



# SCROLL

THE MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT NEWSPAPER



Issue 3  
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February 2014

## Suspicious car leads to school wide evacuation

Cole Charnetski and  
Michaela Towfighi  
*Scroll Editors*

On the morning of January 8, the school was evacuated due to a suspicious vehicle on Loudoun Road. Students were out of school for just over an hour before they were allowed to return.

After one of the security team members noticed the suspicious vehicle at 7:50 am during a patrol that they do every morning before students arrive, Barak Fave, head of security, went and inspected the vehicle himself. While looking at the vehicle, Fave determined it appeared suspicious enough to contact the police just before 8:00 am. Within eight minutes, the police arrived at the scene to take over the investigation.

The police would not comment on this incident, as they do not want to encourage copycat events and also do not want to reveal their specific tactics in these kinds of situations. However, based on interviews with ASL administrators and security, *The Scroll* has been able to piece together what transpired.

Once the police arrived at the scene, their first concern was that people near the vehicle could be in danger if there was in fact a bomb in the vehicle. According to Fave, the concern was that if there was a bomb, it would have exploded upwards, therefore putting students in the science rooms overlooking Loudoun Road in danger. Mr. Peter Lutkoski, middle school assistant principal, evacuated these science classrooms first at 8:40 am.

The students were then moved into the Commons for precautionary measures. Malcolm Tisdale, eighth grade student said, "In the eight years I've been here, I've never heard of this before."

As police continued their investigation, they concluded that the entire school needed to be evacuated. Mrs. Coreen Hester, head of school, announced over the public address system at 8:50 am that the school needed to be evacuated and gave instructions on where students would go.

Middle school and high school students and faculty walked to the St. John's Wood Church Gardens off of St. John's Wood High Street. Lower school students were evacuated to the George Elliot School on

See Evacuation, page 3



Photo by Mr. Bridgewater

ASL was evacuated on January 8 due to a suspicious car on Loudoun Road. Middle and high school students evacuated to the St. John's Wood Church Grounds. All students had to cross Finchley Road to get there.

## BBC uses many sources to cover local evacuation

Michaela Towfighi  
*Scroll Editor*

On the morning of January 8, when ASL was evacuated due to a suspicious vehicle on Loudoun Road, The BBC was one of the many professional news organizations to report on the situation. But since a BBC news crew was never at the scene, how did they collect the information that was posted to their website and announced on BBC Radio?

According to Ian Jolly, assistant news editor for the BBC website, the BBC was informed about the situation through the partner of one of the members of staff who lives near the school and was evacuated from their house. The BBC then first informed people at 9:35 am on BBC London Radio as a travel update about Loudoun Road being closed. The story was then published on the BBC website at 9:51 am. When the article was first published, the BBC had collected some information from the ASL twitter feed and website. Jolly said the BBC used the ASL website as a source, and they also checked with authorities such as the police. The po-

lice press office initially told the BBC that they were carrying out a controlled explosion; therefore the BBC posted this information online in the article. "The information [the police] gave [to the BBC] was that officers at the scene were carrying out a controlled explosion," said Jolly. "Now, it seems what happened was those on the ground eventually decided that that wasn't going to be necessary, and so they didn't do that, but that information didn't get fed back to headquarters."

So, even though police didn't carry out the explosion, the BBC was never informed of this by the police press office. Therefore, when the article was first published on the website, some of the information, specifically the information about a controlled explosion, was incorrect.

Jolly said, "In any story there will come a point where we will feel that there is not much more we can do, and we move on to the next one. The incident seemed to be over. Bearing in mind that the information had

See BBC, page 2

## Bomb squad works to protect London

Cole Charnetski  
*Scroll Editor*

When *The Scroll* contacted the Metropolitan Police Press Office regarding the incident on the morning of January 8, they were unwilling to comment on the situation for two reasons. The first reason was that because the situation was not a real bomb threat, the police don't want to comment on it to avoid any "copycats." The second reason is that they don't want to put their officers at risk by explaining the step-by-step process in these kinds of situations. However, the two news editors from *The Scroll* were invited to visit an SO15 EOD (explosive ordnance disposal, or bomb squad) base in North London to get a behind the scenes look at how the bomb squad works to protect the city.

When the bomb squad is called to a scene they can be at any location in Central London within 15 minutes because they have all equipment ready in the vans and people on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In response to a call regarding explosives, they have four main priorities. First, and most im-

portantly, they want to preserve life and prevent injury. Secondly, they want to preserve property and information. Thirdly, they want to preserve forensic evidence, which means that they can try to figure out who made the explosive device. Finally, they want to rapidly return the scene to "normality to minimize the financial impact to local businesses and equally importantly to ensure that the public not only feel safe but are safe once again," explained a spokesman from SO15.\*

To succeed in these goals, the bomb squad only accepts highly qualified experts who have served at least 15 years in the military. Also they have a variety of tools such as response vehicles, x-ray machines and monitoring equipment.

Although some news sites wrongly re-

See Police, page 2

\*To protect their identities, The Scroll has agreed not to name the SO15 officers we spoke with during our interview or to identify where their base of operations is located.

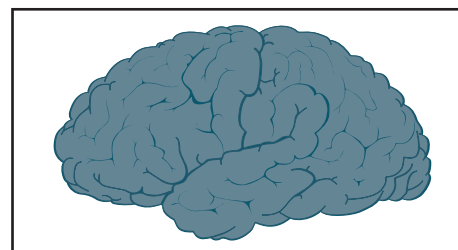
INSIDE



Is the "everyone is a winner" mentality implied at ASL? Turn to page 4 to find out.



To read a review of Notting Hill Sticky Fingers, turn to page 7.



Concussions are one of the most common sports injuries. Turn to pages 8 and 9 to read more about concussions and symptoms.



Many teachers have different unique talents. To read about them, turn to page 11.



**BBC** Continued from Page 1

come from fairly reliable sources, we would have no indication at all that there might be anything untoward or incorrect about it. So it would be unusual for us to go back and revisit a story like this.”

Eventually, someone contacted the BBC to inform them that the statement online about conducting a controlled explosion was incorrect. Jolly also said it is unusual for the BBC to revisit small stories such as this one, however since it was a substantial fact that was wrong, they went back and changed it, leaving an editor’s note at the bottom informing readers of the change. “As soon as we realized that something’s not accurate, we did take steps to put it right. That’s not something that all newspapers and websites do,” said Jolly.

After the incident was over and it was determined that there had been no danger, the Metropolitan Police issued a publication press line about the incident, stating information sourced from them could not go to press. They have this policy to not publicize hoaxes so that others aren’t encouraged to try to copy those incidents. However the information given to the BBC by the Police Press Office was before that publication line was released.

Other professional news sources like the *Huffington Post* and the *Mirror* had also posted information about the suspect ve-

hicle, but it was clear that they had taken their information from the BBC. Nobody from the *Huffington Post* or the *Mirror* replied to *The Scroll*’s request for comment on their coverage. However, Jolly explained that BBC material does get “reused” and people tend to view the BBC as a reliable source. Therefore, other organizations monitor what the BBC publishes and often reports what has been published by them.

With breaking stories, the BBC encourages people to submit things such as photos, videos, and information to accompany stories. Eighth grade English teacher Ms. Sarah Venus submitted a photo to the BBC of the robot used to examine the car, which was posted with the article on the BBC website. While people like Ms. Venus don’t receive money for their photos, the BBC did give her credit for her picture. The BBC does not pay people for their photos, but by sending them photos, the photographer is granting them a non exclusive license to use their work. What this means is the owner can still use and/or sell their photos to other news organizations or people.

While the situation did not involve a real bomb, BBC’s first article shows sometimes when reporting breaking news, like this situation, information can get passed along incorrectly.

**Police** Continued from Page 1

ported that police carried out a controlled explosion on Loudoun Road on January 8, the bomb squad doesn’t do controlled explosions when investigating suspect devices.

Instead, when a suspicious item is found in the city they proceed with a “disruption.” A spokesman from SO15 explained that a disruption is when a jet of water is fired at extreme force at the suspicious object. This is done in order to destroy the device by disrupting the circuitry of the bomb and thereby disabling it with a low risk of it detonating. It also keeps it intact enough so that it can be used for forensic evidence.

To get to a scene, the bomb squad will use either a small SUV (Range Rover Sport) or a large van. The SUV is equipped with a

small robot while the large van is equipped with a larger robot. The reason for having two robots is that each robot is for a different setting. If the suspicious item is in a vehicle then the larger robot would be used. However, if the item is in a small confined space, for example, a train or an airplane, then the smaller robot would be used.

The bomb squad uses the robots to have a close up view of the item they are investigating without putting themselves in danger. Each robot is equipped with a series of cameras on board to be able to view the object from any view needed. Also, each robot has a claw to grab items and to perform all kinds of tasks from dealing with wires to more brutal tasks. It also carries the weapons to neutralize the suspect devices.

A bomb suit is a heavy piece of clothing like a spacesuit that is used to protect bomb squad members from explosives. However, these suits are extremely heavy and will not protect the officer wearing it if they are right on top of the bomb. However, they will protect the wearer on the way to or from dealing with the bomb. This is what makes the high price of the robots worth it, because they potentially save lives.

Due to the variety of tools at their disposal and the amount of experience the bomb squad has, the SO15 spokesman who talked to *The Scroll* advised citizens to move away and call 999 when there is any hesitation in regards to suspicious items and to “never take risks [because] we get paid to do this.”



Photo by Mr. Bridgewater

After the incident on January 8, the SO15 bomb squad agreed to talk to *Scroll* editors Michaela Towfighi and Cole Charnetski about their procedures when responding to incidents involving suspicious items. This is the robot used to inspect large items/areas such as vehicles.

## Evacuation “what if...”

Leah DiBianco  
*Scroll Editor*

The January 8 evacuation raised a host of questions about how to handle an evacuation. Head of the School Coreen Hester explained what would happen in certain situations.

On the morning of the evacuation it was dry and not too cold. Therefore the middle school students were able to stay outside for about 90 minutes. On a chilly day without rain, the students would have not stood outside for longer than two hours before being sent home.

In the event that students had to be sent home, everyone would have been sent home from the Church Grounds. For students who normally take the bus home, the busses would have gone to the park. Busses would have gone to the two locations and collected kids

who normally take a bus home, and students who walk home or do not travel by bus would have had their parents to come and collect them from the locations. If a parent were unable come and collect their kid, faculty members would have stayed with them until they could be picked up.

Students who regularly walk home would have been escorted by security to the St Johns Wood High Street where they would then be picked up by their parents or walk home.

Parents would have been informed about the early release as they are in all instances of an early dismissal: The School would have contacted the parents via text message, email, and a message would also have appeared on the ASL main page.

However, it was unusual that the evacuation was outside. The evacuation plan includes indoor

spaces: St John and Elizabeth hospital or Lord’s Cricket Ground. In this incident, the suspicious car was too close to the hospital, and police had advised people to not come within 200 meters of the vehicle. On the day of the evacuation, the Cricket Ground had initially said they were conducting renovations and therefore unable to hold 500 students.

If the threat had been real and there had been damage to valuables and the school, the school would take steps to restore the equipment and building. ASL has a reserve fund for emergencies and has insurance. The insurance would help with any damage to the building, while the cash reserve would cover valuables, textbooks, equipment, and similar items. Decisions about what needed to be replaced would be determined by the Director of Finance, Director of Operations, and Facilities Manager.

## NEWS LONDON

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8 January 2014 Last updated at 10:04



### American school evacuated in London



An eyewitness said the school was evacuated in a calm manner

**A school in north-west London has been evacuated while police deal with a suspicious vehicle nearby.**

The school says all students at the American School in St John’s Wood are safe and accounted for. People who live nearby have also been evacuated.

The school said the students were evacuated at the request of the police. Students have now returned to campus, a spokesperson added.

Police checked the vehicle and found no explosives inside.

*Correction 9 January 2014: This story has been amended to remove incorrect information that the police had carried out a controlled explosion.*

Source: bbc.co.uk

*The BBC originally reported on the January 8 incident incorrectly. However they later posted a correction stating that their information had been fixed.*



## Robotics sends two teams to National competition

Tom Linkas  
Staff Writer

The eighth grade FIRST LEGO League robotics team called the Griffin Sprog, and the seventh grade team Omicron travelled to Nationals on February 1. At Nationals, Griffin Sprog won the Project Award, and Omicron won the Bechtel Safety Award.

The Nationals were held at Loughborough University. Led by eighth grade science teacher Mr. Chris Goff, the Griffin Sprog and Omicron were hoping for a good showing at the competition. In the previous competition that qualified the Griffin Sprog for Nationals, the team placed first out of 22, winning the overall competition trophy. Omicron won their regional competition on November 26 in Ford, Essex. The Griffin Sprog and Omicron competed among the best teams in all of England. This is the fourth year in a row an eighth grade ASL team has advanced to Nationals.

"I think that the team is on track for a successful championship. There have been a few teams from ASL that have gone to Nationals, but never before have there been two separate teams to represent ASL in the National Championship. So we are hoping that someone wins something and moves on to America where they will compete for the World Championship. But not to shoot too big here, we hope that someone will maybe just win a project award or a tech award," said Eighth grader Nicholas Kuenstler before Nationals. Nicholas is a member of the Griffin Sprog.

Eighth grader Trevor Adams spoke about the goals that the team wanted to accomplish. "Definitely for Nationals we are hoping to get a working prototype of our project. I think that that will set us apart from most other teams at the competition. I'm hoping that our robot will do somewhat well, at least to get in the top four so that we can go to the European championship, but first is always our goal."

The competition can be won by many scores. Some of these include the Technology judging, which is where a team will present the mechanics of their robots and how their programs work. Seventh grader Kaito Arai has been working on a program that uses calculus to accurately turn a robot. "For the tech judging I am hoping to impress the judges with my complicated program," said Kaito.

Another section that teams can gain points in is the Natural Disaster project. This is where the team researches a solution to problems involving Natural Disasters. For example, Team Omicron researched the after effects of floods, and how it can be unsafe to return to an area after a flood. To attempt to solve this problem, team Omicron has developed a robot that will enter an area recently affected by a flood, and survey it to make sure that it is safe for others to enter it again.

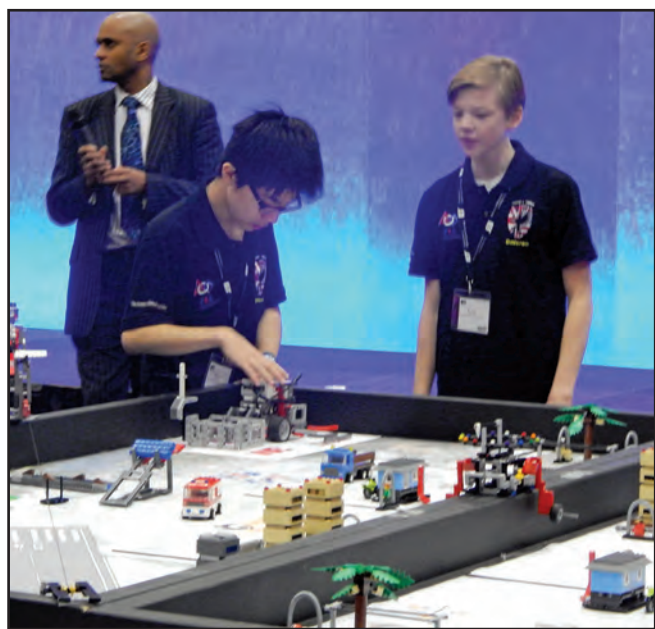


Photo By Alexander Ferragamo

Seventh graders Kaito Arai and Max Kay work on their robot during the National Robotics tournament. They are on team Omicron. Eighth grade team Griffin Sprog also competed at Nationals.

## Evacuation From Page 1

Marlborough Hill. Eighth grader Helen Craig said, "When leaving the building it was really quiet and that scared me a little because the school is never that quiet."

The original plan for all school evacuations is to have the lower school students go to George Eliot School on Marlborough Hill, middle school students go to the St. John's and Elizabeth's Hospital on the end of Loudoun Road, and high school students go to Lords Cricket Grounds.

With the original plans, all evacuation locations have shelter, so if it rains students would be dry. "We have clear emergency plans in place and hope to never use them," said Ms. Sarah Venus, eighth grade English teacher. "Then, if there is an emergency we don't have to worry because the plan is in place."

However, this was not the case on January 8. The middle school students were unable to go to the hospital because it was within 200 meters of the vehicle. If a bomb had gone off, the police feared people within 200 meters would be affected, leaving the school without the option to go the hospital. In addition to this, Lords Cricket Grounds was undergoing renovations and said they would only be able to accommodate 100 students. Due to these situations, both middle and high school students evacuated to the Church Gardens, in-

stead of the original plans.

According to Fave, once the school was evacuated, the bomb squad then approached the car to investigate. Although the police wouldn't comment on their response to this situation, a photo taken by Venus right before she evacuated from her classroom indicates that the bomb squad used the larger of the two robots that they have in their repertoire to help them determine there was not a bomb in the car [see Bomb squad on page 1 for a look at how the bomb squad works to protect London]. They were then able to determine that it was safe for students and faculty to come back to school. Contrary to what was published by other media sources, there was not a controlled explosion by the police.

Once the police decided it was safe for students to return to school, faculty and staff walked the students back to school just before 10 am. Students then continued on with a normal Wednesday schedule. If the examination of the car had taken any longer, students would have been evacuated from their evacuation locations [See "What if..." on page 2 for details on the school's evacuation plans].

While this situation was a false alarm, the school still evacuated the building for precautionary measures, to ensure everyone at ASL would be safe.



Photo by Ms. Venus

On January 8, ASL was evacuated due to a suspicious car on Loudoun Road. The police used a robot to examine the suspicious car. Ms. Sarah Venus, eighth grade English teacher, took this photo just before evacuating the building.

## Student Council sets goals to have successful school year for students

Cole Charnetski and  
Michaela Towfighi  
Scroll Editors

From hot chocolate stands to planning the spirit days, the Student Council has been busy since the elections in early November. The change in election process, which added more components to the process such as an essay, has benefited the The Student Council so far.

Caitlin Welch, current student council president and former vice president, said, "The student council has made more of an impact this year since there are fewer people on the student council." Caitlin also says everyone on the student council has had to be more productive in order to get a lot more work done. "But not a lot of big events have gotten done this year that show that, but once we are done with the projects we are working on now there will be a long list of things that we have done," said Caitlin.

Meeting every Day 2 and Day 6, the student council have been working on many projects since elections such as comfy clothes day, a hot chocolate stand, and planning the spirit assembly. Caitlin's goals for the semester are to "[Have] more spirit days, finish working on the spirit assembly and a few fundraising events later in the year."

In order to come up with ideas for projects and fundraisers, the student council needs suggestions from the students. One of the projects they have been working on to get these suggestions is setting up suggestion boxes in each grade's pod and a suggestion box on Haiku. Students can leave their suggestions either in the boxes, or by using the forum on the student council Haiku page. Malcolm Tisdale, current vice president, said, "The student council is really based on the entire student body's ideas. If you want an idea to get through or get done, you need to advocate for it."

Student Council interviews by Riley Sockwell





# THE SCROLL

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*The Scroll welcomes reader input in the form of letters to the editors. Letters should be typed and include the writer's name and homeroom teacher. Letters may be turned in to Mr. Bridgewater or may be sent to scroll@asl.org. We reserve the right not to publish letters due to spacing, technical, or legal problems.*

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## Journalism 101

In most professional newspapers and in *The Scroll* the majority of articles are meant to be objective or unbiased and to inform the reader about an issue in their community. In the Arts, Sports, News and Features Sections, the articles are retelling of events that are specific to that section. For example, Features may run an article about a talented student in the school. It is important that writers keep their opinion or view out of these articles because these stories are supposed to inform the readers so that they can formulate their own opinion. However, Arts and Features may occasionally contain articles with opinions such as restaurant or movie reviews. The Opinion Section is the only section that only contains stories that are subjective. These authors of these articles are attempting to explain their viewpoint and why others should share that opinion. So next time you read *The Scroll* or another newspaper try to identify articles that are objective and articles that are subjective.

## Culture of everyone “winning” harms students

In life there are winners and inevitably there are losers too. However, at our school it appears that all students fall into the former category. School is primarily designed to prepare its students for life ahead, but by allowing all students to be “winners” it will provide them a false sense of self that will only hurt them in life. While it should be noted that not all departments at school follow this policy, the athletic department and the administration actively promote this culture. In order to better prepare students for life beyond school, the administration should change this culture of “everyone’s a winner.”

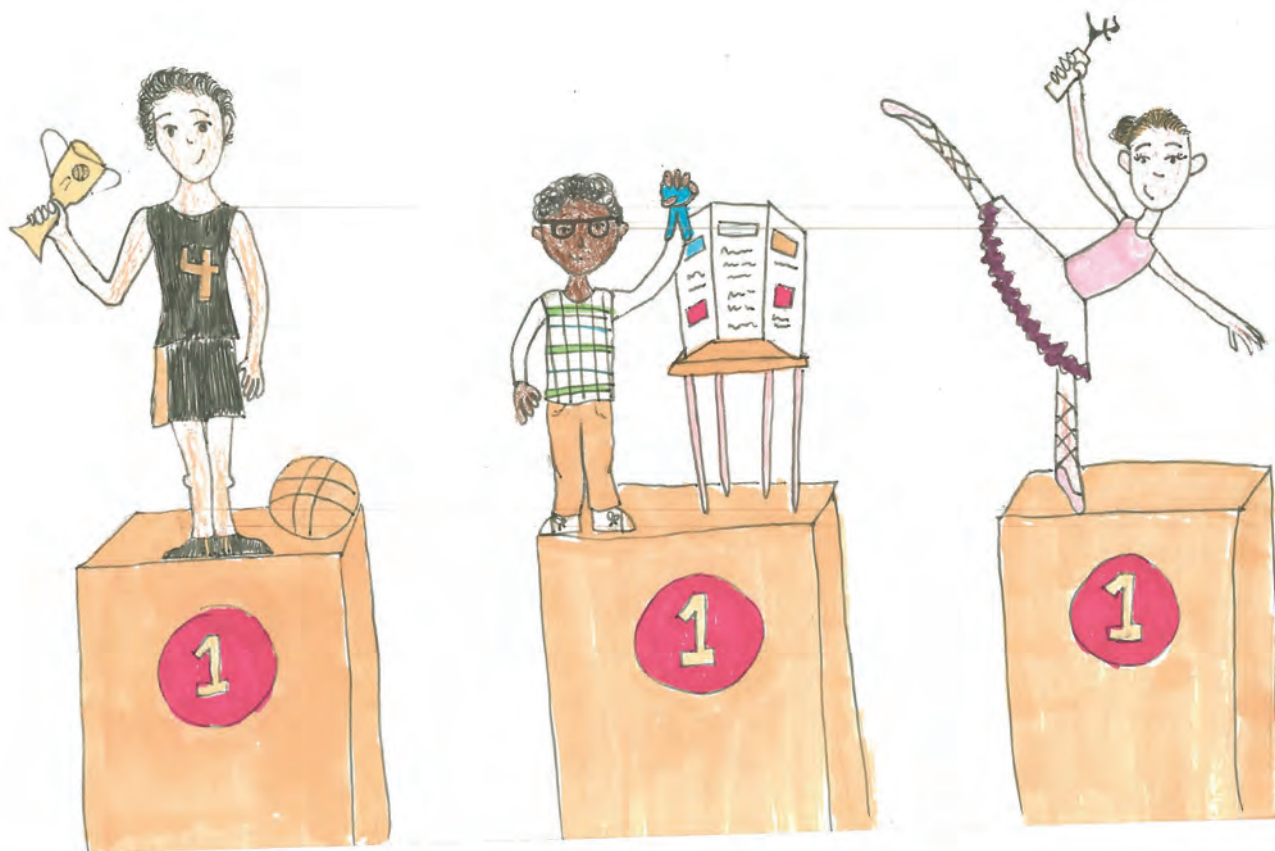
Over the past few years, the athletic department has eliminated cuts in some sports such as soccer. The elimination of cuts implies that skill is not the primary factor in making a team and that no one “loses” because no one is cut. While this policy may encourage participation, it comes at the cost of team performance and the morale of being one of the best. Moreover, the end of season sports party used to have player awards, but this practice has stopped. This policy fails to prepare students for life ahead as they may grow up to believe that they will always make a team or get a job and they will be in for a rude awakening when they realize that life does not work that way.

It is not just the athletic department that is guilty of employing an “everyone is a winner” mentality. In the past few years the administration has eliminated Eagle Awards and the Honor Roll. These two honors rewarded students for good character and academic excellence, respectively. The

elimination of these acknowledgements suggests that everyone has equal behavior and grades, but this is not the truth. Furthermore, accolades in life, whether academic, financial or service-related are not taken away because they hurt people’s feelings. So why should the school do away with these awards?

In certain classes teachers allow students to retake their test or quiz if they have failed to receive a satisfactory grade. This policy allows students to improve their grade and make them feel more like a “winner” in terms of their new grade. While some may argue that this system allows students to learn from their mistakes, it will fail to prepare them for high school, college and life ahead by permitting them to believe that they will be given a second chance in every situation.

Our school is creating a culture of every student being a “winner” by eliminating cuts in some sports, by failing to honor excellence and by allowing students to retake assessments. While these policies may help students in terms of participation and happy feelings, it will fail to adequately prepare them for life. In order to address this congratulatory culture, the administration should try to illustrate the fact that some students work harder to achieve more in some disciplines than others by awarding them. By maintaining this culture, students will not face disappointment in school and will therefore struggle to cope with setbacks in the future. If this culture fails to change, students will struggle to adapt in the cold, harsh world that awaits us.



Cartoon by Siena Henson

*Students who work hard should be rewarded for their academic and athletic accomplishments. However, the school's culture of “everyone’s a winner” does not allow students to be adequately recognized because either everyone is rewarded or no one is rewarded.*

## Is there a way to express excitement and ask a question at the same time?

Rohan Prasad  
Staff Writer

Sometimes, when writing, one is put in a tricky situation. At the end of a sentence, you must make the difficult decision of using a question mark or an exclamation mark. You don’t want to use a question mark, since it doesn’t imply the same emphasis that an exclamation has, yet an exclamation mark would not do the questioning of the sentence justice. Many writers in this situation resort to the bad style of using two characters, like “?!” but there is another solution. One could simply use the interrobang, a solution to this conundrum; an interrobang is a cross between an exclamation mark and a question mark.

“What is it?” you ask. “When can it be used?” The in-

terrobang can be used in more situations than you think. For example, what do you put when a character sees something terrifying and exclaims “What was that?” While not useful in more formal writing, a narrative could use the interrobang.

On a computer it is a little tricky to access, as it is not on a standard keyboard. There are many options here, though. One, you can press Alt-8253 if your computer supports Alt codes. Two, on Mac OS X, you can press Command-Alt-T, which brings up a menu where you can navigate to “Punctuation” and find the interrobang there. Alternatively, and perhaps the easiest method, you can simply Google search “interrobang” and copy-paste it into the required document.

While other punctuation marks are more commonly used, the interrobang is still very useful for writing. Will you use the interrobang?



Photo from Wikipedia/Interrobang

*Interrobangs are useful because they combine the expression of an explanation mark and a question mark. These marks should be used more often in creative writing.*



# Community Read requires change

Rohan Prasad  
Staff Writer

Every year the students in the middle school are required to read a Community Read book over the summer. Then, in the new school year, students meet with other peers from different grades and discuss the book with a teacher supervising them. This process is called Community Read. While the Community Read's intention is to create bonds between students and have them talk about a common topic, Community Read does nothing of the sort, and is not done often enough to be useful. Community Read should either be forgotten entirely, or allotted *far* more time.

As most middle schoolers know, advisory is an important time for students to meet and discuss with their peers. It allows for closer bonding with their peers, and the opportunity to develop a relationship with an adult in the school. Even now, the advisory time is taken up by assemblies and grade-only meetings, which means more often than not there will be something that gets in the way of advisory. Early in the year it's even *more* important for advisory time to be given, since students will spend that time together every morning.

Except, Community Read does exactly the opposite. It makes students miss advisory during a crucial stage in the year. It makes you connect with a group of random students. While this is a nice thought theoretically, in practice it means you don't see anyone in your Community Read group until the next meeting, at which point you've forgotten everything you know about them. When talking about why we don't have Community Read meetings very often, even Mr. Bullard, the organizer of Community Read, said, "we have a strong and vibrant advisory program, and we would have to take away from that program for Community Read [to be expanded]."

Community Read's meetings are too few and far between to be useful. This year there have only been two meet-

ings, and Mr. Bullard confirmed there will not be any more. These meeting's precious time is mainly taken up by coming up with tricks for remembering other people's names, which is hardly deeply reflecting on the book. Mr. Bullard said that one way to deal with the issue of time is to make Community Read meetings longer. "In an ideal situation, if Community Read sets the schedule and there's nothing else we had to consider... it would be great to have an hour long block in the first couple days of school, and an hour long block later in that month."

Because we don't have the hour long blocks, Community Read is not helpful. There isn't enough time to do anything useful. If Community Read is to exist, it should either be like Mr. Bullard suggested, hour long blocks, or it should be dropped entirely.

As the discussions are run now, you don't even have to read the book to participate in the meetings. Nikhil Agarwal, an eighth grade student who left ASL in December, didn't read his Community Read book. He said, "I listened to what other people were saying first, so I could get a rough idea, and then I commented, like I actually read the book and understood it, when in reality I didn't." It's that easy to avoid reading the book. "In the second [meeting], we didn't actually talk about the book," said Nikhil.

Some veteran middle schoolers might remember "Recy-cool-ing," a push for the middle school to start recycling more. Even now, students are encouraged to recycle whenever they can. Yet, does buying *four-hundred* books, each containing at least one-hundred pages, seem helpful for the environment to you? Books that people have little enthusiasm to read (and sometimes not even read at all!) are left on the shelf for the rest of eternity, and forgotten for years. It goes against ASL's core values: respecting our community, therefore our environment.

Community Read might have good intentions, but it is

impractical. ASL should either abolish Community Read entirely, or give it a massive upgrade.

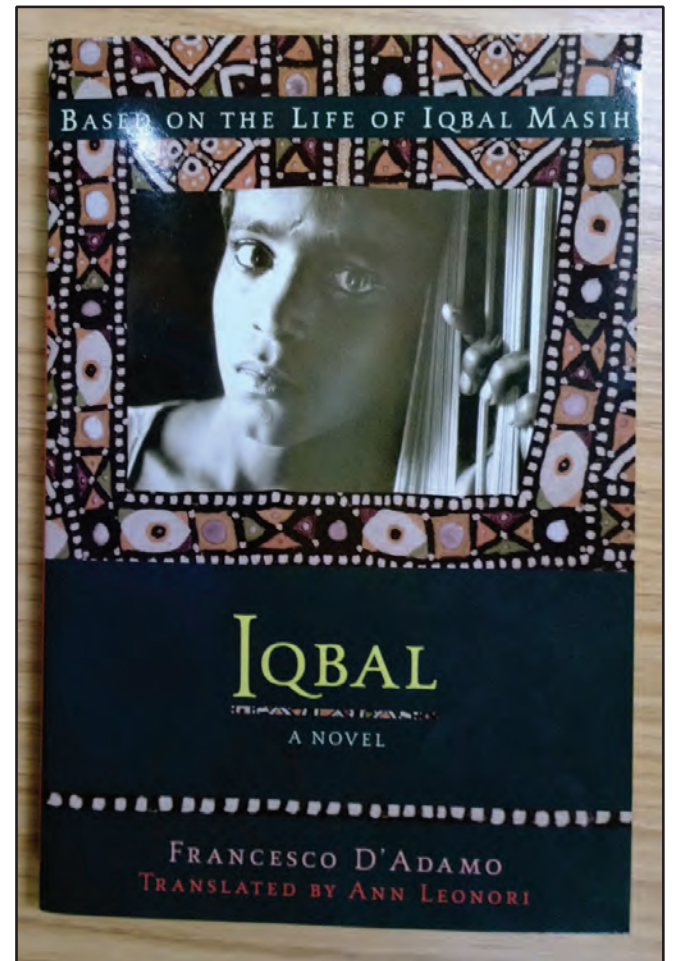


Photo by Alexander Ferragamo

*The Community Read book for the summer of 2013 was Iqbal for seventh and eighth grade students. Students have met two times this year and there will be no more Community Read this year.*

## *Eagle Eye:* How do you think the school handled the recent evacuation?

*"I think they handled it well in the sense that the evacuation was efficient, but the school could have told us more to prevent rumors."*

Ali Ahmed,  
eighth grade



*"I think they handled it very well because it ran smoothly and no one got hurt."*

Natalie Vann,  
sixth grade



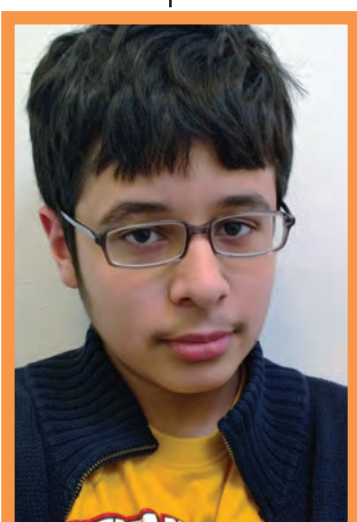
*"I think they handled it very well because the situation could have gotten out of hand and everyone seemed calm and relaxed."*

Kat Bohner,  
seventh grade



*"I think that the school handled it pretty well because they made sure that students were evacuated far enough away to be safe."*

Tommy Ferrell,  
fifth grade



Photos by Alex Gandhi and Alexander Ferragamo  
Interviews by Henry Platt



# School should institute more green policies



Photo by Alexander Ferragamo

Ally Larson  
Staff Writer

Recycling, no printing days and planting at Canons Park are just a few of the things that ASL does to help the environment. However, there are many more things that students can do to make our school more "green."

Students are using lots of resources. Moderate UN scenarios suggest that if current population and consumption trends continue, soon we will need the equivalent of two Earths to support us. And of course, we only have one. But there are many things that we can do.

For example, composting should really be part of our recycling and garbage system. If we have composting in the lunch room especially, there wouldn't be as much food going to waste. Along with uneaten food, plants, cardboard, tea bags, napkins and paper towels can all be composted. We know what can be recycled, and the rest of our waste would go into garbage without a compost system. There wouldn't be as much waste in the garbage with compost at lunch. The only problem about this is that the

Westminster Council, who pick up the trash, don't accept compost. It would definitely be hard to change the garbage system, though composting can be done without a company picking it up. We could do it ourselves, especially with Canons park.

Along with composting, there are many more other ideas that can be used for helping the environment. Last year, there was a no-printing day. This is very helpful for saving

money and trees, because ASL prints A LOT of paper each day. We should try and organize a few more no-printing days again this year.

The laptop program is another great way to save paper. If teachers have more electronic worksheets, we can save trees. At the same time,

it is nice to have some homework on paper, so we have to have something in between.

There are so many ways that we can help the environment, including electronic worksheets, no-printing days and composting. There are many more other ideas, too. We should use all of these ideas, especially composting. If everyone in our community tried their hardest, ASL could impact London, England and possibly the world.

*There are so many ways we can help the environment, including electronic worksheets, no printing days and composting.*

# Students should be more informed about evacuation procedures

Henry Platt  
Scroll Editor

On January 8, the school was evacuated because of a suspicious vehicle parked on Loudoun Road. For many students this was the first time they had ever experienced an evacuation at ASL. While the faculty and the administration handled the situation effectively, efficiently and to the best of their ability, there are some things that the administration should take into consideration in preparation for the next evacuation, whenever that may be. These measures cover a variety of disciplines, including drilling and transparency, and would allow a potential future evacuation to run more smoothly.

During the evacuation it was apparent that many teachers and students alike were unfamiliar with the procedures for this situation, even though there is an A4 piece of paper in every classroom containing directions, and this led to some confusion. In order to prevent confusion in future scenarios, the administration should implement mandatory evacuation drills. These drills would not have to run as frequently as fire drills and may only need to be tested every other year. Furthermore, to ensure that evacuation locations are not compromised, these tests should only apply to faculty and take place over the

course of student breaks to limit class disruption.

Over the course of the evacuation, several rumors were spread, including some that suggested that students were to be dismissed or that there was a bomb big enough to destroy the school. These rumors caused the situation to be more tense as some students were scared of being harmed or were let down when we went back to school. The administration should prevent this misinformation from circulating during future evacuations by better informing teachers about the situation and instructing teachers to in turn inform the students about the situation as it unfolds.

While the school could improve on some areas surrounding the evacuation, it should be noted that teachers handled the situation very well. For example, when the students first arrived at the Church Yard, teachers ensured that they were in straight lines, but later on allowed students to run around the yard. This helped relieve some of the tension surrounding the evacuation and helped lift the mood.

These evacuations were managed by the faculty very well and ensured that the evacuation was as efficient as possible. However, the administration could drill teachers on the protocol more often and increase the transparency surrounding the situation of the evacuation to make these events more effective and eliminate some of students' anxiety.

*For many students this was the first time they had experienced an evacuation at ASL.*



Cartoon by Siena Henson

*The lack of transparency surrounding the evacuation caused many rumors to circulate amongst students. The administration should inform the students more about an evacuation in the future. The school should also prepare students for future evacuations by going over the procedure.*



# Rich food covers up for poor service

Naz Ozturk  
Scroll Editor

Sticky Fingers cafe and restaurant was first opened in 1989 by the legendary Rolling Stones rocker, Bill Wyman. This restaurant is a haven of good food and great music. They mostly play songs from one of the Rolling Stones albums and other rock legends.

## Atmosphere

The restaurant is decorated with Rolling Stones merchandise (which they also sell) and posters, guitars, records, and retro items like a pinball machine and booth tables. The restaurant itself is very spacious, but when it's filled with customers it looks pretty small. It's a great hangout on Saturday nights, and it's right near Notting Hill High Street so there is always something to do when you get out of the restaurant. The very vibe of the restaurant gets you in the mood for a concert.



Image from Stickyfingers.com

*The Sticky Fingers restaurant has a great atmosphere and good food, but the service is mediocre. It is run by a member of the rock band The Rolling Stones Bill Wyman, and the restaurant also sells Rolling Stones merchandise.*

## Service

Their service isn't that good. When you first come in, they take your order immediately, but after that they take forever to ac-

tually to bring your order. Since it's such a big restaurant, the waiters have to run around the restaurant constantly, so sometimes in the rush of everything the waiters forget your order and you have to remind them again and again.

## Food

As its name states, the food they serve there is mostly casual food that you can eat with your hands. Their menu includes a rich selection of hamburgers, baby back ribs, BBQ chicken wings, nachos, and any kind of American finger food you can think of. My favorite are the BBQ chicken wings and baby back-ribs. Their BBQ sauce isn't too strong and the baby back-ribs are cooked for just about the right time. The meat is not pink but is still very soft which makes it easier to eat. In my opinion, the burger isn't very good. It's pink, salty, and the meat is very tough. Their french fries aren't great either. They are salty but they are too crispy and basically filled with grease. The only reason why they put salt on them is probably to hide the taste of the grease. Their nachos are pretty good. They just don't have enough salt so if you ever order them, don't forget to add some salt. This restaurant is good, but it is not a restaurant that you must visit.

## The Details

**Address:** 1a Phillimore Gardens, Kensington W8 7QB  
**Nearest Tube:** High Street Kensington  
**Website:** <http://www.stickyfingers.co.uk/>  
**Telephone:** 020 7938 5338

£15.75

Cost of the  
Smoked Baby  
Back Ribs

3/5

Rating for  
Sticky  
Fingers

\*Rating key: 5 = You haven't fully lived until you've eaten here, 4 = This is a great restaurant that you need to visit, 3 = Some positives and some negatives with this restaurant, visit with caution, 2 = Eat here only at your own risk, 1 = Don't eat here unless starving to death.

# Anjali Siromani turns passion into business

Isabel Rewick  
Staff Writer

With a passion for creative design and the arts, seventh grader Anjali Siromani knew she wanted to pursue something artsy as a hobby and share it with other people. At first, she had wanted to pick drawing as her official hobby but then she realized that nobody would really want to buy a kid's drawings. Then she decided try making bracelets.

In November 2013, Anjali found a box of bracelet making tools and supplies from when she was young and had a craze for making jewelry. After experimenting with the kit, Anjali discovered that she wasn't bad at making bracelets and that it would be a fun thing to do. As soon as this passion was discovered she went on loads of different websites such as Beads Direct and YouTube and found out how to make leather bracelets.



Photo by Jonathan Phillips

She started researching how to make bracelets with leather as well as charms. The leather and charms

would make up the whole company. The charms have sayings such as Hope & Dream. The messages can be inspiring and fun.

Once Anjali decided that this was something she wanted to pursue as a passion, she got her father's opinion, and he thought it would be a good idea to raise money for charities in the future with the profit she will get. So she started selling them on Amazon.

Making bracelets sounds like a really fun and easy hobby, but even though it is fun, it's not always easy. Anjali described the process as a bit overwhelming. All of Anjali's supplies have been bought at stores, and techniques have been taken from YouTube, and it took and still takes a lot of research. In the beginning, it took 30 minutes to make one bracelet but now it only takes 15 minutes. "It takes some time to fix them," Anjali said. The hooks that attach the charm to the leather are really small because the hooks are in millimeters. "That can get frustrating," she said.

Sizes are hard to pay attention to as Anjali describes herself as someone who doesn't want to pay attention to detail, and she just wants to rush into things. She is trying to keep an inventory for what she has sold and spreadsheets for that purpose as well. She

thinks that she should plan more and think about the bigger picture. She also will often forget how many bracelets she has sold.

However Anjali won't let the hard parts about her hobby stop her from pursuing a passion. Anjali is inspired by her hobby to work on a new bracelet that has a magnetic fastener and separate charms can be bought so that consumers can create their own bracelets and they can have something personal and special.

Anjali hopes that she will be able to set up a website by February, and continue selling on Amazon. She plans to call this business Wired Charms, and she already has an Instagram and other social media accounts to support it.

"It's just a hobby so far, and I might just love it for a year or two and then drop it. I don't think it will be one of those things that I do for the rest of my life," Anjali said.

"It's very expensive," Anjali added. "It costs about £50 to make 18 bracelets and I only get around a pound for profit." Anjali has to work hard to get these bracelets done but she has admitted that she enjoys this hobby very much. She likes creating things and helping charity and this passion allowed her to move onto making a new item.



Photo by Jonathan Phillips

*This bracelet was made by Anjali Siromani.*



Sourna Daneshvar  
Scroll Editor

On December 29, former Formula 1 driver Michael Schumacher was skiing off piste in the French Alps when he crashed, and split his helmet, putting him into a coma. The state that Schumacher was in is the worst result of a concussion, though any concussion is dangerous. Concussions don’t just happen when skiing on the rocky alps, or just to adults. Middle school students give themselves the opportunity to suffer a concussion every day when participating in any recreational activity.

A concussion is when parts of the brain hit the skull due to a sudden hit or blow to the head. Concussions are the most common form of brain injury that can occur in any sport or recreational activity. In its simplest form, a concussion is a brain bruise. According to athletic trainer Ms. Jenny Newell, “It’s not a bruise that you can see or measure very easily.”

Suffering a blow or knock to the head that leads to a concussion means more unseeable damage. “When you get hit in the head, we know your brain chemistry changes, and it takes a certain amount of time for the chemistry to change back,” said Newell.

Only middle school athletes involved in the highest risk sports are tested. Athletes involved in these sports must undergo an ImPACT concussion test. Newell said “It’s a computerized neurocognitive test. It’s a way of testing how you think pre-concussion to post concussion.” With the testing, Newell is able to understand how far in the recovery process athletes are and judge if they are fit to play.

If an athlete is suspected of having a concussion, the test is one of the evaluation tools under ASL’s protocol for concussions, found at asl.org/concussion.

Athletes are not permitted to return to play the same day they are suspected of having a concussion. Once the athlete is proven free of symptoms through the ImPACT test, and cleared by a physician they must follow the return to activity process. The progression for return is approximately a six day process, with no athlete able to complete more than one step a day. Should the athlete at any point show symptoms or signs of a concussion the protocol says “Athletes should seek medical attention immediately.”

Coaches are crucial members in identifying concussions and guiding athletes through the process of recovery. To ensure coaches are knowledgeable about their responsibility in dealing with concussions, the dangers of concussions, and symptoms, all coaches must take an online concussion course from the National Federation of High School Sport.

All coaches must pass the course that involves a multiple choice pre-test, and post test of identical questions about concussions. In between the pretest, and post test there is an approximately 30 minute course giving basic yet crucial information about recognizing a concussion, the signs, and symptoms of concussions, coaches responsibilities about managing concussions, and helping athletes recover.

The course is divided into four units to highlight specific aspects of managing concussions. Key phrases from the course such as “When in doubt, sit them out” are repeated throughout the course.

The course gives information about when emergency medical services are needed, such as Michael Schumacher’s injury. Loss of consciousness, drowsiness, serious headaches, seizures, irregular breathing, and vomiting are crucial indicators for when EMS is needed.

Seventh and eighth grade rugby coach Mr. Sean Ross said “[The course] is not set out to be difficult. It’s just to develop your understanding.” While the course is not difficult, it is helpful for coaches. Ross also said “It raised some things I wouldn’t have necessarily associated with concussions. The symptoms, the incidents that would cause a concussion, the precautions you need to take, and if you’re unsure, follow up steps,” he added.

With the evolution of concussion knowledge, coaches, especially at ASL, understand their responsibilities. Ross said “If there’s a sudden impact to head or body in some cases you have to take the student off the pitch, assess them appropriately, and if you’re ever unsure they don’t go back on.”

Newell is pleased with how coaches here handle students with potential injuries, and said, “Coaches at ASL are at the forefront regarding coaching, and concussions.”

While coaches understand their responsibilities with concussions there is always a frustration dealing with any injury. Ross said “For a lot of coaches concussions can be frustrating because they can’t see the symptoms. The urge to send a player back on can be quite high.”

While there can be pressure for an athlete or coach to let the athlete play, there are severe consequences should an athlete be prematurely cleared. Newell said, “We know you are at a higher risk for a more severe

brain injury. Once the brain chemistry changes in your brain it never quite goes back to normal. It means it’s more likely to happen again.”

Newell also added, “If you get hit again while your brain chemistry is changed, you could deal with second impact syndrome and death. Some milder things are depression or anxiety trouble with light headaches.”

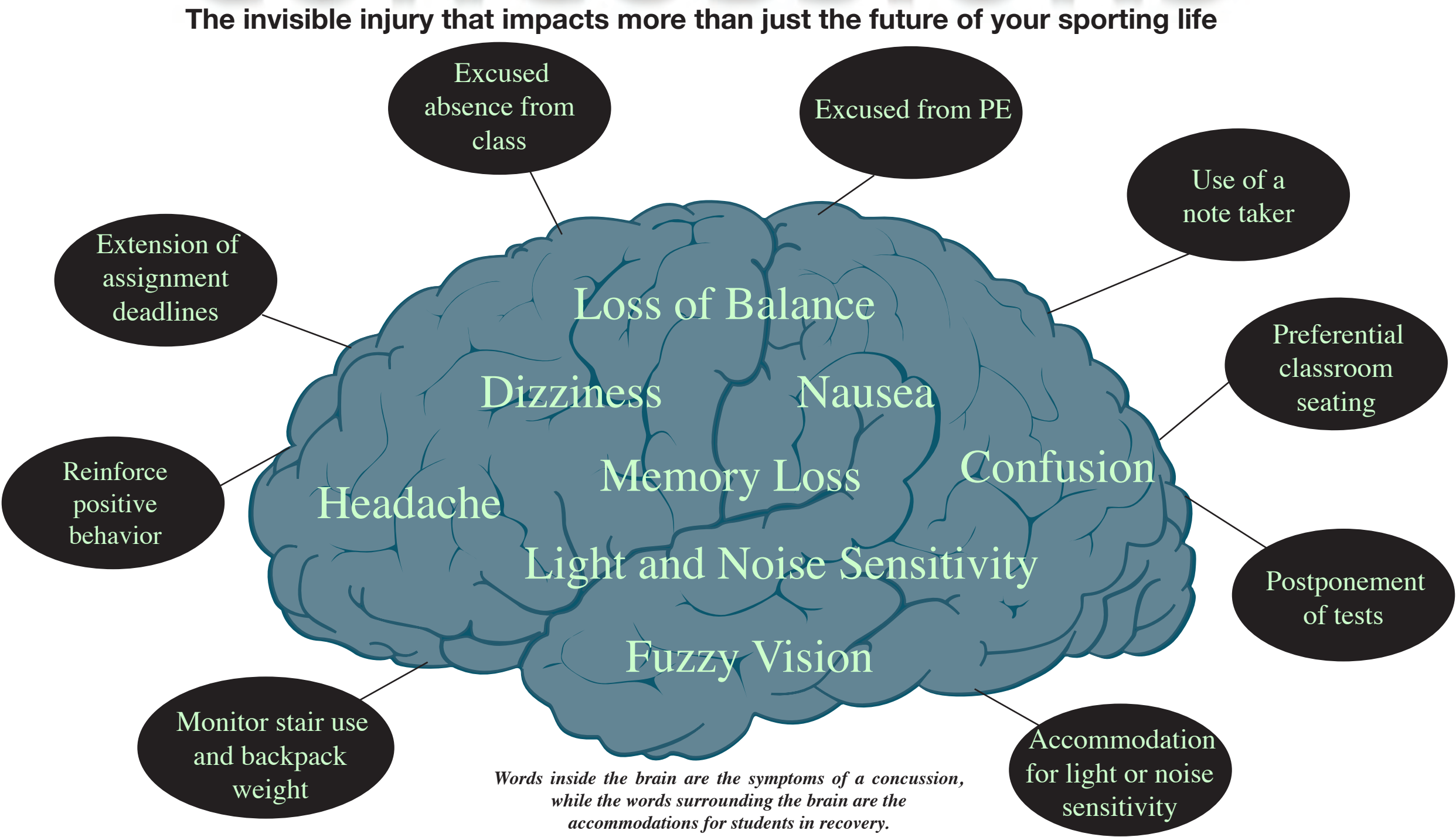
As the athletic trainer, Newell tracks all athletes with concussions, and helps athletes any way possible. She said, “Regardless of what type of injury, concussion or other, my goal is to get an athlete back to return to the level of play they want to be at in the safest and quickest way possible.”

While her goal for all injuries is the same, treating them is different. Newell said, “Physical injuries tend to be a bit more direct. You can see them. Concussions are insidious; there’s a little bit more of a mentoring feeling throughout the process of a concussion recovery.”

Dealing with any form of brain injury, especially concussions is serious. As awareness continues to be raised, coaches become more cautious. “I would say in the past two years due to a lot of different reasons, our cultural sensitivity to concussion has increased. We call more things a concussion now than in a the past,” said Newell. She added “As concussion awareness grows, everyone, coaches, parents, and most importantly student athletes are understanding what the risks are, and what to do once sustaining a concussion.”

While concussions are serious, they’re manageable with patience from parents, athletes, and coaches.

Interviews by Mariam Sousou and Sourna Daneshvar  
Photos by Alexander Ferragamo




Key Phrases

**Cognitive awareness**  
The mental process of knowing, including aspects such as awareness, perception, reasoning, and judgment.


**Memory Function**  
A situation in which the time to complete a given computational problem is decided primarily by the amount of memory required to hold data.

**Subjective and Objective Observations**  
A subjective observation is an observation that is not concrete. It is invisible and is based on an individual’s personal opinion or preference. Unlike an objective observation, a subjective observation cannot be tested or proven.




Eighth grader Ellie Bauer got concussed in October of this year during a volleyball unit in PE class. She suffered her concussion because of an elbow to the head.

“At first I always had headaches and I took lots of Advil. I didn’t skip any classes, but I wanted to mostly because I had headaches and couldn’t focus. My homework was quite challenging, I didn’t want to around screens. I was out of sports for almost two weeks. I always took Advil before I played sports my first week back.”



Eighth grader Eric DaCosta got concussed last March playing in a rugby tournament. His parents no longer allow him to play rugby.

“At first, I didn’t even think I had a concussion. My mom knew I was concussed after the game. I was really pale and I was in a lot of pain and my mom saw me and knew I had a concussion. [When I got concussed] I had to stay in bed and had really bad throbbing headaches all the time. Two days after I had the concussion I returned to school. I couldn’t play soccer for about a week. My mom still lets me play soccer and lacrosse, but I guess rugby’s off the list. My mom’s still very doubtful about letting me play rugby.”



Eighth grader Caoimhe Mesch got concussed in November 2012 during soccer season. She suffered her concussion because of a ball hitting her head.

“After my coach thought I had a concussion I had to go on the ASL concussion protocol. I couldn’t look at any screens. I couldn’t be in any light rooms. I couldn’t do much math or science work, anything that included using my brain a lot. I couldn’t read. I couldn’t write. I couldn’t do much at all. My symptoms were headaches, dizziness, stomach ache and nausea. I would see stars. I would also get really tired. Also, my body wouldn’t move properly.”



## Artist Spotlight: Ajuni Takkar takes pride in her abstract art

Naz Ozturk  
Scroll Editor

Seventh grade artist Ajuni Takkar takes pride in her work, and one piece is a part of the ASL Permanent Collection. Ever since she was a toddler, she loved drawing but she never considered it as a serious hobby until three years ago. After that she took it seriously so that she could take her artwork to the next level. Before her artwork was in the ASL Permanent Collection (outside Mr. Bridwater's office), Ajuni's artwork had never been displayed.

Although her artwork has only been displayed once, all of her artwork is very important to her. She says that she loves trying new things with her artwork and that drawing relaxes her and sometimes even gives her these great ideas for other drawings. Most of her artwork is abstract. Even if she is drawing something she has seen, she doesn't draw the exact same thing. She always changes something in her drawing.

Ajuni's inspiration for her artwork is anything that looks interesting or a close up of something that would've been boring to draw. But by drawing a close up, it'll be something incredible. She says that her "secret ingredient" to being such a great artist is practice and bit of talent.



Photo by Alex Gandhi

*Ajuni Takkar is an avid artist. She spends her free time drawing and painting abstract art. The pictures she paints are not realistic. She finds different angles and views to her art, thus her work is more abstract.*

### Misheard song lyrics:

#### **Gone, Gone, Gone by Phillip Phillips:**

Actual Lyrics: You, my back bone you're my cornerstone  
What we thought: You, my back bone you're my cortisone

#### **Forget you by Cee Lo Green:**

Actual Lyrics: I guess he's an Xbox and I'm more Atari  
What we thought: I guess he's an expert and I'm more attorney

#### **What makes you beautiful by One Direction:**

Actual Lyrics: You're turning heads when you walk through the door  
What we thought: You get kicked as you walk through the door

#### **Monsters by Eminem feat. Rihanna:**

Actual Lyrics: You're trying to save me, stop holding your breath  
What we thought: You're trying to save me, stop holding your bread

### Top of the Chart Songs

Isabelle Laxer  
Staff Writer

Here is a list of the most popular songs throughout the Middle School. These songs were suggested by students of all grades. Student were asked what their favorite song is right now, and these songs were said repeatedly.

1. "What Does the Fox Say?" by Ylvis
2. "Roar" by Katy Perry
3. "Best Song Ever" by One Direction
4. "Story of my Life" by One Direction
5. "Timber" by Pitbull ft. Ke\$ha

## Ms. Thomas enjoys art of mobile photography

Celine Sawiris  
Staff Writer

Jennifer Thomas, middle school and high school art teacher, has a love for mobile photography. Many people think that their mobile phone is just another backup tool to take a photo if you don't have your camera with you, but Ms. Thomas thinks differently. She says that your mobile phone can take amazing pictures and there are many apps you could use to edit them and make them perfect.

When she talks about her passion for mobile photography, her eyes widen and her smile grows. Ms. Thomas, paints a picture of what a perfect photograph is, taking multiple pictures to create an artwork. Ms. Thomas considers herself as unique in her art because she takes multiple photographs while others focus just on taking one "perfect" image.

"I think that the number one thing about mobile photography is that it allows the artist to be very immediate in capturing their image," said Ms. Thomas. "If you're in a big crowd, you can quickly pull it out and take a few quick snaps."

Ms. Thomas' philosophy about mobile photography is that it has something that's discrete about it that allows you to capture more of the world around you. It's quite quick and direct and it is much quicker than if she made a painting or a drawing.

Ms. Thomas clarified that mobile photography is just another tool for making art. "I could take a photograph of a beautiful autumn tree or I could paint a tree, or I could make a print of a tree, or I could make a sculpture of a tree," she

said. "It is using the mobile camera, which makes it just another tool that I can use for making artwork. I could manipulate the image really quickly with my camera."

Ms. Thomas said that she combines her drawings with her photos. She paints into the photo and at times glues something on that she finds, and she might write some words over it if she has a beautiful poem in mind. She uses different techniques. "I love mobile photography and that's the thing that I really spend time on," she said. "Although I spend most of my time on taking images, I also do make paintings and drawings. They're usually mixed media."

Ms. Thomas goes into more details when she points out that her photographs are based on wherever she is, especially because she travels a lot. "If I were in Australia, I'd take a



Photo by Celine Sawaris

*Ms. Thomas takes great pride in mobile photography. She often mixes the photos she takes with text, paintings, or other pictures. Ms. Thomas considers mobile photography as art.*

photograph of the landscape and the beach. In London I take photographs of the city and [things like] like the subways and the very old buildings," said Ms. Thomas. "I do love going into the country and I love nature. If you could say to me, what would you love doing the most, I would say, I love photographing nature, like trees, leaves, and flowers. Here the buildings are very old. They can be 500 to 600 years old. Pretty amazing!"

Ms. Thomas' love for art began when she was a child and got early feedback that she had some talent. "I remember, when I was a tiny child, I always loved drawing. I remember watching television, I was very young, maybe seven or eight years old, and there was a competition that was to draw a Freddo Frog chocolate bar, so I drew it and sent it into the competition. My drawing won and I remember getting like 100 chocolate frogs," said Ms. Thomas. "It was truly amazing for me because I thought, wow, someone really does value my drawing and that was a great inspiration to me and I knew that I wanted to continue pursuing my dream as an artist."

Ms Thomas considers mobile photography as part of her art. Ms. Thomas feels that if you have a trained eye and you are very thoughtful about how you take a photo, you could take a photo that was just as good on your iPhone, as a picture that someone had taken on a £10,000 camera. She thinks that it truly is up to the person taking the photo. "It depends on how much consideration they want to give to making the image," Ms. Thomas said, "but I think that beauty is in the eye of the beholder and I think that a picture says a thousand words."



# Teachers reveal their secret talents

Sarah Covey and Skylar Levine  
Staff Writers



Photo courtesy Ms. West

Ms. West, ASP coordinator, is passionate about blacksmithing. Her father taught her to blacksmith when she was 18 years old. In the past she made fences and railings, however now she makes boxes, flowers, and jewelry. To create things out of metal she heats the metal until it's just soft enough to mold. Then she uses an anvil and a hammer to shape the metal into the desired shape. She mostly uses steel, as well as copper, brass, and stainless steel. Ms West's favorite project to undertake is creating a flower.



Photo by Alexander Ferragamo

Mr. Harris, PE teacher, can juggle. He started to juggle when he was 12. It took him two years to get very good at it. Mr. Harris wanted to learn how to juggle because he admired how fun it looked. Now, he will sometimes juggle with different things. The biggest thing he can juggle with is a basketball. A tip for juggling from Mr. Harris was to be patient, persistent, and start slow, as it may be frustrating.



Photo by Alex Gandhi

Ms. Raza, art teacher, can stand on her head. She learned how to do it when she was five, when she was playing around with her sister. It did take her a few weeks though. Now she does it once a week. Ms. Raza says that when you first try to stand on your head, do it in steps, not all at once. Ms. Raza states that it improves circulation, and explains that it is a way of relaxation. She is able to stand on her head for up to three minutes. Ms. Raza is willing to teach anyone who wants to, to learn how to do a headstand. Ms. Raza's next goal is to learn how to do a handstand.




Photo by Alex Gandhi

Mrs. Jois, fifth grade aide, is able to knit. Mrs. Jois started knitting when she was ten. Her favorite things to knit are sweaters, scarves, quilts, and gloves. Mrs. Jois also enjoys following different patterns when she knits. Mrs. Jois doesn't knit as regularly as she did when she had more time, but when she is able to she will knit in the evening. When she starts knitting, she can keep going for up to two hours, if she wants to. Mrs. Jois said her next project was going to be a scarf with a unique pattern.


## High Notes: What's your favorite band/musician?

Naz Ozturk  
Scroll Editor




"I like Guns & Roses, because I like rock music and their songs are really fun to listen to."

Loucas Xenakis, fifth grade




"I like Maroon 5, because their songs have a nice beat to them."

Lily Whitman, sixth grade



"I like Imagine Dragons, because their songs are very catchy."

Micah Skariah, seventh grade



"I like Coldplay, because I like alternative music and their songs are catchy and you don't get sick of them."

Isabelle Gorrvan, eighth grade



# Attention to detail drives eighth grade girls' season

Mariam Sousou  
Scroll Editor

This year ten eighth grade girls put their skills to the test and made the basketball team this year. The girls all had one thing in common: a love and passion for the sport. This created a determined team that's ready for a challenge.

Their practices don't take place as often as the players wish. They happen twice a week for two hours, depending on their game schedule. These practices, however, are enough to prepare them for new skills to confront their upcoming games.

This year's coach, Ms. Marisa Haylett, known as Coach Marisa, said, "The girls are really positive with each other. This really helps. We're also really strong on offense, which is really good."

Looking at Coach Marisa's whiteboard, the players soak up the plays that they recall from the one practice they had before the game.

Coach Marisa sent the starting five out while the other girls watch intently. The team worked together to create and use as many plays as they could. This helped work as a team. The girls won by a score of 42-10 on December 12 against Hillingdon.

Coach Marisa was beaming with not only the score but also the way the girls played together. She commented on the game, "The girls are friends off the court which helps them work together as a team better."

Maddie Bauer agrees with Coach Marisa, "We are all really close and this means we have good communication on the court."

The following practices Coach Marisa worked the girls hard and practiced plays to enforce cuts and picks. She had them practice cuts such as scissor cuts and V-cuts. A V-cut is when a player sprints down to a corner of the court then back up to receive the ball. This confuses the defender in order to make an open pass. The team also practiced inbound plays so every detail of the game would be perfect.

After three weeks without a game, the team practiced the drills they lost during the winter break. Confident and



Photo by Alex Gandhi

*Guard Ellie Bauer beats the TASIS defense on a fast break for a scoring opportunity. The Eagles won 41-8 on January 16. This was the second game of the season, with the girls only having one practice to prepare beforehand.*

excited, the girls were ready to take up their next challenge, ACS Cobham on January 14.

A home game and a big crowd pumped the girls up even more. During the 10 minutes warm-up they practiced and practiced all the different picks and cuts that were required; they were ready.

During the game Coach Marisa yelled out plays that the girls should run. The girls tried to run an effective offense before scoring, such as different ways to screen and cut.

Ending the game with a 23-3 score against Cobham, the team had used all the plays they should have.

With no practice before the next game, the team were prepared for their next obstacle, TASIS on January 16. In this game the team worked together by balancing the plays with

the baskets. The girls ended the game, 41-8.

Although the girls have been successful, there are still areas to improve. These have been worked on in the limited practice time available

"Defensively we're getting a lot better. On offense we're really aggressive. We are really good at getting the ball quickly and running," said Coach Marisa about strengths and weaknesses about the team.

"We could improve on our shooting. We need to shoot further shots and become comfortable with shooting in a game."

During the practices and games the girls acquired skill in determination and love for the sport. This led to a winning season.

## Seventh grade girls progress during undefeated season

Phaedra Letrou-Papamarkakis  
Staff Writer

This season the grade 7 girls' basketball team has grown so much from the first practice. The girls showed outstanding sportsmanship not only within their team, but to their competitors.

They won their first game on the road on January 12 against ACS Hillingdon, 38-0, which was followed by winning their first home game against Cobham 19-2 on January 14.

They are improving every day and continue to show teamwork during games and practices. They always cheered each other on and support one another. Theo Longboy said, "It's great to be on this team, because I've learned so much and bonded with the other



Photo by Alex Gandhi

*Guard Kendall Fass drives by the Hillingdon defense looking for Kat Bohner. The girls won the game 26-6 on January 23. Coach Mazzenga has stressed the importance of working in the system of an offense to get scoring opportunities.*

girls, and I'm looking forward to our next games."

The girls set goals at the beginning of the season and are working hard to accomplish them. Some of these include working on their left hand lay-ups, defensive slides, shell drill and offensive plays. Their coach, Mr. Mark Mazzenga said, "We've been making great progress in understanding the mechanics of the game, but are still in the process of figuring out the tactical aspects on both sides of the ball, i.e. running a systematic offense and defensive positioning."

The Eagles have accomplished a lot on the scoreboard this season. With a few weeks left in the season the team hopes the success will continue and that they will reach their goals.

### Boys basketball results

**December 12 (Hillingdon)**  
Eighth Grade Boys won 42-16  
Seventh Grade Boys won 36-11

**January 14 (Cobham)**  
Eighth Grade Boys won 42-15  
Seventh Grade Boys won 28-4

**January 16 (TASIS)**  
Eighth Grade Boys won 41-10  
Seventh Grade Boys won 32-7

**January 23 (Hillingdon)**  
Eighth Grade Boys won 40-17  
Seventh Grade Boys won 38-3

### Rugby results

**January 14**  
U14 rugby lost 0-8 against Cobham  
U13 won 7-3 against Cobham. Ben Rifkin, Parker Clark, Garrett Kimball, Thomas Cassidy and Cameron Moghadam scored

**January 16**  
U13 won 8-1 against TASIS. Ben Rifkin, Parker Clark and Garrett Kimball scored.

**January 23**  
U14 lost 7-6 against Hillingdon. John Carrafiell, Kelyn Howell, Murad Jah, Chris Reuter and Sam Moyle (2) scored

### Girls basketball results

**December 12 (Hillingdon)**  
Eighth Grade Girls won 42-10  
Seventh Grade Girls won 30-0

**January 14 (Cobham)**  
Eighth Grade Girls won 23-3

**January 16 (TASIS)**  
Eighth Grade Girls won 41-8

**January 23 (Hillingdon)**  
Eighth Grade Girls won 42-1  
Seventh Grade Girls won 26-6



# Athleticism leads prolific offense throughout season

Sourna Daneshvar  
Scroll Editor

From the tryouts in the first week of December, 12 individuals formed the eighth grade basketball team. Now around two months into the season, these individuals have joined together, and become focused on



Photo by Alex Gandhi

*Guard Dylan Middlebrook attempts a contested lay-up off a fast break against a Hillingdon player on December 12. The boys won the game 42-15. The athleticism of the team has given the team the ability to score points off fast breaks.*

the team, not themselves.

Eighth grader and point guard Corey LaScala said, "We're a very athletic team, and in the beginning of the season after tryouts we were thinking of ourselves, not as a team."

The season started with one practice before the team was thrust into a home game against ACS Hillingdon, which resulted in a 42-16 win in favor of the Eagles. After the Hillingdon game, the team had four practices before away games against Cobham and TASSIS. The Eagles came back with 42-15 and 41-10 wins, respectively.

Scoring more than 40 points in each of the first three games, the team has used their athletic ability to get points on the fastbreak, and the offense has shined. Coach Colin Bridgewater said, "Our offense works to the strength of an athletic team."

During the first three games the Eagles have been well-rounded, but the team still has ways to improve. Mr. Bridgewater said, "In our first three games I've had to be coaching and teaching the help-defense on the fly, and that's just because we've had so many games early in the season. I've focused on teaching the offense early in the season more than defense."

When the team traveled to Aberdeen on January 30, the depth and athleticism of the team was on show as the team finished second, losing only to a high school team from Egham in the final.

Forward Matthew Clement said "We faced a real challenge in Egham and I think that if we had a better game we could have easily beat them.

Using all 12 players to pressure the opposition, Mr. Bridgewater said "We have 12 players who are athletic. We can tire the

other team out."

He further commented about the depth of his team. "The big positive about a bigger team is if a few guys are cold in a game we still have a few bench players to rely on."

While more work is to be done this year before two home games and the LSSA tournament, the team has already improved. Matthew said, "Together as a team we've

definitely improved because of the competition we faced in Aberdeen."

"[Mr. Bridgewater] has brought us together; he helps us keep our heads up in the toughest situations," said Corey. Those 12 individual basketball players in the first week of December have two home games and LSSA's to finish the season.



Photo by Alex Gandhi

*Guard Nic Demetris looks for a pass near the basket after receiving a pass from the top of the key during a game against Hillingdon on December 12. The Eagles won the game 42-15.*

## Eighth grade girls and boys basketball earn medal positions at Aberdeen basketball tournament

### Aberdeen Basketball Tournament Eighth Grade Girls

#### Day 1

34-3 win against Egham JV  
41-4 win against Portlethen Panthers  
20-18 win against International School of Aberdeen

#### Day 2

20-4 win against Southbank  
31-4 win against International School of London



Photo courtesy Benjamin Thompson

### Aberdeen Basketball Tournament Eighth Grade Boys

#### Day 1

43-0 win against Stavanger  
28-4 win against International School of Aberdeen  
23-3 win against Southbank

#### Day 2

34-8 win against International School of London  
9-19 loss against Egham JV

## Seventh grade boys basketball team finds way to improve in undefeated season

Matteo Solecito  
Staff Writer

This year's seventh grade basketball team has improved tremendously throughout the season. In the team's first three games the team has been very successful, as they won every game with a cushion of a twenty point lead.

The team's practices are very intense as "we need to beat the team before we even start playing, mentally and physically," said coach Dave Musk.

Athletic Director Mr. Farmer has helped

coach the team this year, especially defensively. He said "Know where you need to be always on the court." Coach Farmer has also worked with the team on offense, and also pushes the team to stay in triple threat position.

The team has a solid background of friendship, making it easier to work well as a team. Guard, Aidan Norris said, "We need to talk more on defense as we don't want to turn our heads from the point guard, which would end up in us getting a ball in the back of the head, or not knowing where the basket is." But there are always areas for improvement,

as sometimes the team rushes their offense.

With the undefeated start to the season, the team looks to continue success throughout the remaining regular season games. Point guard Alex Parker said, "I hope we can build on our great start to the season and then develop more chemistry, so we play more as a team in games."

The team then looks to transfer it into the upcoming LSSAs, which will be a great test for how much the team has improved from the start of the year.



Photo by Alex Gandhi

*Guard Dylan Evans defends a Hillingdon guard during a game on December 12. The Eagles beat Hillingdon 36-11.*



# Friendship makes dance routines lively

Caitlin Welch  
Staff Writer

Despite the fact that the middle school dance team is made up of both seventh and eighth graders, the dancers have gotten to know each other tremendously. Even

though a big point of the dance team is making new friends, the dance team has been working extremely hard getting the dances together to be able to perform well at home basketball games this season.

Eighth grader Juli Nino said she likes the dance team because

“It’s fun and you get to make new friends.”

Seventh grader Lucy Adams said, “We get to dance and make new friends.”

Not only has the team been able to make new friends throughout the grades, but they have got-

ten to know the coaches on a more personal level. Coach and seventh grade humanities teacher Mrs. Tracey Steege says that one of the best parts about coaching a dance team is being able to hang out with the girls you don’t normally see.

Even though lots of dancers love making new friends on the team, according to Juli Nino the best part of the season has been the performances at the basketball games.

Ms. Jess Spector, one of the two dance team coaches and a fifth/sixth grade health teacher, said that her favorite part of being a coach is watching the dancers grow throughout the season. She also wants to teach the students that if you combine flexibility with strength it will result in a great performance. Mrs. Steege said “[I want the dancers] to feel confident that they can improve, no matter what level they started at.”

Both coaches love teaching the team and have similar reasons why they started in the first place.

Ms. Spector started dancing at age four and when she had a leg injury she had to stop dancing professionally. Since she loves teaching she decided it was the perfect way to continue what she loves.

Mrs. Steege was away from ‘formal’ dancing and missed it tremendously. ASL is the first school she has been to that has had a middle school dance team. She took this opportunity to keep dancing.

Even with a coaching change, the dance team’s performances have not slipped from years’ past and their team chemistry has continued to be high. The dance team has three dances; a jazz routine, a hip-hop and a pom. They perform at the half time and one of the quarters of all the middle school home basketball games. So far this season the team hasn’t had many practices, but has learned quite complex routines in the amount of time they had. Through hard work and determination the dance team has overcome this challenge and performed greatly at their games.



Photo by Alex Gandhi

During half-time of the seventh grade girls basketball game against Hillingdon on January 16, the girls perform in front of the ASL crowd. The girls perform only one of their dances during game breaks.

## Preparation helps middle school swim team compete

Nick Kuenstler  
Staff Writer

After a long period of preparation and practice, the middle school swim team is ready to take on other schools and show off their newly-developed swimming prowess. “We’re definitely ready to compete,” said middle school swim coach and fourth grade teacher Ms. Erin Daley on the progress of the seventh and eighth grade swim team.

Coach Daley said that the 17 swimmers

have made good progress over the season and have acquired new skills. “When most of our swimmers joined the team, they knew how to swim [recreationally] and some basic skills. However, they have now made significant improvements to their stroke and speed,” said coach Daley.

Eighth grade team member Miranda Mix said, “We have spent a lot of time developing our stroke, especially breast stroke, which I wasn’t very good at before joining the team, but I can now confidently say that

I am good at it.”

After several more practices, the team competed against the City of London Girls School on January 28, gaining the experience of competing in a competitive environment. Coach Daley said, “[The team] have been developing their competition skills in preparation, including starting from blocks and [doing] flip-turns.” These are both advanced skills professional swimmers use to raise their game and times in a competition setting, and will help the team’s efficiency

during the competition.

When asked about their chances for the January 28 meet, Miranda was optimistic, and said, “While we’re not on a junior varsity or advanced level, we’ve made huge improvements and have put a lot of effort into this, so I think we have a good chance of succeeding during the meet.” Overall, the performance and skills of the middle school swim team has improved during their season, and they are ready to compete against other schools.

## Team concept leads JV swim team to successful season

Alex Gandhi  
Scroll Editor

The loud screams from the coaches, parents, and swimmers cheered on each swimmer as they swam faster than lightning, each time they raced.

Mr. Anderson, one of the coaches for the JV team, said, “There are other sports in which a very gifted athlete can get by on their given talent for while, with little practice, and find success, but not in swimming. Because of this aspect of the sport of swimming, one is surrounded with hard working, goal orientated people, who understand what it takes to be a ‘winner’”.

Whenever each swimmer was done with their race, they would go straight to the benches to cheer on their other teammates. Max Mingst, said “I love how the sportsmanship of the swim team is so amazing this year.”

The JV swim team has practices on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday to make sure every swimmer improves or performs to the best of their ability. At every practice, the swimmers push themselves to their limits in order to become the best swimmers they can be.

Eighth grade swimmer Malcolm Tisdale said, “In each

practice, we do a variety of drills, including each stroke. All of these drills help us improve our strokes so we will not get disqualified in a race.”

Swimmers have to work hard to improve each stroke, not just their favorite one. The coaches want to help the swimmers become well rounded and be good at every stroke, not just their best one.

The JV team will continue to have meets hosted by Cobham as well as meets in Brussels and Paris. Seventh grade swimmer Quinn Whitman said, “I am really looking forward to both meets, as it will be a great time to connect with my fellow team-mates.”

Swimmers will also get the chance to qualify to swim in the ISST’s, which will be held at the Cobham for the Division 1 team and then qualify for the championship, which will be held at the London Aquatics Centre (Olympic Pool) in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park on March 6-7.

The ISSTs for swimming is an end of season meet where the fastest varsity and junior varsity swimmers compete.

Ally Larson added, “I love the swim team because we all have so much fun together even though we’re all different ages.”

Overall the JV swim team had a very effective season.

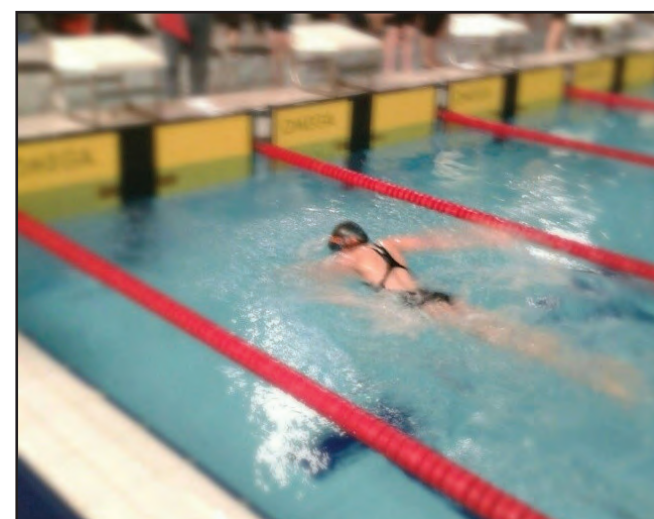


Photo by Elizabeth Mullaly

Seventh Grader Ally Larson swims the butterfly stroke on January 24 during a meet at Cobham. Swimmers spend the season improving all their strokes, not just a particular one they favor.

They all trained hard at every practice and swam as fast as they could at each meet.



# Rugby teams use optimism to power through season

Chris Reuter  
Staff Writer

The ground is a mud bath, the cold is fierce, the wind and the rain beat the ground, while players dressed just in shorts and t-shirts battle over a ball. This is a typical rugby game. This season, there are two middle school rugby teams which train every Tuesday and Thursday, rain or shine.

The U13 team have enjoyed more success in their first two games thanks to a high powered offense. They won 9-2 against Cobham on January 14 and 8-1 against TASIS on January 16.

Even though the U13 squad had many players unfamiliar with the game, they've still found a way to win. Isaac Dacy, from the U13 team said "None of us really knew how to play rugby in the beginning of the season. We've been a lot bigger than some of the teams we play and that's helped even

though we're still kind of new to the game."

Even though the team has a physical advantage, they don't rely on their size to win games. Isaac said "We focused a lot on defensive movement. We try not to have the other teams score any points because our offense is really strong."

The U14 team has had some powerful opposition, resulting in losing their first two games. The first one was against Cobham on January 14, and the team lost 8-0. The next was against Hillingdon on January 23, and the final score was 7-6.

Eighth grader Miles O'Reilly, the U14 scrum half, said "I think that the team has the potential to do very well if we train harder."

According to Miles, "Everyone on the team is very supportive and we all cheer each other on during the games. I think that there is a high level of team spirit between us."

Eighth grader Murad Jah, the U14 loose head prop, said, "The team is amazing. Even though we lost a couple

games, we have never given in."

Since rugby is a contact sport, a large part of the play is tackling. Miles said, "Tackling is one of if not the most important parts of rugby. A good tackle is one that is below the hip, one that you slide down and clamp their legs together, one that takes the force of the attacker and drives it back towards the ground, and one that you keep hold of the person you tackle."

There are many aspects of a good tackle, and tackling incorrectly has consequences. Miles said, "If you go into a tackle half-hearted or scared, you increase the chances of injury and could allow the other team to score."

Miles is not the only player who recognizes the importance of tackling. Sam Moyle, the U14 team's winger said he enjoyed tackling because "It feels great to hurt someone... in a legal way."

Murad said that tackling "feels really good because you bring someone who is a threat down."

When players get to use the skills that were honed during the practices, Eighth grader Jimmy Wafa, the U14 team winger, said, "I get myself as angry as possible and I lift weights to get myself pumped."

Eighth grader Marco Kelly, the U14 team captain, has a different technique. "I listen to music and right before a game I try to get myself into a mentality and only focus on rugby."

Similarly, eighth grader Alex McDonnell said, "I try to clear everything out of my head and focus on rugby."

After a long physical rugby game, players often feel the physical aftermath. Murad said "I feel great [after a game]. I may be in pain, but I know I inflicted more pain on others."

Marco said, "[I feel] tired and quite sore, but if the team played with all their effort then I'm happy."

Alex McDonnell said "I feel physically worn out and quite tired."

While both teams have had different seasons in terms of results, both have focused on their defense and tackling to keep other teams at bay. With impressive offenses and the defense continuing to be a focus during practice the season appears bright for the rest of the year.



Photo courtesy Mr. Ross

*U14 team captain Marco Kelly receives a pass from teammate Murad Jah during a practice at Cannons park. The work done in practice focuses on the technique so during games the risk of injury is reduced during the physical aspects of a game.*

# Ms. Spector passes on dance knowledge

Ally Larson  
Staff Writer

Ms. Jess Spector, a grade 5 and 6 health teacher and counselor, as well as a soccer and dance coach, is very passionate about dancing. From the age of four, she started dancing because of the "super cool pink tutus that all my friends were wearing," and has continued ever since.

"My parents have so many stories of the ridiculous and embarrassing steps I would create, even as young as a few years old," Ms. Spector said. "There was something about moving in time to a rhythm that fascinated me."

She danced seriously until she was 22, despite a couple of knee injuries that had stopped her soccer training, as she had been also playing soccer as well as dancing. Then she began having blood circulation problems with the same leg. There were times when she couldn't even walk or sleep because of it. Devastated, she thought she'd never be able to dance again.

With ongoing treatments, her leg is fine but she can no longer train as hard as she could before. She does feel very lucky though, as she thought she'd never be able to



Photo by Alex Gandhi

*Ms. Spector demonstrates an arabesque position. This position is used in the dance team's routines this year. Not all dances use this position, only certain types of dance, such as jazz.*

dance again.

She worked briefly as a choreographer, but then once she received her degree in counseling, she began working in schools. She was thrilled when her first headmaster asked her if she could coach the varsity dance team. In total she has now been teaching dance for 15 years.

Ms. Spector has had lots of experiences throughout her past as a dancer and coach. While working in Germany, she had to teach a dance in three different languages! She watched the dancers perform and said it was amazing to see because it felt like a huge accomplishment.

To her, one of the most amazing things about coaching is that there is always at least one dancer who performs and grows at an impossible rate, who practices inside and outside of school. "I would love for people to realize what they're capable of. With hard work they could pull it off," she said.

Devoted to dance, Ms. Spector concluded, "The fact that I can still take part in something I love so much, even after my setbacks, means everything to me. It would be hard to imagine my life without dance, and I am so lucky that I do not have to."



# Haghani shows Arsenal support with blog

Sourna Daneshvar  
Scroll Editor

Over the winter break most faculty members and stu-

dents used the vacation to rest for the second semester. However, eighth grader Mark

Haghani spent that time to start his Arsenal blog, The Fat Red.

Mark, a lifelong Arsenal fan, recalls how he first started supporting the Gunners. "My brother started supporting them, and I just fell in love with them. I had a chance to be a Chelsea fan, but I turned that down."

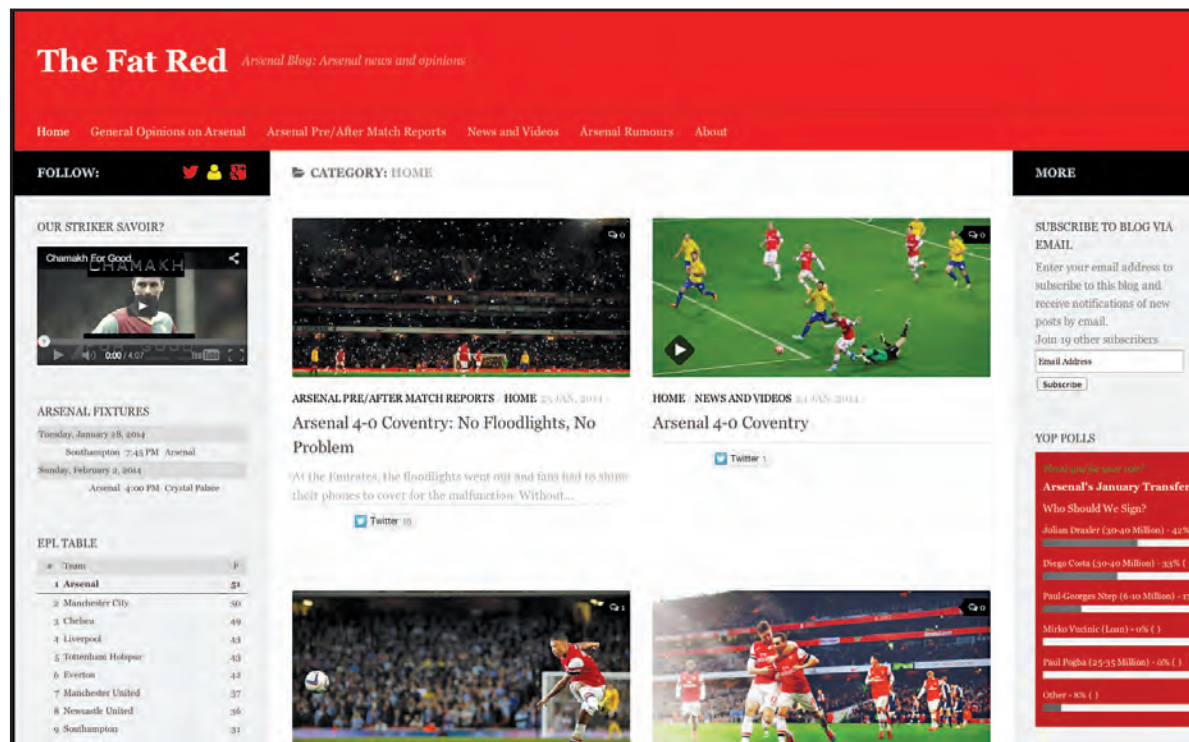
Mark explained that his lack of activity during the break is what caused him to begin the website. "I felt like I was pretty unproductive. I was looking up football news a lot, so I thought I would do something that was actually productive. I just asked my brother if he could link me up with a website, and a make a website for me so I could start blogging," Mark also said, "I've been doing everything ever since, and it's been so much fun."

Part of Mark's motivation over the winter break came from family friends the Rosenblouths, whom his family spent time with over the break "They were really into technology, and they have their own websites, so I kind of felt left out because I didn't have a website," Mark said.

Starting the blog took huge commitment.

"For the first four days I spent six, seven hours on average working on it, and updating it," explained Mark.

"I was choosing a theme which was really, really complicated. I



For each game Arsenal play, Mark posts about his pre-game and post game thoughts. He also has additional posts about Arsenal's injury news, transfer rumors and other general thoughts. The website opened December 26, 2013.

was just in a total computer coma. I was just on my computer constantly. My eyes were blood shot."

Mark started his blog by himself, and continues to work on it alone. "Everything's my work. No one has written an article for me yet," he explained. "[Working on the blog] is addicting."

While he has written every article on the blog since it was founded, it is unlikely the work will remain solely his. "There are a few people I've asked [to write], because sometimes I'm going to be away, and not be able to write," said Mark.

Now that the theme for Mark's blog is set-up, all he has to focus on is publishing articles, which is easier said than done.

Showing emotion, and convincing readers there's an actual person writing his articles is what Mark has focused on. He's tried to do this every way possible, including altering the spelling of North London rival Tottenham Hotspurs.

When Mark mentions the Spurs in his articles, he never spells them as "Spurs," preferring Sp\*rs. "It shows emotion, and shows I don't like them," explained Mark.

It is clear Mark dislikes his North London rivals, but they are not alone. Mark said, "Every other team is like an enemy to me. Any team in the Premier league or Championship I wouldn't consider writing about."

Despite not writing about other teams, he does have articles about other players. "I write about other teams' players but they have to be linked to a transfer with Arsenal for me to write an article about them."

With all the news and rumors that surround a highly publicized club

like Arsenal, there are challenges with keeping up to date with the news. He said, "I use Twitter, Daily Mail, and Bleacher Report. Those are my three main sites. When I'm on the bus I load up 15, 20 pages, and read them [on the way] back to my house. I have to get up to date with everything."

Getting all the news he needs for his favorite club is a large task; however putting his opinion on it, not as difficult. "I have my opinion on it because I've always been very opinionated when it comes to anything, especially football," Mark said.

His commitment to The Fat Red, and writing about Arsenal, has led to better results on an academic level. He explained, "English is my weakest subject, and I'm now becoming a better writer."

While Mark has spent a lot of time to deliver well-informed and well-written articles on his blog, he understands there needs to be other items on his blog. The blog has a league table, all of the latest results with the winner highlighted in green, a photo gallery, videos, polls, a comment section, and links to the The Fat Red's Twitter page (@thefatred), and his most recent posts.

Mark says he includes these features because other blogs he likes had one of these elements, but not all. He hopes viewers will enjoy not having to read different blogs to see all the information they want.

This extra mile got positive responses from eighth grade subscribers and fellow Arsenal fans Jack Ryan and Baker Fox. Baker said, "I like the videos about the players he thinks should join."

Jack said, "[The blog] is well or-

ganized. It covers great stories and topics."

Mark has received support from his family and students at ASL. He still wants to expand the blog. He said "ASL's not my target. I'm targeting to get loads of people from everywhere, I have 53 different countries so far look at [my blog]. I just want to get so many unique visitors, and get trophies for the best blog." These are goals for Mark, but he appreciates that some things are long-term.

His most prominent way of raising publicity is through Twitter. The blog's page has around 120 followers not from ASL, "I think social media is just so big that everything has to go through there, and that's the way to get people looking at my blog," he said.

Maintaining his blog does not come without taking away his time, something he used to have. Mark said "It was really, really easy [to work on the blog] in the Winter Break. I was writing two articles a day. I just had loads of time, but now that I'm back at school I have to concentrate on three things; the blog, school work, and sports that I actually play." He added, "It's gradually getting harder and harder. It takes up all my free time now."

While the blog requires lots of attention, it's not something Mark regrets. He advises others interested in starting a blog to start the blog up in a break because it takes a lot of time.

School breaks are a great time to rest from academic work, and recharge your batteries for the rest of the school year. As Mark Haghani proved, it's also a great time to start a blog.