New West Exe website launches

Where do I go to find term dates for West Exe? How can I find out what my child is studying in Maths at the moment? How do I know the latest news in PE at West Exe?

From February 2010, the answer to all these questions and much more besides is the West Exe website. We have completely redesigned and updated our website and we are confident that this is the best place to find information about the school and about your child’s education.

The new look website is at [www.westexetc.devon.sch.uk](http://www.westexetc.devon.sch.uk). Alongside information about curriculum, extra-curricular activities, specialisms, and celebration of success, you can find the latest school news and departmental blogs. Copies of the latest West Exe Community newsletter can be read online, and instructions for students to log in to their computer network accounts from home. The daily bulletin for students will continue to be available online, as we know that parents find this valuable. The photo gallery will display photos of recent life at West Exe. We will also be adding e-copies of important letters home and other documents.

We are also now on Twitter! You can sign up to follow us on Twitter and receive updates from West Exe on your computer or on your mobile. For example, did you know that when we had to close in January, this was posted on the website each morning? This will be available immediately to our Twitter followers, ensuring that you are always fully up to date. To sign up to follow us you will first need to create your own free Twitter account at [twitter.com](http://twitter.com). You can then start to follow WestExeTC and receive our news. Click on ‘Find people’ and type WestExeTC into the search box. Click on our username and you will receive our news. You can also sign up to receive messages via text on your mobile ‘phone.

We hope that you will come to use the website as your first port of call for information and advice about West Exe Technology College, and we will value your feedback and ideas for continued development and improvement. There is a link on the website to contact us with your suggestions.

Vicki Carah, Deputy Headteacher, and Stephen Berridge, ICT Projects Manager
On Friday 15th January, students in Years 10 and 11 who have ambitions of working in the NHS were lucky enough to go on an open day at Plymouth University to learn more about some of the different jobs available to them in the healthcare service.

We started the day by getting an introduction in the huge lecture theatre to the building and the different types of nursing available. We also got to meet the two other schools sharing the event with us: Westfields and Paignton.

During the day we went to different rooms and were introduced to five different jobs in the healthcare service: Child Nursing; Adult Nursing; Midwifery; Mental Health Nursing; and the Operating Department practice. All the demonstrations were interesting and interactive. We only got shown a small fraction of what we could do as there is such a variety of treatment available in the NHS but most of us now have an insight into what we will do and some of us enjoyed activities that we wouldn’t have even thought about doing.

All in all it was a great day and a great experience for all.

Lloyd W, Year 10
Q: How many Y10 BTEC Public Services students can you get inside an A4 piece of paper?
A: The whole class!

This is just one of the many teambuilding activities Y10 BTEC Public Services have taken part in since they started the two year certificate course in September. Other activities have included motivational exercises with the RAF, teambuilding activities at Exeter University as well as hosting visitors from the Army. The course has broad aims including preparation for any student with an interest in any of the armed or emergency uniformed services or for those interested in developing team building and problem solving skills. So far the class have finished the first unit Public Service Skills which has highlighted the key qualities needed for effective teamwork and leadership. Recently the students had to prepare and deliver individual presentations to demonstrate their knowledge and skills of effective communication. Future units of study will involve planning and taking part in adventurous activities and sporting events and investigating the importance of fitness in the uniformed public services.

Mark Whitehead
BTEC Public Services course tutor
Years 9 & 10 students from West Exe Technology College were lucky enough to get hands-on experience of hybrid technological innovation thanks to a visit to Ashwoods Engineering in Willand. The lucky students were guided around the engineering environment and were able to see first hand how the local company is doing its bit to reduce the carbon emissions of light commercial vehicles. Students witnessed the installation of the Ashwoods Hybrid Drive which can be retro fitted to any vehicle. It uses a battery and motor/generator system to store energy from braking and converts it back into power to assist in driving the vehicle when travelling uphill. Managing director Lloyd Ash commented, “We were more than happy to support West Exe when they requested the visit – after all, the students are the designers, inventors & engineers of tomorrow and we are keen to do our bit to encourage them to go further in the industry.” He also added, “There has been a real interest in the work we are doing here at Ashwoods recently and our hybrid solution is currently being trialled by a number of large national companies with their delivery and utility vans. We’ve a really promising future and are proud that we have been able to have so many of our components made within a thirty mile radius of us. It just goes to show the skilled engineering companies that are still out there locally.”

Students enjoyed the trip, with one commenting “I can’t wait to apply for my work experience here!” Thanks to Brad, Lloyd, Mark & Henry for making the visit possible and such a success.

For more information about Ashwoods, please visit www.ashwoods.org

Kevin Hadley, Head of Technology
West Exe Robotics Club goes national

It has been a pleasure for us, in our early years of teaching, to be involved in the after school Robotics club. We meet on Tuesdays after school in the Autumn term. The aim of the club is to engage students in robotics by building their own robots, whilst developing their personal learning and thinking skills and also to encourage learning through fun!

This year we formed two teams and decided to enter the regional leg of the Lego First League. The Competition was held in Callington, and on 7th December 2009, eleven students from Years 7, 8 & 9 along with Mr Wigmore (Technology, and the brains behind the project!) and Miss Brown (Science) set off with anticipation. We didn’t really know what to expect so we were optimistic but realistic at the same time. There were two elements to the competition: the robot itself, and a presentation about transportation. Both teams performed incredibly well and at the end we came home with three trophies and qualification for the national championships! (As well as a ever so slightly weepy, and immensely proud Mr Wigmore!)

As Far South West Regional winners, we were invited to the British National Finals at Loughborough University taking part with the other twenty-four winners.

The 2009/10 challenge was about transportation. In the preparation for a tournament, each team had to:

1. Build a robot from LEGO Mindstorms and program it to take part in the robot game.
2. Research a project about transportation in a community defined by the team.

At a tournament, each team must:

1. Run their robot against another in the robot game.
2. Explain their robot’s technical features (engineering and programming) to a team of judges.
3. Deliver a presentation of their project about transportation to a team of judges.
4. Discuss teamwork and the process of working on the challenge with a team of judges.

The competition was a huge event, with most of the teams taking 10 members; it had 250 competitors and at least another 250 staff, judges and supporters, the prize we all wanted to win was a trip to the world festival in Atlanta. Worldwide over 100,000 students take part. The opening ceremony was a fairly calm affair and we were keen to get down to our final preparations and perfecting of the robot, but the excitement soon rose. The students split into various roles with concentrating on the robot and others on the presentation. The presentation went very well. The robot competed three times and unfortunately we did not make the ‘Cut’ for the quarter finals, there was disappointment but satisfaction in knowing that we were one of the top teams in the whole country.

We look forward to the 2010 Challenge. Hopefully we can look forward to being Far South West Champions again and go to the finals next year and beyond! And yes, it was fun!

Paul Wigmore, Technology Department, and Stephanie Brown
Congratulations go to Kim M, Hannah B, Becky A, Sam E, Jade W and Kingsley C for their innovative idea of organising a Prom themed Fashion Show in aid of the chosen college charity, Help for Heroes.

The group got together and wrote an action plan detailing how the event would be organised, how they would collate prizes for a raffle, where they would hire the prom dresses and evening suits, a price guide for refreshments and how they would go about auditioning for models. This was then presented to Mrs Green, Assistant Headteacher who agreed the idea would not only be an excellent way of students working collaboratively together, but also a great way of raising money.

The wheels were put into motion, letters were written to a range of companies asking for prize donations, Moss Bros and Catwalk 09 were approached for the hiring of dresses and suits, Dunstans for floral displays, tickets and posters were designed.
Year 11 students were auditioned to become models, a group of Year 11 musicians approached for playing background music and Emily A to sing the opening song.
After several planning meetings, careful choreographed music, fittings for dresses and suits and model rehearsals, Friday 11th December 2009 finally arrived, this was the night they had all been working hard towards.
Year 11 students attending Exeter College for hairdressing styled the models’ hair and Sue and Karen, the owners of Catwalk 09 arrived to help the models into their dresses. All models were extremely excited at the prospect of parading down the catwalk looking elegant and radiant, an amazing opportunity to not only have fun, but to raise lots of money for a worthwhile cause.
The evening was a huge success, everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves and an amazing total of £750.00 was raised. Well done to everyone involved.

Marie Gane, PA to the Executive Headteacher

Special thanks to Moss Bros, Catwalk 09, Dunstans, and to Woodlands, Café 36, Catwalk 09, Game Stores, Bicton Park, Exeter Rugby Club, Exeter City FC, and B & Q, for donations for raffle prizes
West Exe was delighted to have the outstanding achievements of its students recognised at the Excellence in Exeter awards ceremony held at the Great Hall at the end of last term. Students from Years 7 and 10 received awards from Academic Achievement, Sporting and Artistic Endeavour and Service in the Community.

Awards also went to last year’s Year 11 students:
Paul A
Mason K
Lukas M
Susannah C
Anne W
Stacey T
Glen W
Emma B
Robert B
Pollyanna H

Year 11 BTEC Drama students performed a most polished excerpt from *Othello*, well received by the large audience of family, friends and distinguished guests. West Exe Technology College also received a commendation for the Excellence in Exeter Community Award, celebrating the outstanding achievement in raising over £7,500 last year for the Devon Air Ambulance Trust. This was a very special night where the message that excellence was something to be proud of was certainly broadcast loud and clear!

Congratulations to our awards winners who were:

**Academic Achievement**
Milo S
Kameron P
Kiera P
Emma H
Jasmine C
Liam T
Lloyd W
Alex H

**Sporting and Artistic Endeavour**
Sophie May C-C
Max B
Daniel S
Sharna R
Emily B
Harriet C-P

**Service in Your Community**
Alex G
Michael S
Hannah B
Chloe H
Abbey D
Emily S
Tim W

*Julia Green, Assistant Headteacher*
On January 27th, six Year 8 students represented West Exe Technology College at the Holocaust Memorial Day event being held at the Exeter Guildhall. HMD 2010 was a very special event as it marked the 65th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz.

For two weeks, the students gave up their lunchtimes to create a display that would educate people about the Holocaust and reflect the theme of HMD2010 - the Legacy of Hope.

They read books and websites and then chose images, poems and music to include in their presentation. The students’ hard work certainly paid off as the final display was very impressive with display boards, laptops, a CD player of interviews and even an i-pod with podcasts.

During the event, the students were a real credit to the College as they talked to members of the public and the Jewish community. People attending the event were very impressed with the students and the quality of their display. There was also much media interest in the students and their work. Like professionals used to dealing with the media, the students gave interviews to the Express and Echo, Spotlight and West Country News.

During the event, the students met and spoke with Rudi Oppenheimer, a Holocaust survivor. At the end of the event, the students took part in a candle lighting ceremony to remember the victims of the genocide.
L4L visit police station

A group of students in Year 10 follow “The learning 4 life” course. This is a specialist foundation course in which students complete CoPE level 1 challenges in addition to weekly Vocational Placements. In October we went on the school minibus to Exmouth Police Station. We had a mini tour of the Police Station from PCSO Stuart Penny. He took us to the interview rooms, the holding cells and even took fingerprints of some students. (Which were taken away by the students and not held by the police!!) We also had a really good question and answer session where we quizzed PCSO Penny about lots of aspects of the law, crimes and the role of Police officers. This was an exciting trip, but the best bit was when Inspector Jez Capey (an ex student from our school – in the same year as our teacher, Miss Carrington!) joined our group outside in the yard and let us look at police equipment and dress up in riot gear. We also got to sit a police car and turn on the siren! It was really loud!! Jez also talked to us about Pepper spray and showed us how handcuffs work. It was a brilliant trip, we learnt a lot about Police work and got to see the inside of a working Police Station. There were places we couldn’t see due to confidentiality, but overall it was very interesting.

Sam W, Lisa L, Ryan J, Jack D, Caneisha V, Alex H, Danielle S and Samantha M

Pirates and Marines at Lympstone

Recently five students, Rachel M, Freya G, Andy O, Charlie F, and myself got the opportunity to play with the Royal Marine Band at their base in Lympstone, together with other students from schools around Devon. When we were there we spent the morning rehearsing “Pirates of the Caribbean” with all the different instruments people could play before playing with the band in a concert to invited family and friends. The concert also included a presentation about the Royal Marine Band and different performances by members of the band. It was a really enjoyable and inspiring day and I’m sure the people who went as well would agree with me.

Abbey D, Year 10

West Exe childrens' headaches to end?

St Thomas Health Centre has a particular interest in headache research. The county wide Headache Clinic is run from this setting and we have a strong research interest in the area. Although headache and in particular migraine is a well recognised problem in adults affecting approximately 15% of the population, the situation in children is not clear. An important piece of work that we undertook through the school was a survey of over 1000 Exeter school children. We found that over 20% had headache that bothered them once or more a week and for half of this group, the impact on their overall quality of life was significant. This impact has effects on both home and school life. In the majority of cases students have not sought help for their problem. This research has been published in a scientific journal and hopefully will raise the profile of the problem. We have also undertaken some innovative work where West Exe students, as part of their BTEC studies, interviewed other students with headache. This shows very clearly that the needs of students with headache are not addressed and their condition is not taken seriously despite a high impact at school and at home. Further research is needed to find out why more children don’t seek help even when their problem is quite significant and how the problem can be better managed in schools. We hope to continue this work with West Exe which will eventually lead to a nationwide headache policy for schools.

Dr David Kernick, St Thomas Health Centre

World Wise Geography quiz

Lloyd W, Callum P and Alex B, of Year 10 represented WETC at the Geographical Association World Wise Quiz. This comprised a whole day at Plymouth University. The morning was spent attending seminars on using GIS (Global Health) and studying Palaeontology (dating and identifying fossilised remains). This provided our students with a valuable insight into University courses and life. The students also attended a lecture given by a local Polar explorer. In the afternoon, teams from 14 schools in the South West battled for medals in the world wide quiz. Our team came joint 4th. Well done boys – you were excellent representatives for WETC and did us proud.

Leah Carrington, Humanities Department
A new team of student librarians were appointed at the end of last term to help out in the Learning Resources Centre. They faced tough competition as we had over 40 applicants for ten positions. The student librarians have started their training by getting to grips with the LRC catalogue and finding out how to issue, return and reserve books for other students and staff. They also help with making displays, sorting and shelving books, and are on hand to help others find information or to recommend books. They are each responsible for maintaining an area of stock in the LRC. They are all currently working towards the School Library Association’s Student Librarian Accreditation Scheme, which goes from a First Certificate all the way to a Platinum Award. Thank you to all the student librarians for their hard work and enthusiasm.

Leah Shaw, LRC Manager

In each module we have a different focus for our PUB (Punctuality, Uniform, Behaviour) initiative. These are specific areas on which teachers and students are asked to focus to ensure that expectations are being met and to promote effective teaching and learning to ensure that targets are met. This module’s focus is mobile ‘phones.

**Students** have been asked to: ensure that mobiles are turned off and put away in bags at the beginning of the lesson; ensure that mobiles are not used during the lesson; ensure that headphones are not visible during lesson time – both in lessons, and moving between lessons.

**Tutors** have been asked to: remind students at the beginning of each day of the expectations; ensure that students do not have headphones visible at the start of the day; report any concerns to Year Leader, and liaise over strategies.

**Teachers** have been asked to: remind students at the beginning of every lesson to switch off and put away mobile phones; ensure that they circulate during the lesson to ensure students are complying with the expectations; ensure that the mobile phone laminated notice is visible in the classroom; use the behaviour system if students do not cooperate with the expectations; ensure that personal mobiles are switched off.

We hope that parents and carers will support this policy by talking it through with their children, perhaps where appropriate drawing a comparison with their own workplace policies, and also by not expecting to contact their child during lesson times.

Julia Green, Assistant Headteacher
TERM DATES 2009-10

Spring Term
Term commences: Monday 4th January 2010
Half-term: Friday 12th February – Friday 19th February inclusive
Last day of term: Thursday 1st April

Summer Term
Term commences: Monday 19th April 2010
May Day holiday: Monday 3rd May
Half-term: Monday 31st May – Friday 4th June inclusive
Last day of term: Friday 23rd July

Staff Training Days: The following days are 'Non-student days' and are specified days on which staff attend for planning, in-service, curriculum development or staff development purposes: Friday 12th February 2010

TERM DATES 2010-11

Autumn Term
Term commences: Thursday 2nd September 2010
Half-term: Monday 25th October – Friday 29th October inclusive
PLEASE NOTE COLLEGE CLOSED FOR STAFF TRAINING DAYS
Thursday 25th and Friday 26th November
Last day of term: Friday 17th December

Spring Term
Term commences: Tuesday 4th January 2011
Half-term: Monday 21st February – Friday 25th February inclusive
Last day of term: Friday 8th April

Summer Term
Term commences: Tuesday 26th April 2011
May Day Holiday: Monday 2nd May
Half term: Monday 30th May – Friday 3rd June inclusive
End of term: Friday 22nd July

Staff Training Days: The following days are 'Non-student days' and are specified days on which staff attend for planning, in-service, curriculum development or staff development purposes: Wednesday 1st September 2010; Thursday 25th & Friday 26th November 2010; Friday 18th February 2011; Monday 7th March 2011

Coats and Scarves removed inside the building.
Black footwear inside trousers.
Black trousers NOT jeans.

Attend to achieve!

- Punctual arrival gives a good start to the day
- Late arrival causes disruption to lessons
- Absences to be reported every day, please
- 93% attendance required to get a Prom ticket

And don’t forget . . . . ‘Attend to achieve’ – good attendance leads to high achievement! Have you reached your attendance target? Are you Gold, Silver, or Bronze?

Parents' Evenings 2009-10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Autumn 2009</th>
<th>Spring 2010</th>
<th>Summer 2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 7</td>
<td>EPRA 29th Sept</td>
<td>Subject Evening 9th February</td>
<td>Subject Evening 15th June</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 8</td>
<td>EPRA 29th Sept</td>
<td>Subject Evening 1st December</td>
<td>Subject Evening 30th March</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 9</td>
<td>EPRA 29th Sept</td>
<td>Subject Evening 12th January</td>
<td>Subject Evening 16th March</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 10</td>
<td>EPRA 29th Sept</td>
<td>Subject Evening 26th November</td>
<td>Subject Evening 4th May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 11</td>
<td>EPRA 29th Sept</td>
<td>Subject Evening 10th November</td>
<td>Subject Evening 2nd March</td>
</tr>
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