, it will be seen that the attendance requirement is a very fair one.

I am appealing to all parents from the 1st to the 7th year to try to ensure that their daughters understand why good attendance is so essential. It is also important that parents do not arrange holidays or unnecessary dental check-ups, etc. during school time. It is, after all, the parent's attitude to the missing of lessons which is likely to make the biggest impression on any child.

This year has been a very busy one for productions. Following "Dracula" at Christmas, the dance production "Food for Thought" at half-term, we have "The Tempest" just before Easter. I am sure that you will encourage our young actresses by giving us your support.

The final parent's meeting this term will be for 2nd year parents which will take place on Wednesday 1st April.

Yours sincerely

Y. B. Zackerwich - Headmistress



# SCHOOL NEWS

CONGRATULATIONS - to Joanna Kellman who has been accepted as a member of the London Schools' Steel Orchestra;  
- to Stephanie Jarrett and Ann O'Neill who successfully auditioned for the Senior Group of the Inner London Schools' Dance performing group, and Marva Dyer, Brenda Lamong, Karen Lindsay, Deborah Goodwin, Carol Thompson, Michele Hawkins and Tanya Martin who have joined the Junior Group;

- to Sally Rumbelow who passed Grade 2 Piano Examination of the Royal School of Music;

- to Laura Coston, Angela Hughesman, Susan Brooks, Gillian Stuart, who were selected to attend a hockey coaching course at Dartford College;

- to the following girls who passed Trinity College music examinations: Mandy Fisher (guitar grade 1), Debra Higgins (guitar grade 1, and to Madeline Fletcher who has been granted an ILEA award for the oboe;

- to Esther Williams and Miranda Broadribb who have both been awarded Modern Language Scholarships in German to enable them to go to Germany for a short time to help them with their A-level German.

NEW CROSS FIRE Proceeds from a Mufti Day and a collection in school from girls, parents, and staff, amounted to £295.50 which has been sent to the New Cross Fire Fund. A separate amount of £100 was sent to Mrs. Ruddock whose three older girls all went to Sydenham School.

BOOK SWOP A Book Swop Shop was recently started by Mrs. Veitch of the English Department. It will take place on Thursdays in Room 156 from 12.05-1.00. Girls who take a book to exchange will receive a token which they can then spend to buy any of the books on display.

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS £598.03 was recently raised by 2nd year girls who took part in the MS "Discover - Read" activity. They received a certificate of appreciation.

HORSE FOR HANDICAPPED Austen House girls recently presented Charlton Park School with a £100 cheque which will enable this school for the handicapped to buy another horse for the children to ride. The children derive a great deal of benefit from this activity.



# EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

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A number of parents have asked if we could give details in Grapevine of the out of school clubs and activities available to girls at Sydenham. Notices about these usually go out over the Tannoy to the girls but parents rarely hear about them unless their daughters join in. The following two pages give details of the music and sports activities and on this page we list some of the other activities available.

Art Workshop Run by Mr Leech and Mr Dahl on Tuesdays from 4.00 p.m. - 6.00 p.m. in the Art Dept for 4th-7th years.  
Careers' Workshop For 3rd Years upwards seeking information on careers. Mrs Wallman in Careers' Office Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 12.30 - 1.00 p.m.

Chess Club Mrs Richards Mondays ( Keller House only ) and Thursdays ( all comers ) Room 119 at 3.50 p.m.

Debating Society Seniors only until Easter. Fridays in Room 109 at 12.30 p.m. Contact Miss Massey.

Drama Anyone interested in participating or helping with school productions should contact Mr Dean. There is always some activity going on, but which years are involved varies.

Film Club Open to all years. Films shown on Tuesdays in the Main Hall throughout the year. Contact Mr Kightly.

Gardening Club 2nd years only on Tuesday (12.05 ) and Thursday (12.30) lunchtime. Mrs Moy. Meet at Greenhouse.

Handwriting Club run by Mrs Dixon in the Grundig Centre on Tuesdays at 12.05 p.m. for anyone who wishes to improve their handwriting.

Mountaineering Club Contact Mr Rouncefield for details.

Needlework Club Mainly for 5th Years. Run by Miss James in Room 067 on Thursdays from 3.40 - 4.30 p.m. Only until Easter.

Pandamaran Club This has been meeting to build the Pandamaran boat under the guidance of Mr Walker on Mondays at 4 p.m. at the Boat House. Stops at Easter, after which they hope to be sailing it.

Dance Various activities for both juniors and seniors. Contact Miss Jobbins for details.



# EXTRA CURRICULAR MUSIC

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## INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Instrumental teachers for a wide range of musical instruments visit Sydenham and any girl who wishes to learn one may do so. The lessons for beginners are usually held with small groups and timetabled so that they do not conflict with the same lesson each week. Lessons and the loan of instruments are free. Any girl not currently learning an instrument who would like to do so should get in touch with Miss Lyall, Head of Music. Parents should approach Miss Lyall or the House Mistress if they would like their daughter to have lessons.

## OUT OF SCHOOL MUSIC ACTIVITIES

Choir Tuesdays at 3.45 p.m. in Room 128. The choir is for all ages. There is no preliminary test and all comers are welcome.

Recorder Club Tuesdays at 12.30 p.m. in Room 138. This is for all ages and all types of recorder- descant, treble, tenor and bass. Members must be able to read simple rhythms and know the fingering for many notes.

Orchestra Wednesdays at 12.30 in Room 138. For all instruments except absolute beginners. Members must be able to read simple rhythms and count accurately where there are bars and rests. Anyone may join whether they learn their instrument at school or not. Those interested and not currently members should contact Miss Lyall.

Folk Club Fridays at 12.30 p.m. in Room 138. For those who play the guitar or flute and those who like singing folk music. Anyone may join whether they learn their instrument at school or no, but absolute beginners are not eligible. (Guitar and flute lessons are available under the instrumental music programme.)

Music Club Mondays and Thursdays at 12.30 p.m. Open to anyone interested in music whether instrumental player or no. Various activities including listening to and making music and an opportunity for those who wish to try out their own compositions. Those interested in joining should get in touch with Miss Moore.

Beginners' Wind and Brass Group Any girl interested in joining such a group please contact Miss Lyall.



# EXTRA CURRICULAR SPORTS

<u>MONDAY</u>	<u>12.30 - 1.00 p.m.</u>		
	4th/5th Yr Trampolining (Sp)	Gym 1	Mrs Styles
	1st Yr Netball (Sp)	Gym 2	Mrs Lamb
	1st Yr Rounders (Sum)	Gym 3	Mrs Lamb
	<u>3.40 - 5.30 p.m.</u>		
	BAGA Awards Club ( All years)	Gym 2 )	P.E.
<u>TUESDAY</u>	Team Gym Club (All years)	Gym 3 )	Staff
	1st/2nd Year Tennis (Sum)	Courts	Mr Walker
	<u>12.30 - 1.00 p.m.</u>		
	4th/5th Yr Volley Ball(Sp)	Gym 2	Mrs Lamb
	Athletics(All Years) (Sum)	Gym 1	Mrs Lamb
	4th Yr Rounders (Sum)	Gym 3	Miss Rexstraw
<u>WEDNESDAY</u>	<u>3.40 - 5.30 p.m.</u>		
	1st/2nd Yr Table Tennis	Gym 1	Mr Donnelly
	4th/sen Netball (Sp)	Gym 3	Miss Rexstraw
	Tennis Club (Sum)	Courts	Mr Walker
	<u>12.30 - 1.00 p.m.</u>		
	Judo Club (all years)	Gym 1	Mrs Double
<u>THURSDAY</u>	2nd/3rd Yr Netball	Gym 3	Miss Stevenso
	<u>3.40 - 5.30 p.m.</u>		
	Hockey Training (all yrs)(Sp)	Gym 2/3	Mr Walker
	1st/2nd Yr Table Tennis	Gym 1	Mr Donnelly
	Under 15 Team Tennis	Courts	Miss Rexstraw
	<u>12.30 - 1.00 p.m.</u>		
<u>FRIDAY</u>	1st/2nd Yr Table Tennis	Gym 1	Mr Donnelly
	Gym Club (all yrs) (Sp)	Gym 2/3	P E staff
	High Jump Club(Sum)	Gym 2	Mrs Lamb
	<u>3.40 - 5.30 p.m.</u>		
	Judo Club (all years)	Gym 1	Mrs Double
	4th/5th Badminton Club	Gym 2	Mrs Moy
	Team athletics training(all yrs)	Gym 3	Mrs Lamb(Su
	3rd/4th Yr Tennis Club	Courts	Mr Walker
	<u>12.30 - 1.00 p.m.</u>		
	1st Year Hockey	Gym 2	Miss Rexstraw
	2nd Year Hockey	Gym 1	Mrs Lamb

Rounders and Tennis matches in the Summer term have been arranged for Tuesday evenings and Athletics matches for Thursday evenings. Parents welcome as spectators.



NETBALL AND HOCKEY Now that the evenings are getting lighter, netball and hockey matches are being played respectively on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Most of our teams have been very successful - thanks to the hard training the girls and staff have put in. Results to date:

Netball against Sedgehill - 4 junior teams: 1st Year A won 7-4; 1st Year B lost 2-5; 2nd Year won 10-0; 3rd Year won 14-9. Against Stillness Primary: 1st Year B: drew 2-2.

In the 4th Year Tournament Sydenham won in the first round against Deptford Green 6-0, and against Vauxhall Manor 5-0. In the finals we won 4-0 against Collingwood, but in losing to St. Theresa's 1-3 we were runners-up with 6 points.

All of our Netball teams won against Collingwood on 10th March: 1st Year 8-0; 2nd Year 16-0; Premier team 17-0.

Hockey Our Junior hockey team beat old rivals Addey & Stanhope 6-0 and then went on to play in the Kent Schools Under 15 Championships where they beat every school with a total of 10 goals scored and none scored against them. They beat Malory 3-0; Rockhills 2-0; Ramsden 1-0; Plumstead Manor 4-0. The girls go on to play the rest of Kent at the end of March.

CROSS-COUNTRY This is a new event for Sydenham but in spite of this we fielded a team of 13 girls for the South London Schools' Cross Country Championships and did very well. Our Junior team was placed 10th overall and Marina Delaney came 3rd in the Intermediate Championship. In the London Individual Schools Championship Marina came 11th and all our competitors did very creditably. Congratulations.

HORSE RIDING Debbie Lee and Natasha Stevenson both attended a week's residential course in Riding and Stable Management during Half term. They had to work very hard, getting up each day at 6.30 and finishing the last lecture at 7.30 p.m. but they both enjoyed it and passed the Grade 1 test of the British Horse Society, plus receiving a special merit award for outstanding work.



## SPORTS NEWS (ii)

SWIMMING Our second swimming match was against Sedgehill School. Sydenham won overall by 144 points to 128. 1st Years lost 31-37; 2nd Years won 35-33; 3rd Years won 42-26; Seniors won 36-32.

British Heart Foundation Sponsored Swim A total of £871.19 was raised by this swim last term - more than any other team participating and we therefore won the Challenge Cup which was formally presented to us on February 9th by Marti Jarvis on behalf of the Foundation. We shall be entering again next year with the aim of bettering our total - all pupils, staff and parents welcome to participate.

S.E. London Schools' Swimming Gala We shall be entering a team for this Gala on June 10th at Greenwich Baths. From this gala pupils will be selected to represent S.E. London Schools in the London Secondary Schools' Championships on July 9th.

JUDO 17 Sydenham girls were entered for the London Girls' Championship of the British Judo Association. 4 girls won gold medals ( Lisa and Kim Smith, Susan and Christine Double), 3 girls won silver medals ( Debbie Lawrence, Julie Webb and Julie Tyler) and 4 girls won bronze medals ( Toni Goulding, Belgin Mustafa, Maureen Lawrence and Pamela Brailey). All these girls and Janet Lambert who came third in her group have been invited to attend special Sunday morning training sessions from which the London team for the National Championships will be chosen.

GYMNASTICS This year we have entered for four different sections of the Inner London Schools Gym Association Championships. In Grade 4- Under 13 championships JoyAn Best, Vicky Gittens, Tania Matthews and Martina Darcy have all gone through to the second round, and in the over 13 championship Marva Dyer, Angela Hughesman and Pauline Reid all go through to the second round. In the Grade 3 over 13 competition, Natalie Thurlow and Brenda Lamont go through to Round 2. JoyAn Best and Marva Dyer both came first in their sections.

VOLLEYBALL A Club was started in January this year and from those members two teams were recently chosen to play their first matches against Sedgehill. The Seniors lost 3-2 and the Juniors lost 3-0. Not bad for their very first matches!



# FOOD FOR THOUGHT

One evening whilst preparing her meal Miss Jobbins had an inspiration. Perhaps ideas of food, music and dance could be combined to produce a show. And from that came FOOD FOR THOUGHT, a Sydenham School Dance production which must surely rank with the best so far produced.

A most unusual programme was prepared in the form of a menu for breakfast, lunch and dinner. The programme design itself was so attractive that it could not fail to whet the appetite, and the show itself must have satisfied even the most discerning gourmet.

One hundred and forty girls ranging from first year to sixth and seventh years took part on the stage. The standard of dancing varied, but even the most inexperienced dancers who were on the stage for their very first show did very well indeed. The zeal and energy displayed did not vary. There was an obvious excitement and enthusiasm throughout the whole cast.

The three young men from Forest Hill School entered the spirit of the show and supported the girls with performances combining suave charm and comic talent - not an easy combination.

It would be wrong to mention any particular performance as every girl gave of her best. The joy expressed in the Breakfast and some of the Lunch time items contrasted with the strength of feeling shown in Student Demonstration, the desolation in the wasteland scene, and the gaiety of the Dinner Menu items.

Altogether it was a most ambitious production, excellently carried out and confirming, once again, not only the expertise of the staff and the talent of the girls, but the tremendous spirit of cooperation which exists throughout the school.

Thankyou and congratulations to all who helped - front stage and backstage. We look forward to the next show.

JESSE TUXWORTH (Governor)



# DRACULA SPECTACULAR

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It was unclear what horrors were in store for us with this Christmas production from the 3rd and 4th Years. It sounded rather morbid - visions of graveyards, blood and evil fangs. Not much fun for Christmas - why not a straightforward pantomime?

In the event it is difficult to think of a better Christmas play. We have our hero, Professor Nicholas Necrophiliac (played with a splendidly straight bat by Ann-Marie Fearnley), our vulnerable heroine in Nadia Naive (played with simple charm by Natalie Bostock), the Tyrolean jolity of Herr Hans and Frau Gretel (played with a ruddy zest by Dawn Curtis and Gillian Stewart) and the eerie mountain top castle presided over by Count Dracula (Lori Meeking), his ludo-loving mother (Lena Tsakmakis) and his (at times) reluctant slave Genghis (Amanda Moore).

It was of course a variant on the normal Dracula story. Miss Naive takes her innocent and credulous young pupils on a school trip to Transylvania; they stay in the guest house belonging to Hans and Gretel. All is well until night time when an unwelcome guest, Count Dracula, arrives. He invites Miss Naive and her students to his castle the next day and in spite of pleas to refuse the invitation from the Professor and his companion, Father O'Stake, (Josephine Powell) who were also staying at the guest house, she walks them straight into the trap. The rest of the play is spent, amidst much billowing of smoke, gurgling of chemicals and flickering of lights, effecting the rescue of the young innocents from the jaws of evil. At last all are rescued, Nadia and Nicholas are married and the school children about to return home when - in the final moments of the play - Nadia's newly grown fangs reveal that it is too late. Count Dracula has after all claimed another bride!

Sting and all, it is a very funny play with something in it for all members of the family. As always with the Sydenham drama department it was slickly executed with a simple but effective set. The musical and dance numbers not only helped create the pantomime atmosphere but also revealed the breadth of talent of the cast. Congratulations to everyone involved!



# THE TEMPEST

WHY BRING SHAKESPEARE TO SYDENHAM? Many of my Theatre Arts girls have been asking me this question during the last few weeks fearing that they will be playing to rows of empty seats on April 8th, 9th and 10th. The reason quite simply is that we have 20 girls of exceptional talent and in my opinion the Bard's appearance at the school is long overdue.

For several years now it has been our intention to make the CSE final production something difficult and special. We have tackled plays by Aristophanes, Owen, Elliot and Orton in our efforts to broaden the experience of both our actresses and our audience.

I am aware that most of YOU, our audience, will rarely have seen a Shakespeare play and I can only say that you have missed out on a great deal. The play we are performing, 'The Tempest', has comedy, magic, violence, bawdy - all the ingredients of Dallas or CrossRoads. The only difference is that the language is a little strange and thank God for that, I say.

We have a very talented cast, a great story and an interesting collection of visual surprises for you. All we need is YOU sitting in the Hall on the 8th, 9th and 10th of April for something quite remarkable to happen.

I hope you are coming.

COLIN DEAN

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## MINIBUS NEWS

Fund raising for the Minibus Fund is going on at a great pace with a raffle for toys, a sponsored trampoline jump-in, and a sponsored "sing" during the VIth form Rag Week, all taking place during March within the School

A sponsored Country Ramble in Kent for parents and children will take place on Sunday 17th May, and a dinner and dance is being organised for Saturday 18th July while the 24 hour sponsored Abseil from the roof of the school buildings is taking place. More details nearer the dates.