



## Sponsor announced for Wren Academy

A new sponsor has been announced for the Church of England Wren Academy that is due to open in North Finchley in September.

Berkhamsted Collegiate School, an independent co-educational school for more than 1,500 day and boarding pupils aged 3-18, will be a co-sponsor. The lead sponsor for Wren is the Diocese of London.

Berkhamsted joins a growing number of independent schools that are sponsoring academies and developing partnerships with state schools. Although it is a mixed school, boys and girls are taught separately between the ages of 11-16. This is similar to the proposed model for Wren Academy where a high proportion of lessons will be taught in single-sex classes.

Being a sponsor will allow Berkhamsted to nominate governors to the governing body of Wren. As the academy grows it is intended that students will also link for shared learning activities and extra-curricular opportunities.

### Partners in learning

Announcing this move the Chair of Governors, Peter Williamson said: "We are delighted to participate in this initiative which we expect to be mutually beneficial for both schools. Berkhamsted Collegiate is a highly successful, forward-

looking school and we are confident we can play a part in making Wren Academy a great success."

Michael Whitworth, the first Principal of Wren Academy, said: "I am looking forward to developing some innovative links and partnership with Berkhamsted. I am sure we will both learn much from each other which can only benefit all our students."

### Academies increasing nationally

Academies are publicly funded independent schools but no fees are payable by parents. The Government has a target of opening 400 academies by the middle of the next decade. Well over a hundred are currently open or in the process of development.

The Wren Academy will open in September with 162 pupils aged 11, growing year on year until eventually it will have nearly 1000 students between the ages of 11 and 18. Its specialism is Design and the Built Environment.

Over 500 pupils and their parents have included Wren as one of their school choices for next year's 162 places.

## Inspiring a child to read

By Ruth Hudson

The 2008 National Year of Reading was launched on 8 January. It aims to build a greater national passion for reading with a focus on reluctant readers, those with low confidence and lack of self-esteem.

Volunteer Reading Help is a national charity and has been training and placing volunteers in schools for more than 30 years. Volunteers are recruited from the local community to help children who find reading a challenge.

Each volunteer works with the same three children for an hour and a half twice a week during term time in a local primary school. The aim is to increase the child's confidence and self-esteem in a relaxed environment, so that reading becomes enjoyable and achievable.

### Survey proves VRH effective

In a recent pupil survey completed by teachers of the children helped by VRH, 98% showed improved confidence in reading and 97% showed an improved attitude to reading and an improvement in reading performance.

Schools Secretary Ed Balls said at the launch: "I welcome Volunteer Reading Help's commitment to be involved with this initiative. I have no doubt that they will make a significant contribution to what I hope will be a major success. We need children to be reading because they love it and appreciate

the opportunities that reading brings - not because people like me say it's important."

The London North West Branch covers the areas of Barnet and Brent. If you have an enthusiasm for reading, enjoy being with children and would like to volunteer, please contact Harriet Watson on 020 7372 7523 or email londonnorthwest@vrh.org.uk for more information. We welcome volunteers from all cultures and backgrounds from 18 years upwards.

## Fred and Charlie's tube challenge

By John Lawrence

Two 14-year-old schoolboys took on one of the world's hardest transport challenges by attempting to visit every station on the London Underground network in one day.

Fred Isaac, who lives in Huntingdon Road, and Charlie Gould, from Hampstead Garden Suburb, started at 5.10am at Cockfosters tube station and finished a bottom-numbing 18 hours and 35 minutes later at Edgware.

They were trying to beat the record set by two Swedes in 2006 who visited 275 stops in 18 hours and 25 minutes. Unfortunately, Fred and Charlie just missed that total but did manage an amazing 251 stops out of an available 268.

### Fund-raising and fun

The boys' attempt was to raise money for charity as part of the community action programme at University College School in Hampstead. Their history teacher Andrew Wilkes bravely accompanied them on their mammoth journey.

A weary Charlie said: "It was completely exhausting but was actually great fun and a fantastic way to raise money. We had a few delays on the day and they really counted against us."



Fred Isaac gets 'tube face' in the middle of his attempt on the tube travelling world record. Photograph by John Lawrence

Fred said: "It was fascinating to be part of both the morning and evening rush hour and all the hours in between. We'll have to have another go at breaking the record, now that we've picked up some useful hints."

They spent the day chatting to each other, doing crosswords and Sudokus, reading, dozing and eating. To qualify for the

record, the boys' trains had to stop at each station although they didn't need to get out.

So far, Charlie and Fred have raised over £2,000 for Great Ormond Street Hospital, the Umbrella Mental Health charity, The Meningitis Trust, The National Hospital for Neurology, the male cancer charity Everyman and a school in Uganda.

## Chiropractor chooses city life

By Lucy Chamberlin

**Back pain, anyone? Aching shoulders, stiff knees or sore elbows? New chiropractor Dr Mark Warren has taken up residence at 98 High Road and hopes to treat all your structural ailments.**

Originally from Devon, he came to London last year to find business openings, and found East Finchley. "I love the fact that it has a busy high street as well as a fantastic community feel here," he says.

Mark wanted to diversify and extend his practice from its rural roots, and the vibrancy of the city, not to mention prospects of 2012 Olympic opportunities, determined his destination.

He sees a wide range of complaints, from sport injuries to babies' and children's issues, posture-related matters, and problems that come with age.

In the next month or so he will have a colleague joining him; she will practise massage

in the second treatment room, and they are also hoping to start up yoga classes for anyone who fancies coming along. These will take place in the special rehabilitation room upstairs, complete with foam mats and period fireplace, a room which is otherwise used for patients'

personal exercise and treatment regimes.

With state-of-the-art x-ray and other equipment, the practice is clean, bright and friendly, and should prosper. Fifty per cent of new patients, at any rate, first found it through an advert in *THE ARCHER*!

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