



*SPECIAL EDITION*

**The Visit of HRH, The Duke Of York, KG**

**What a way to start the summer term!**

Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> April was an unusual day! News of the visit of HRH, The Prince Andrew to the school could only be circulated the day before and so students and staff returned with little time to make the arrangements and get the school ready for our VIP guest. All did wonderfully well and the school looked at its very best in time for the arrival at 12.15 on the big day.

The Duke was welcomed to the school by Mr. Dillow, the Principal and by Mr. Schapira, Chairman of the Board of Governors. He was presented to members of the Senior Leadership Team of the school and to members of the Board of Governors.



*Lower School welcome*

Excitement was at high pitch already among the Lower School students as they lined the Rombon quad and the red carpet. Cheering broke out as the main gates were thrown back and the Duke's cavalcade appeared on the main street outside accompanied by flashing lights and sirens clearing the road ahead. He entered the school to cheers and much waving of the Union Jack and was visibly touched by the enthusiasm of the children.

Miss Dean's earlier assembly on the theme of "The Grand Old Duke of York" did cause some confusion as the youngest children asked in vain where his horse and army were!



**Visiting the Art Department**

A representative sample of student's work was displayed in the upper corridor. Prince Andrew very much enjoyed quizzing the older students on their influences and challenging them to explain their work. He complimented the younger students' accounts of their work in making baskets and bags for the Eisteddfod competition and was appreciative of the hard work which had gone into them.



The Duke visited Miss. Vaccaro's **Y10 Business Studies** class and was impressed by the challenging use of spreadsheets in the lesson. Throughout his visit, he demonstrated a keen interest in the potential of new technology in education and was curious to discover how schools are coping with these demands.

**Y8 Physics** were busy investigating forces in their class and were eager to respond to the Duke's questions challenging them to apply the knowledge they had received. As a former Helicopter pilot in the British Royal Navy, Prince Andrew was clearly knowledgeable on the subject and we were relieved that the students eventually managed to come up with the correct answers!

The Duke was interested in how the school is developing the role of its leading students in representing the interests of their peers with teachers and school management.



**Drama**

Following initial confusion that the Y10 drama class was not actually doing drama, the Duke enjoyed his conversation with the students and heard of their enjoyment of the GCSE course.



## History

The Y8 History class informed the Duke that they were currently studying King Henry VIII. Much intrigued he asked what aspects they had found of interest, receiving the reply that his royal antecedent's money problems had sparked the class's curiosity. The Duke remarked with a wink that money troubles are not the exclusive preserve of historical royalty!

Hearing from Mrs. Voice that the area of focus for the class was the dissolution of the monasteries he asked the students to identify the one remaining Religious building in the UK which had never been reformed. Blank faces all round (including those accompanying the Duke) were interested to hear that the St. George's Chapel at Windsor Castle has this distinction. The Duke, as one of the Knights of the Garter (KG), is well placed to know since this order has its spiritual home in the same Chapel.



## Charity activities

The Duke spent a great deal of time chatting with Upper School students about their charitable initiatives and encouraging them in their endeavours.

He gratefully received gifts of a Cookbook in aid of Cancer Research and a T shirt in aid of Haitian relief. He wished the school disco initiative well while regretting that he would not be able to attend!



## School assembly

Prince Andrew then joined the assembled Upper School and staff in the gym. Following a few words of welcome from the Principal, Mr. Dillow, the massed school choirs entertained him with a medley of songs taken from the musicals of Andrew Lloyd-Webber.

We were then honoured to hear a brief speech from the Duke, congratulating the school on its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary and sharing his appreciation of the contribution of British schools like the Sir James to the international community. The Duke complimented the school on its positive atmosphere and offered his support for our commitment to excellence and the highest standards of achievement in the long tradition of British education. In closing he emphasised the importance of teamwork between school, students and parents to ensure that success continues.

On closing Prince Andrew unveiled the plaque created to record his visit before bidding a warm farewell to the school.

A final opportunity was taken to speak briefly with assembled parents who lined the Duke's way to his car and then we bid a warm farewell to our most distinguished visitor.



We all enjoyed this visit made even more special by the enthusiasm and interest demonstrated by our Royal visitor in the activities and achievements of our students. It was a great pleasure for the school to meet the Duke who will always be assured of a very warm welcome in this little piece of Britain within Milan. Our thanks go to HM Consul- General Dr Lawrence Bristow- Smith, Vice-Consul Steven Anderson and to the Duke's equerry, Mr. Robin Ord-Smith DVO for their support in making this visit possible and for joining us on the day.

*Robert Dillow*



*"It's a responsibility for all the people of the United Kingdom, regardless of race, color or creed, and an understanding that you have an individual connection with each and every one." (HRH Prince Andrew)*