Heads, we win!

We bid a fond farewell to Mr Lonsdale and a warm welcome to Miss Allen.
**Vote for change**

WE are extremely proud to announce that, yet again, students from Falinge Park High School have enjoyed phenomenal success in the UK Youth Parliament elections.

Ethan Marriott has been voted in as Member of Youth Parliament (MYP) for the Borough, with 77% of this year’s votes. Tabitha Rusden also retained her position as Vice Member of Youth Parliament following her first successful term last year.

We hope they will be bringing change to the Borough and look forward to continuing our involvement with the Youth Parliament as a school.

**Pride in our heritage**

AS our school celebrates 80 years of being an educational establishment, FPfHS will be holding a Heritage Fair on Saturday, 11th July 2015, from 11am to 3pm. Members of the community, students present and past, and anyone who has a keen interest in the rich history of our town are all invited to attend.

There will be a variety of activities both in school and in Falinge Park itself – from an Army assault course to an exhibition based on the old school building.

More information can be found at http://www.falinge-heritage-trail.co.uk/

**Room to grow**

THE construction of the new MFL block began during the Easter holidays. The foundations have been laid and the building, which is modular in design, is being manufactured elsewhere. The various parts will be fitted together on site, and clad with material matching the main school building.

The finished unit will have six classrooms, a careers office and associated supporting accommodation. Two of the rooms will open out into one large, lunchtimes dining area. Completion is due mid-July, in time for the 2015-2016 academic year.

**Interview with Mr Lonsdale**

What has been your favourite performance?
The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe. It was performed under difficult circumstances, at Rochdale Sixth Form. So we went back to basics with the scenery, and there was more improvisation. And, of course, the wardrobe fell off stage, and I had to catch it! Also, I enjoyed Annie and other musicals - I love the ones you can sing along to.

Have you preferred being a class teacher or the headteacher?
I miss most as headteacher is being in the classroom. I’ll never forget I’m a teacher. I’m unique as a secondary head who still teaches. It keeps me grounded and gives me an understanding of teachers’ problems. As head, though, I’ve realised that I can still touch the lives of young people, and staff as well.

When have you been most proud of the school?
After one of our Year 11s sadly passed away, her year group were brilliant at organising the green day. Young people often get a lot of bad press, but I was very proud of the school’s reaction.

What do you think of the new headteacher, Miss Allen?
We get along very well. Handing over the headship to the new headteacher is unusual, but we see the school in a similar way. She cares, and I can see it working well. Miss Allen won’t be me, she’ll bring along her own personality, but she knows this is a special place, and is honoured to be here.
This year sees the start of a new era as the current Headteacher, long-serving Robin Lonsdale, steps down from his post and Janice Allen steps up to the plate.

A fond farewell... and a warm welcome

As part of the transition, Janice, previously a deputy headteacher at Abraham Moss, has been visiting the school on a weekly basis since April. This is a unique method of handover between headteachers, one they were both keen to put into place. Robin has been able to introduce Janice to local primary heads, other local secondary and sixth form heads so she can familiarise herself with the area.

“It’s important that Janice had the time with me to pick out all the knowledge that lives in my head,” says Robin. “She’s also had the chance to meet students and staff – and has met a lot of parents and stakeholders. It means that, come September, she’s not a stranger to our ways and values.”

“I believe that the values at this school should be shared across our entire education sector,” says Janice. “Every child can succeed, and should feel valued. When I started as a teacher, these values shaped me, and they still do.”

Falinge Park High School is a positive place to be, ranking in the top 20% of progress in schools, on a national level. On top of this, there’s a waiting list for next year’s intake and the new MFL building opens its doors in July.

“I’m lucky that I’m going into a school with a solid foundation,” says Janice. “Robin’s vision for the school is the same as mine, and I’ve seen that the staff share it too. The school is inclusive, giving opportunities to every child and I want to carry the success so far even further.”

A SMOOTH handover is the priority for the school when it comes to a change of headteacher, to not only minimise any disruption to the students and staff, but to instil trust that the school will continue as before, ever improving and providing students with the best education possible. Robin Lonsdale and Janice Allen speak about the challenges of such a big change, and their approach to the transition.

“Letting go of the school after so long is really difficult,” explains Robin, who has been at Falinge Park High School for over 20 years, “but the second best thing you can do is pass it to someone who will love it as much as you do. This is really important to me – and one of the reasons I knew Janice was the right person for the job.”

“The Head is the figurehead of a school, the ‘engine room’ is the staff and students”. Change can scare people – but in this instance we want everybody to embrace it.”

Janice agrees: “As Robin has been here a long time and is much loved, it’s really important for the staff to realise that the change to someone they don’t know isn’t scary. A new headteacher can come in with the wrong ideas and view of what the school is like – but our handover means this won’t happen. I’ve been getting to know the school really well.”
During the week commencing 16th March, students from Years 7, 8 and 9 took part in a variety of STEM-related activities. In Science, they were able to find out what qualities are needed to become an astronaut at NASA, while in Technology they designed a Bloodhound jet-propelled car that was capable of breaking the world land speed record.

In addition, one of the north-west’s STEM ambassadors treated Year 7s to a spectacular show, featuring a home-made laser, plasma ball, and much more. This week allowed students to learn about the importance of Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths in our daily lives. They also discovered the many different and exciting career paths available, and what skills they require.

Jayaish Madha

Project 1915 was established to build on the success of 2014’s Project Tommy, and to further commemorate the First World War by taking a wider look at events that took place in 1915. Among these, women began working in munitions factories around the country, and Australian and New Zealand soldiers (Anzacs) joined the fighting at Gallipoli. Soldiers also joined the British Army from India – in fact, one in eight of the people at the recent Tower of London memorial was in memory of an Indian soldier. Away from the battlefront, Coco Chanel opened her first shop selling hats and gloves, and the theory of Pangaea was first published.

Work on Project 15 has been going on throughout the year in a variety of different formats, subjects and genres, the main objective of which is to make learning meaningful, relevant, challenging and emotional.

Project 1915 was showcased recently at Manchester Science and Industry Museum (MOSI).
A tournament of two halves

YEAR 7 students Layla and Georgia Barrett, and PE Teacher Ms Younge, talk about their experience of the recent netball tournament at Boreatton Park in Staffordshire:

Layla and Georgia: “We played six matches over the two days. We worked well as a team with all members of the squad participating and motivating each other. Both attack and defence played well, allowing lots of opportunities for scoring goals.”

Ms Younge: “As well as the two-day tournament, the squad also took part in various outdoor activities, including zip lines, a giant swing and trapeze. Awards included Player of the Tournament, which was presented to Layla Barrett, and the Most Improved Players were Olivia Bottomley and Amy Marsh. The trip was such a huge success, there may be another one coming up in October.”

Ultimate accolade

Joe Schofield (an ex pupil of Falinge) has been presented with our highest award in PE, for outstanding achievement.

Joe has played Rugby Football League for Mayfield in Rochdale since the age of 11. At the age of 16, he represented Lancashire and Bradford, and was recently awarded the highest accolade possible – to represent England!

We are very proud of Joe and wish him the best of luck with his future career.

Samantha Ridings

Athletes showcase their skills

SIX of our students – Lee-Thomas Kirkham, Ijtihad Ahmed, Kai Snape, Raafe Anjam, Aden Khan and Anmol Mahmood – were chosen to represent Rochdale at the Greater Manchester School Games, in Boccia and tennis.

The students had a fantastic day and were a credit to FPHS. Lee and Ijtihad won silver in the Boccia, while Kai, Raafe, Aden and Anmol came fifth overall in the tennis.

Thank you to Miss Mitsi and Mr Brown for their help and support throughout the day.

Lindsey Sykes

Boxing packs a punch

PROFESSIONAL boxer Kieran Farrell visited FPHS to deliver a taster session to Year 7 students. Boxing is one of our extracurricular activities, and is offered to all students every Friday lunchtime in the Dance studio.

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