

ASPIRE

THE MARSH ACADEMY NEWSLETTER TERM 4 - APRIL 2011

Badminton
Trip Heads to
Azincourt



New Pedestrian
Crossing Opens
to Keep Our
Students Safe

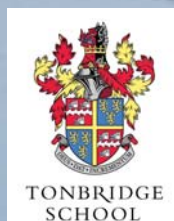
Academy Achieves Kent
Safe Schools Status

Marsh Academy recognised
as one of most improved
schools in the country

Romney Marsh
Skills Festival
Launched

Year 7 & 8 Go
Back to the
Future!

Microsoft



Who's Who in the Academy

Tracy Luke

Principal

Marion Emptage

Head of School

Lin Burrows

Shaun Simmons

Vice Principals

Robert Bristow

Luke Magee

Richard

Robinson

Assistant Principals

Elena Cooper

Blue Mini-School

Leader

Alyson Shaw

Green Mini-School

Leader

Lesley Palmer

Red Mini-School

Leader

Jim Grant

Yellow Mini-School

Leader

Pamela Upton

Head of Post-16

A Message from the Principal & Head of School

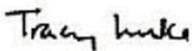
Dear Parents & Carers

Welcome to the new edition of Aspire, which comes at the end of another busy term at The Marsh Academy! We've seen students rewarded with a performance by pop star Jodie Connor, a record-breaking World Maths Day, well-being sessions for our Post-16 students, a trip to Azincourt for our Badminton Team and a dip in the sea by our Red Mini-School staff! Congratulations also go to several of our students who are receiving both regional and national recognition in golf, indoor rowing, swimming and badminton.

We were especially proud this term to be commended by the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust for being one of the fastest improving schools in the country. We also received our Kent Safe Schools accreditation in recognition of the work we do to prevent bullying and keep our students safe.

We wish you a very relaxing Easter break, and best of luck to our year 10-13 students who should be getting going with their revision over the holiday! We look forward to seeing you all back in two weeks.

Best wishes



Tracy Luke
Principal



Marion Emptage
Head of School

Sign Up to the Mailing List!

How did you access the newsletter today? If you went via our website but would prefer to have the newsletter come straight to your inbox every term, sign up to the mailing list!

Just send your e-mail address to LSmith@marshacademy.org.uk with the subject line "Newsletter", and it will be sent to you as soon as it's available each term!

To keep up to date throughout the term, keep an eye on our "Latest News" page at www.marshacademy.org.uk/latest-news.

INFORMATION

Marsh Academy, Station Road, New Romney, TN28 8BB
t: 01797 364593 :: w: www.marshacademy.org.uk :: **Absence Line:** 01797 363594

Back to School: Tuesday 26th April 2011

Bank Holiday Weekend: Friday 29th April to Monday 2nd May 2011

May Half-Term: Monday 30th May to Friday 3rd June 2011

MARSH ACADEMY ONE OF MOST IMPROVED SCHOOLS IN COUNTRY



The Marsh Academy has received national recognition for achieving some of the fastest improving GCSE results in the country. The Academy was commended for being one of the most improved schools nationally, increasing the proportion of young people gaining five or more GCSEs at grade A*-C by 35 percentage points between 2007 and 2010.

A celebratory dinner was held by the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust (SSAT) at the Royal College of Physicians on Wednesday 23rd March to reward those schools that had improved the most from 2007-2010.

The Marsh Academy replaced Southlands Community Comprehensive in September 2007. Results have improved over those three years from 36% of students gaining at least 5 A*-C grade GCSEs in August 2007 to 71% of students achieving this milestone in 2010.

Tracy Luke, Executive Principal, said: "We are delighted to have been recognised nationally for the achievements of our students and staff. Everyone at the Marsh Academy has worked incredibly hard since we opened in 2007 to raise standards and ensure that our students have every opportunity to achieve their potential."

Marion Emptage, Head of School, said: "This recognises the strong start that we have made as an Academy, and we will continue to strive for excellence. Congratulations to all of the staff and students at the Academy who have worked so hard to deliver great results."

Elizabeth Reid, chief executive of the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust, said: "Congratulations to all schools and their students where GCSE results have made dramatic improvements. Schools are giving young people greater opportunities and helping them secure the qualifications they need to go to jobs, college or university."

BACH TO THE FUTURE!

Year 7 and 8 students received an introduction to all things orchestral this term when Kent Music's "Bach to the Future" roadshow visited the Marsh Academy.

The roadshow aimed to show students the importance of music in everyday life, as well as encouraging students to take up learning an instrument.

Starting with a medley of well-known classical music pieces, the four musicians delivering the roadshow demonstrated to students how each family of instruments in an orchestra made its sound. To highlight this, a primitive brass instrument was fashioned from a hosepipe and a funnel, a string instrument from

a bucket and broomstick, whilst a McDonalds straw became a woodwind instrument!

Students then had the opportunity to put their voices - another important instrument - to good use with a singalong to "I'm a Believer" from Shrek! This led into a series of film themes, from Pirates of the Caribbean to Harry Potter, to demonstrate the way that music could be used to create atmosphere and dramatic effect.

The roadshow was thoroughly enjoyed by both year groups, and was a fascinating demonstration of the importance and relevance of orchestral music in everyday life.

IN BRIEF

29 Year 11 students were rewarded in February for achieving their English or Maths GCSEs in their re-sits. Those students who had achieved at least a Grade C were rewarded with pizza and a film on a Friday afternoon, which proved to be an extremely popular reward!

Congratulations to the Year 9 ICT Diploma Group - all of those who took a recent exam passed, with 2 Cs, 7 Bs and 5 As! Connor Dunne, Jonah Edwards, Chloe Tilly and Ed Goddard also passed a Functional Skills exam in ICT which means that they now have half a GCSE already, only halfway through Year 9 - a fantastic achievement!

The 6 students in each year in each mini-school with the most merits to date received £5 each this term as a reward for this excellent, ongoing effort and hard work. Congratulations to all of those students!

Well done to everyone who helped to raise £922.85 for Comic Relief!



PEDESTRIAN CROSSING NOW OPEN!



A new pedestrian crossing at the Marsh Academy has been formally opened and dedicated to the memory of Cllr William Richardson, who campaigned for the crossing for several years before passing away last November. Cllr Richardson's wife, Judith, said: "It was a project very close to his heart because he was concerned about road safety outside the school. I was pleased and proud to see it dedicated." Principal Tracy Luke said: "The safety of our students is extremely important, so we are very pleased that this crossing will ensure that students have a safe route to the bus stop or to their homes."

REACHING FOR THE STARS

Study skills organisation "Learning Performance" spent a full day at the Academy on 17th March 2011 to work with Gifted and Talented Year 9 students and Year 10 students who are working towards a C grade in Maths and English GCSEs. The Year 9 session was entitled "Reach for the Stars" and helped students

with study skills and revision techniques to give them the best chance of achieving their potential. The "Hit the Mark" session for Year 10 students was designed to prepare students for their forthcoming exams and make sure that they had the skills that they needed to achieve the best grade that they could.



TERM-TIME HOLIDAYS

We would like to remind parents and carers that following Attendance and Behaviour Service advice, it is Marsh Academy policy not to authorise holidays in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. In the event of exceptional circumstances, please ask for an "Application for Leave of Absence" form. If this absence is not authorised and you still take your child out of school, the Attendance and Behaviour Service is likely to issue a Penalty Notice of £50 per child.

This applies to all years and is because research shows that having attendance of 95% or more at school is one of the best ways of ensuring that a student achieves their potential grades in coursework and exams.

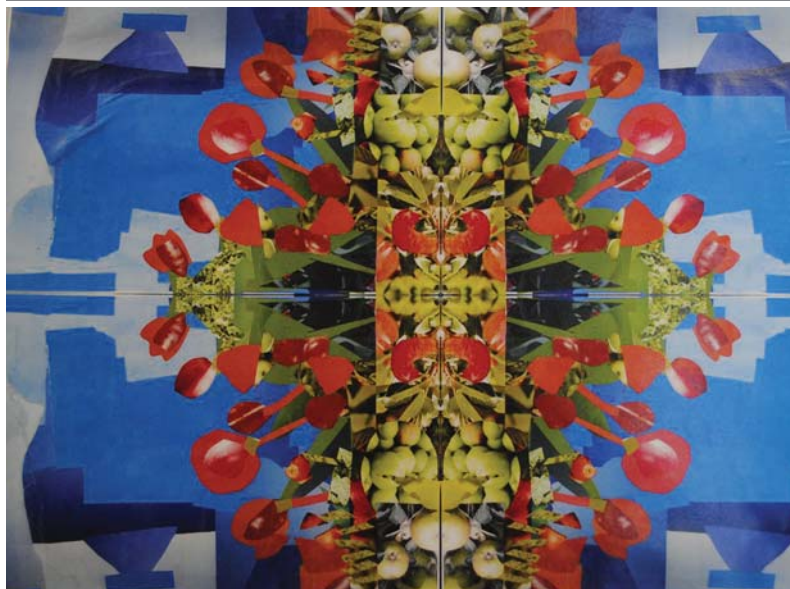
ROAD SAFETY

On 22nd March, Year 7 and 8 students received a talk from "The Man from the Council" on road safety. The performance was delivered by Theatre in Education, and featured a serious presentation on road safety and pollution from an 'expert' - however, his serious style was somewhat undermined by his unruly assistant! The combination of serious messages and humorous presentation made the session a huge success with the students, and a final quiz showed how many of the presentation's important messages had hit home, including:

- using public transport or sharing lifts to reduce pollution
- Not using an iPod or mobile phone when crossing the road
- The importance of helmets and brightly coloured jackets when riding bikes.

UNSUITABLE SWEETS & DRINKS

Recently we have had a number of students arriving at school having been to shops nearby purchasing sweets and drinks that are not suitable for breakfast and cause hyperactivity which is not helpful in the classroom. Examples are caffeine drinks, the brain licker sweet and large gobstoppers and lollipops. As well as caffeine and E number chemicals, these drinks and sweets also contain much more sugar/corn syrup/glucose than a traditional sweet, which is not good for young people, and we would ask you to ask your children not to buy them. We will confiscate these items if students bring them on site.



KS4 Artist of the Month
George Brabham

ST NICHOLAS CAREERS WEEK



Damian Collins MP and PE teacher Andre Double with pupils

Year 6 students from St Nicholas Primary School in New Romney turned into sports broadcasters on 18th March when staff from the Marsh Academy delivered a session on "careers in sport" as part of the school's careers week.

The Academy's School Sports Co-ordinator, Andre Double, outlined a wide range of careers in sport to students, from PE teacher or physiotherapist to sports journalist or retail, to show students that a career in sport isn't just for the top athletes! Pupils then organised themselves into broadcast teams to produce a sports news programme, reporting on everything from the cricket world cup to the 2012 Olympics and interviewing "sports stars" along the way. Students worked together to produce their headlines and

script before rehearsing and producing "St Nich's Sports News"! Some students took their places as newsreaders or sports stars – Steven Gerrard, Lisa Dobriskey and Lionel Messi all had starring roles – whilst others operated cameras and held cue cards.

Damian Collins, Member of Parliament for Folkestone and Hythe, dropped into the session to see how students were getting on and was very impressed by the work he saw. He said "It's great to see the Marsh Academy and St Nicholas Primary School working together to get pupils thinking about their future careers options early, and they did an excellent job putting together their sports news broadcasts. I think we definitely have some sports presenters in the making on Romney Marsh!"



WORLD MATHS DAY



A BIG thank you to everyone who took part in this year's World Maths Day: it was a huge success with over 1 million students from 191 countries taking part! The total correct answers this year amounted to 428,598,214 with Marsh Academy students correctly answering 114,173 questions - 4,111 more than last year! Congratulations to you all!

Overall Winner

Ashley Fletcher - Year 11
2468 correct answers

Top Score in One Minute

Michael Dabin
48 correct answers

Best Year 7

Roy Cuff
1015 correct answers

Best Year 8

Jack Williams
1130 correct answers

Best Year 9

Jonah Edwards
699 correct answers

Best Year 10

Kieran Sullivan
1174 correct answers

UNIQUE SKILLS FESTIVAL COMES TO THE MARSH



A unique skills festival will be held at the Marsh Academy on 6th and 7th May 2011 to give local students the chance to discover the wealth of career prospects on their doorsteps.

The Festival, which is a joint venture between Kent County Council, the Marsh Academy, the Livery Companies Skills Council and Hadlow College, will bring together young people, experts from the local business community and the London Livery Companies, and will offer students the chance to take part in hands-on activities whilst finding out about employment opportunities and training. There will be a focus on six key employment sectors: rural economy; energy and engineering; construction; IT and telecoms; fashion; and marine and maritime.

The festival will also feature

an exhibition that will be open to students, parents and the public, exploring issues around the history and development of Romney Marsh, the City of London Livery Companies, apprenticeships, careers guidance and more.

540 Year 8 and 9 students from the Marsh Academy and other schools in Ashford and Shepway who are choosing their Key Stage 4 options will have the chance to attend the fair on 6th May; they will choose a sector to focus on and spend time speaking to young people already working in that sector, as well as taking part in activities and finding out about training and employment opportunities.

On 7th May, 90 Post-16 students from Kent and East Sussex will travel to the Academy to take part in full-

day, extended masterclasses in the sector of their choice to get a real feel for working within that sector.

The Festival was formally launched on 17th March at the House of Lords by Lord Howard of Lympne. At the launch, Damian Collins MP said: "The Romney Marsh Skills Festival is a wonderful opportunity for young people and their parents to learn more about the array of skills, training and careers opportunities that are available. It is a great way of raising young people's ambitions and providing new and exciting options as they consider their next steps into work or training.

"The innovative link with the City Livery Companies adds an exciting new dimension that will present a tremendous mix of new and traditional skills which I hope will inspire and excite young people as they make important decisions about their future learning and careers"

Robert Alston, Chair of Governors at the Academy, said: "The Marsh Academy is very excited to host the Romney Marsh Skills Festival, the first event of its kind in Kent, which will help not only our own students but young people from across the area to make the best choices for their futures. We hope that it will be the first of many!"

For more information on the event, please keep checking our website, www.marshacademy.org.uk.



I-r: Robert Alston, Chair of Governors; Marion Emptage, Head of School; Lord Howard of Lympne; Paul Carter, Leader of Kent County Council; Tracy Luke, Executive Principal; Simon Tallis, Head Boy; and Damian Collins, MP for Folkestone and Hythe

GRACE IS SWIMMING CHAMP!



Year 8 student Grace will be heading to Ankara, Turkey at the end of April as one of the England representatives at the Turkish Childrens' Sports festival. Grace will be representing her club, East Invicta Excel Swimming Squad. This follows her selection to play in the ASA Regional Waterpolo Championships in Manchester at the end of March, which was for girls born in 1997. The team put in a strong performance to come second, and Grace is pictured above with her silver medal. We wish Grace well for her trip to Turkey!

POST-16 WELL-BEING MORNING

Post-16 students were treated to a range of experiences on 30th March as part of a well-being morning. The morning was a great opportunity for students to learn how to relax and look after themselves ahead of their exams.

Students took part in Tai Chi and relaxation sessions, learnt about healthy eating, received massages and were given makeovers and manicures by staff from The Body Shop.

Students found the sessions thoroughly enjoyable and particularly welcome as exams and coursework deadlines approach! Year 12 students

Nikita was a fan of the relaxation techniques, saying "they helped to clear my mind and made me feel very calm", whilst Katya (17) said "the makeover was fabulous!"



FREE COURSES FOR PARENTS

Two free courses for parents will be held by Kent Adult Education after the Easter holidays at the Marsh Academy.

"Understanding Your Teenager" is a five week course running every Tuesday from 26th April from 6pm-8pm. The course will look at ways of communicating with teenagers; how teenagers develop; the pressures on parents and teenagers; expectations and boundaries; alcohol, drugs and sex in the teenage years; and problem solving.

"Let's Talk About Bullying" will take place on Thursday 28th April from 6pm-8pm and will help parents to learn more about bullying and support strategies; recognise the difference between bullying and learning social skills as part of growing up; recognise common signs of being a bully or being bullied; and explore ways of supporting and communicating with the child.

To book your place on either course, please contact Louise Smith at the Academy on 01797 364593 or e-mail LSmith@MarshAcademy.org.uk.





KS3 Artist of the Month
Alistair Collard

HOME
TO
SCHOOL
TRANSPORT



Kent County Council would like your views on proposed changes to discretionary elements of home to school transport provision. To take part in the consultation, please visit www.kent.gov.uk/transportconsultation by Friday 6th May 2011, or call 08458 247247 for a paper copy of the consultation.



NEW BUILD UPDATE

Our new building is really starting to take shape! The roof is currently being constructed and external cladding and brickwork are underway, including windows going in. Internal mechanical and electrical works and internal drylining have also been started. Work will carry on over Easter with gas, water and British Telecom trenches being brought into the site over the holiday.



Year 8 Technology students have this term been working hard on automatons - animals that move using a crank mechanism. Jessica Carr produced the excellent automata on the left, whilst Coral, Sasha, Charlie, Jacob, Elliot and Jack (above) really impressed their teachers with their work!

KENT SAFE SCHOOLS AWARD

The Marsh Academy is very proud to have received the Kent Safe Schools Award. The accreditation, which is awarded by Kent County Council, recognises the school's work to ensure the safety of all students within the school and in particular its work to tackle bullying. In order to achieve the accreditation, the Academy submitted a portfolio outlining the school's strong and consistent approach to anti-bullying work, and the evidence contained within this portfolio was praised by Kent County Council for its high quality.

The Academy has a wide range of schemes and procedures in place to keep students safe and to tackle bullying, including:

- Incorporating the teaching of developing positive relationships and self-confidence into the curriculum across a range of subjects;
- Delivering "Think You Know" Internet safety training to all Year 7 students;
- Themed lessons in Tutorial, Project-Based Learning, Art, Music and Drama during Anti-Bullying Week;
- Training students to be Peer Mentors to support younger students, particularly in their transition to secondary school;
- Working with over 24

outside agencies to address specific issues;

- Holding Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education lessons focussing on a wide range of issues, from emotional intelligence to bullying;
- Ensuring that clear anti-bullying and complaints policies are available online and at the school for parents, carers and students to view and use;
- Using restorative methods to improve relationships between students; and
- Making sure that students are aware that their Student Development Leader is always there if they have any issues that they need to discuss.

A study by the National Federation for Educational Research (NFER) in 2010 found that, as a result of this work, students at the Marsh Academy felt safer at school than students do, on average, at other schools both in the local area and nationally.

Assistant Principal Robert Bristow, who is in charge of safeguarding and child protection for the Academy, said: "We are delighted to have received the Kent Safe Schools accreditation in recognition of all of the work that we do to make sure that our students are safe and happy at the Academy."



Assistant Principal Robert Bristow with Year 10 Student Mentors

BOX CLEVER HELP BRING SHAKESPEARE TO LIFE!



Theatre group Box Clever came to the Academy in March to deliver workshops and performances designed to get students interested in Shakespeare and to bring his work to life!

Year 9 students attended a performance of Romeo and Juliet that was specifically devised to help students to understand as well as enjoy it, for example by fusing contemporary language and the original text.

Year 7 and 8 students took part in an interactive presentation that introduced them to a wide range of Shakespeare works and helped to make them relevant. The session also helped students to look at the ways in which Shakespeare wrote, for example through the use of metaphors and alliteration.

Both performances were a fantastic way of making Shakespeare more relevant to students, making it both easier to understand and more enjoyable to study, and students thoroughly enjoyed their time with the Box Clever actors.



JODIE CONNOR VISITS ACADEMY!



Marsh Academy students were delighted to be treated to a performance by Jodie Connor this term! Those students in the Academy who had made the most progress in their English and Maths were chosen to be rewarded with the concert.

Jodie Connor shot to fame last year when she appeared as the guest vocalist on Roll Deep's number one single "Good Times" and she released her debut solo single, "Now or Never" in January. She is now promoting her new single, "Bring It", which features Tinchy Stryder

and is currently in the iTunes Top 40.

During an hour with students, Jodie performed her three singles plus a fourth track, "Lover Like You", as well as answering questions and signing autographs.

LEARNING FROM HISTORY

This term, 80 students heard testimony from Holocaust Survivor, Gena Turgel, as part of a visit organised by the Holocaust Educational Trust (HET). The testimony was followed by a question and answer session to enable pupils to better understand the nature of the Holocaust and to explore its lessons in more depth. Richard Robinson, Vice Principle said: "It is a privilege for us to welcome Gena Turgel to our school and her testimony will remain a powerful reminder of the horrors so many experienced. We are grateful to the Holocaust Educational Trust for co-ordinating the visit and we hope that by hearing Gena's testimony, it will encourage our students to learn from the lessons of the Holocaust and make a positive difference in their own lives."

POLARBEAR

Spoken word artist Polarbear spent time with students this term to look at the ways in which writing could be used as a form of expression.

He described a blank page as 'a piece of snow to be played with' and encouraged the students to find their own narrative voice and mode of expression. He also spoke about the importance of revealing who they are through their words and their expressions and helped the students to become more confident in expressing themselves in a creative way.

Polarbear also asked Year 11 Sociology students to think about an event in the life of a person and how to interpret the significance of the experiences that they were having and how to make sense of these experiences as sociologists.

Congratulations to the Year 8 Girls Hockey Team, who made it to the semi-finals of the Kent Hockey Tournament! The team beat three other teams to make it that far, which was an excellent show for their first tournament!

RED SCHOOL DIP!



Red Mini-School staff went the extra mile for charity this term when they went for an April Fool's Day dip in the sea! Staff were raising money for the Red Mini-School charity, Help for Heroes, and despite a very low tide and chilly weather, all were still smiling when they made it back to dry land!

SPORT

SHANNON IS TOP ROWER!

Marsh Academy pupils took on students from across Britain on 4th March when they took part in the 5th annual National Junior Indoor Rowing Championships. The Academy was the only school in Shepway to be represented at the Championships, and all 9 students who took part put on an impressive show to make the Academy proud!

Year 8 student Shannon Blackman (13) kept spectators on the edge of their seats as she battled 153 other students in the Year 8 Girls race, eventually securing a bronze medal in a race that saw the top 3 separated by only 3 metres! Shannon rowed 752 metres in three minutes – an impressive achievement given that she only took up rowing last November! This wasn't the first time Shannon had been involved in a tense race – at the Kent Indoor Rowing

Championships in February, where students qualified for the national competition, the race for the gold medal saw Shannon win by just one metre! PE teacher Andre Double, who has been coaching the team, said: "Huge congratulations go to Shannon, who is now officially one of the top indoor rowers in the country for her age. Incredible!"

Other top results were Tom Curd, who finished 15th out of 143 students in the Year 9 Boys category, and Trish McKinley, who finished 6th in the Year 12 Girls race. Tom rowed 1089 in 4 minutes, whilst Trish rowed 2000 metres in 8 minutes 14 seconds. Congratulations also go to Peter Banks, Grace Walker, Ben Procter, Isaac Tompkins, Amy Briffitt and Andy Crisford who achieved excellent results in their categories!



Year 8 Student Shannon, who is now one of the top indoor rowers in the country in her age group!

MARSH CRICKET STAR!



Ex-student James Tredwell was the talk of the cricket world in March when he put in an impressive performance as part of the England cricket team against the West Indies in the World Cup. After taking four wickets to help keep England's World Cup campaign alive, Tredwell was named man of the match! Can you spot James in the early stages of his cricket career in the photo above?

BADMINTON

Following a successful trial in March, two of our students will now be representing the South Foreland Badminton Team - the regional badminton team for the Hythe, Folkestone and Ashford area! Rhys Morison (year 10) and year 9 student Kvitka Mykhanchuk will be representing the South Foreland team for the first time during the Easter holidays, playing at the Inter-Regional Badminton event at the University of Kent. Both students have put in fantastic performances playing badminton for the Academy, and this is a great opportunity for them to polish their games even more! Congratulations to them both!

BADMINTON TEAM GOES INTERNATIONAL!

The Marsh Academy Badminton Team went international this month when it travelled to Azincourt in northern France to take on the local team, Fruges Badminton Club! Students stayed at the Academy's residential facility in Azincourt, using it as a base for a weekend of sports, culture and team building.

Fifteen students took part in the trip from 11th to 13th March, which was arranged by teachers Simon Tse and Andre Double to reward the team for a year of incredibly hard work as well as to help build team spirit. The first night saw the team play a fixture against Fruges Badminton Club, where the students were made to feel extremely welcome – they were even called upon to help the local students practise their English! Fruges won the match with 21 games to 18 – a great show for the Academy's first international fixture!

The second day of the trip allowed students to take in some French culture, with a trip to the Palais des Beaux

Arts in Lille, the largest French museum outside of Paris, followed by a lunch of escargot. This proved so popular with students that parents were presented with bags of escargot as souvenirs when the team returned home! The day was rounded off with a circus skills session to help students with their team work skills and uncover hidden talents, from plate spinning to diabolo tricks.

Students also had the chance to think about their goals as part of the badminton team and what they believed made a good sportsman. One student commented: "I don't think it's just talent that makes good players, I think it's mostly practice, and having the opportunity to practice" – a great attitude towards the game!

Teacher Simon Tse, who set up the team at the start of the school year and who coaches the students 3 times a week, said "we all had a fantastic time in France and the students really made the most of their time there. We can't wait to go back!"



TABLE TENNIS

The Marsh Academy entered twelve students into the annual Kent County Cup for table tennis in February.

Five girls from Year 9 and seven boys from Years 8/9/10 entered this knockout singles competition. Each played in the group stages and progressed to the knock-out phase of the competition, playing four matches each in total and having a very enjoyable time in the process!

ENGLAND GOLF SUCCESS FOR OLLIE!



Year 9 student Ollie Daws took part in his first matches as part of the England Under-16 Boys Golf Team on 5-6 March at Hawkstone Park in Shropshire. The team was up against the Midlands team, and not only was the England team victorious overall but Ollie also won his singles match! The Academy is delighted to be sponsoring Ollie to help him to continue with these fantastic achievements!