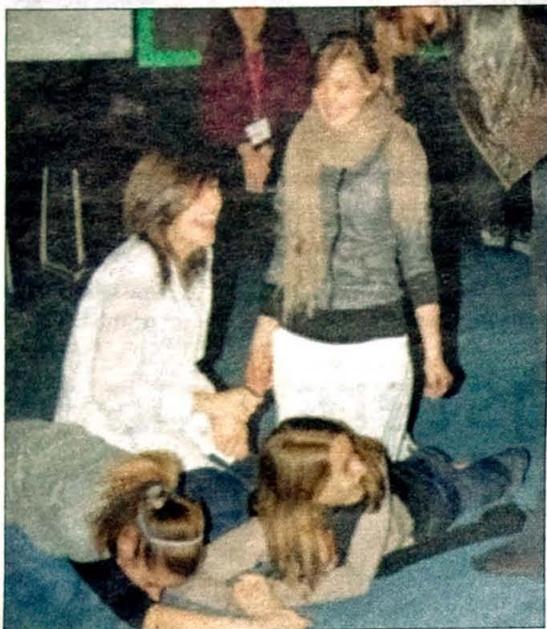


School Report

Pupils at Notley High School in Braintree tell readers what they've been up to, inside the classroom and out



● Good fun – French exchange trip.

Parlez-vous Anglais?

FOR as long as I can remember, I've been learning French at school. Even though I'd never actually been to France (Disneyland doesn't really count) I was fascinated by the language.

So when I was given the opportunity to go on an exchange, I was thrilled. Not only because my friends were coming too, but it was going to be a trip of many firsts: I was going to fly, I was going to a different country and I was going to experience hot weather.

During my week I embraced a totally different culture. Even though France and England are neighbours, the cultural difference was staggering. It was such an eye-opener.

Places we visited included Cite de l'espace and the beautiful walled city of Carcassonne. I learnt some great lessons as well as gaining an understanding of how limited my French vocabulary really is.

by BECKY WALLER

Because I have always learnt French, I thought I knew a lot of the language. Apparently I only know the classroom bits, as I found myself not understanding as much of what my exchange student said to me as I thought I would.

Not only did I learn some great educational lessons but I strengthened English friendships and made some life-long French friendships too.

The exchange doesn't stop there. We're already planning private exchanges between ourselves – some of the French students are returning in October – and with the technology of today we can speak to each other every evening on our PCs.

Personally, going on the exchange has pushed me in my studies and I now have a lot more confidence in myself. I would definitely recommend doing an exchange; it really is the trip of a lifetime.

A helping hand

CHIPS, standing for Childline in Partnership with Schools, is a scheme that has been running at Notley High for six years, which I am now lucky

by SARAH CHOWN

enough to be part of. The new 20-strong group has trained for about seven

weeks, and is now able to help, advise, or comfort fellow students if ever they feel the need.

On June 3, we had the opportunity to visit the Childline offices in London.

The experience enabled us to gain further insight into how to handle certain situations with pupils who may wish to talk with us, and also meet some inspirational people who have given up their time to help others.

While taking part in such a worthwhile programme, I have also acquired valuable skills which will prove to be beneficial throughout my life.

I am grateful for such a chance, and look forward to being able to lend a helping hand in the future.



Maths zoo competition

by BETHANY CONLON

COLCHESTER Zoo: interesting animals and fun activities. But a learning environment?

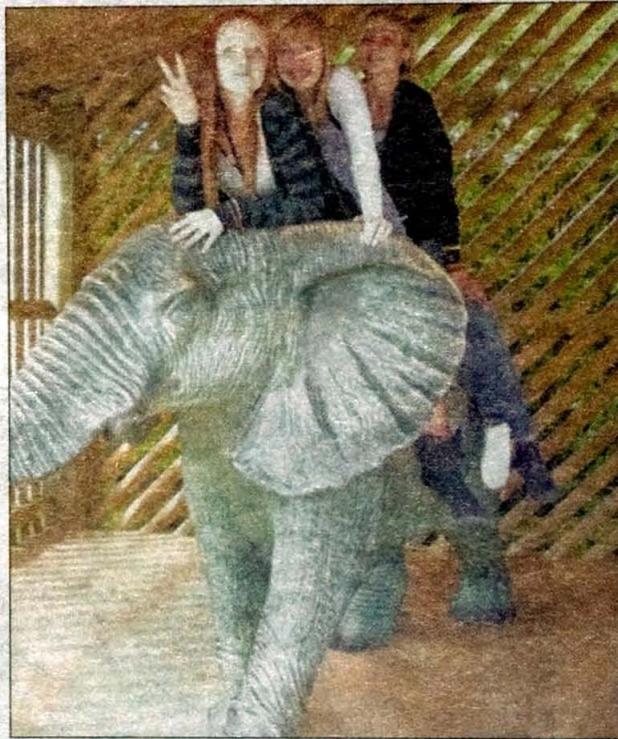
That's exactly what it became one morning. As a treat for doing so well, the top set maths groups in year ten were offered the chance to go to the zoo for a maths trail.

We were excited by the idea; it's not every day you get to miss school to go to the zoo, even if you still have to do work.

And after a short coach journey, 40 of us were there. We were given mathematical questions, ranging from calculating the volume of the pens to working out the animals' BMI. With directions of where to go included, we were let loose.

There were four hours to answer the questions. The trail took us all over the zoo, from orangutans to penguins. There was even time for a quick train ride to see the elephants and some cheeky animal face paints!

Everyone left the zoo happy, maybe a little worried about their answers. But all too soon the winners were



● All aboard – maths trail at Colchester zoo.

announced and the day was over: home time. It was a great day, and it left all of us

year tens with our fingers crossed, hoping for a repeat next year.



● Singing for Amnesty.

Human rights heroes

by KAYLEIGH CHARGE

AT Notley High School, there is a small group of heroes.

They're a select group of students who support Amnesty International.

Not sure what Amnesty International is?

It's a human rights group, who spend their time protesting, boycotting and generally speaking out for unfair treatment of humans to be put right.

Fronted by teacher Mr Hardwick, our group consists of two year ten pupils, including myself, and a handful of year nine pupils.

New to our group are some from year eight, who are excited to get started.

It all began when today's year tens were in year eight, and enthusiastic to help the human race. We started with nearly a whole year group.

The numbers dwindled to only the greatest heroes, and as each year seven comes up to year eight, we invite them along too.

Over the last three years, we've been extremely busy. We've sent off Christmas cards to those who were wrongly put in prison and shown our support to families by sending worry dolls and postcards.

We also had a "torture session" in which we listened to the teachers sing.

Myself and Laura Saddler also participated, singing Skater Boy by Avril Lavigne.

Why not do your bit? Visit amnesty.org.uk and find out what you can do.

Notley Wind Band, you're hired!



● On the go – Notley High School Wind Band.

NOTLEY High School Wind Band and Jazz Band are always on the go, from recording CDs to performing in George Yard.

The students at Notley High School are proud of their school community. The music department, Wind Band and Jazz Band are just a few examples of this.

The bands are also heavily involved in the local community, visiting primary schools and retirement homes.

I was introduced to the bands from the moment I came to the school, and formed almost an apprenticeship, watching and learning from the former drum-

by JACK FREEMAN

meters of the school, with whom I am still good friends.

Having got to the stage where I am the full-time drummer for both bands, it will soon be time for someone else to follow in my footsteps and gain all the experience that I have been lucky to have, although I may not have appreciated it when playing the triangle to a Harry Potter medley!

I would encourage any musicians at any grade to join the Wind Band and gain the all-important experience of playing with an on-the-go musical group.