

# Fulham Chronicle

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## Another fabulous photo-special: it's weigh-in time at London Zoo



SEE PAGE 8 & 9

Residents will be proudly parading their pooches at Hammersmith & Fulham's annual dog show this weekend. The event in Ravenscourt Park, Hammersmith, is open to any breed of dog and there will be other entertainment, including a bouncy castle, a raffle, face painting and a slide. It costs £2 to enter your dog at the event, on Saturday 10 September, with prizes up for grabs in the following classes: golden oldie, best rescue dog, best young handler, best crossbreed, best puppy, best pedigree and best in show.

"We know residents love the borough's parks almost as much as they love their dogs and events like this really show how popular they are," said councillor Wesley Harcourt, cabinet member for environment, transport and residents' services.

"The annual dog show is always a popular event and among the fun, you'll be able to chat to our friendly parks police team who can offer some helpful tips and advice."

The event runs from 12pm but organisers say to arrive at 11am to register if you would like your dog to take part in the competition. There will also be a dog agility course, as well as the chance to get your pooch microchipped and have their claws clipped. The event is run by the council's parks police and proceeds will go to the Dogs Trust charity. It has been sponsored by John Parnham Funfairs, Ravenscourt Park tea house Fat Maison, Sainsbury's and Pets At Home



## Music mogul took lethal drugs cocktail

A FORMER Fulham resident and music mogul who helped establish the Ministry of Sound record label died from a lethal cocktail of drugs and heart disease, a coroner has ruled.

The body of Jean-Phillipe Wilesco, 67, was found on his bed in his luxury flat on June 18 last year.

Born in Paris, he moved to London in 1980 and lived in a flat by the Thames.

Full story on page 4



# Head hailed for school's revival

## Top marks for inspirational teacher after best ever GCSE results

BY GEOFF BAKER  
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FULHAM headmaster Leon Wilson has been hailed by education chiefs for turning the dead-end Hurlingham Academy into one of Britain's "rising star schools" in less than a year.

The proof of Mr Wilson's outstanding leadership as the new principal at the former Hurlingham & Chelsea School was revealed last week when pupils achieved the best GCSE results



Headmaster Leon Wilson - an outstanding leader

ever at the school. Now the academy is expected to be deluged with requests from parents

keen to get their children into the former "inadequate" school that Mr Wilson is aiming to make "the best in London".

Pupils and education authorities alike are now singing the praises of Mr Wilson for his inspirational lead.

"The school has advanced from being in special measures to now being one of the UK's rising stars, the staff room has changed from a temporary home for supply teachers to a centre of excellence filled with enthusias-

tic, inspirational tutors," said a spokesman for Hammersmith & Fulham Council. This year's results are a phenomenal achievement."

The council cited the case of 16-year-old Aubrey Cueto as an example of the dramatic turnaround.

Aubrey, from South Ken, opened her GCSE results envelope with shaking hands to discover that her 12 grades were all

TURN TO PAGE 3

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"I could tell from the laughter and smiles that everyone was having a fantastic time," said Aminata.

"This wasn't just about the new pitch and equipment, it brought people together and gave them the chance to learn about some of the valuable support H&F Council offers."

There were stalls offering a wide range of advice including health checks, tenancy support, and the chance to meet members of the local police team. Residents were invited to have their say on how council housing is run and the chance to join working groups on repairs and other issues.

Music was provided by a DJ, who is also a resident of Robert Owen House and the afternoon was packed with entertaining games, including football, hockey basketball and giant versions of Jenga and Connect Four.

It was the first of a series of events called Community Connects, which will be held at H&F's council estates in the coming months.



## Best results ever at Hurlingham

### ■ FROM PAGE ONE

A\* or A.

"I did work hard, but I'm very pleased," she said as she emerged from the school hall in Peterborough Road, Fulham.

"Aubrey now sails serenely into the Harris sixth form at Westminster, with the eventual target of studying maths or law and getting a job where she can work to improve life for people in developing countries," said the council spokesman.

"I've seen a lot of change here, especially in the past three years," said Aubrey, referring back to the school's lowest ebb, when Ofsted damned the place as "inadequate".

New principal Leon Wilson came from Ark Burlington Danes Academy, where he worked alongside Dame Sally Coates as part of the team which transformed one of London's worst performing comprehensives into one rated 'Outstanding' in all areas by Ofsted.

"Leon has worked wonders in his first year in office, but he is quick to praise the students, staff and parents for making change happen," said the council spokesman.

"But it's only by discussing the transformation with students such as Aubrey that you really appreciate the magnitude of the transformation."

Aubrey said: "Three years ago there was little stability in the teachers. I was studying history, and six months into the year we realised we'd been studying a topic that wasn't even going to come up in the exams!"

"The new teachers changed everything. We were coming in on Saturdays to catch up and make sure I got the grades that I did. This is such a great school now that I'm sad to be leaving. I even asked Mr Wilson if I could redo my last year, just to stay here."

"I was serious! I love it here so much! He said 'Sorry, I'm afraid I can't do that!'"

Mr Wilson beamed with pride as he ushered his students into the academy's hall to collect their GCSE envelopes.

"These are the best results in the history of the school," he said.

"The English pass rate is now 86 per cent, compared to 69 per cent last year. It's all about expectation and believing; believing that every student who walks through the door here can achieve."

"The staff go the extra mile, giving up free lessons and working at weekends. Something really good is happening at the academy, but

it's a team effort. You have to have staff who really want to come to work, and in the year I've been here I haven't used a single supply teacher."

He added: "It is really about expectations, getting the kids to believe - and importantly getting the staff to believe - that they really do deserve the best opportunities and education. It is about setting the bar for what to expect."

"I realised when I joined the school that if we were going to change the culture of it we had to have regular teachers, the same teachers, in there taking the lessons and one of the first things I did was to tell the staff that if they were going to be off then they had to call me first, not to be controversial but to get over the message that we are all in this together."

"I also realised that it's easy just to tell staff what to do and I had to lead from the front, so I took a maths class and I knew that I had to deliver."

Mr Wilson said that he looked forward to the school now being inundated with requests from parents wanting the very best education for their children.

"And rightly so, because something really special is happening here now. In the past pupils were not especially proud of their school but now they are, now they're saying 'this is my school', they are proud because we look after each other."

"One of the things that we take very seriously is the understanding that nobody can disrupt the teaching of others, the learning comes first. But it is also key to understand that I do not want to make this an exam factory; education is also about developing characters and also teaching good manners, which is something else we stress."

"But yes, I do want to make Hurlingham the best school in London; I'm very competitive and I'm not happy being second best. There are other schools who have done better than us with exam results but I want us to be up there with the best, because that's what the kids deserve and I want Hurlingham to become the school where everyone wants to be."

The academy - run by United Learning - attained 68% A\*-C in maths and English at GCSE this year.

"We'll enjoy what we've achieved for a couple of days, then it's back to work for next

year," said Mr Wilson, adding a special mention for the parents who have given his staff such all-round backing.

"They're fantastic, they've supported me on every initiative. They're behind me and behind the staff. As I said, I now want this to be the best school in London!"

In pride of place at the top of the academy's staircase are the words of Maya Angelou: "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

One of those who will also never forget how she felt when she tore open her GCSE results envelope was Diana David, 16, of Earls Court. She described herself as being "pretty OK" with 12 grades between A\* and B (nine of them either A\* or A), more than enough to take her to Paddington Academy to study biology, chemistry, maths and psychology at A level.

"My years here at Hurlingham have been the best experience ever," she enthused. "It's like my second home; it's become part of me."

"I love the teachers, and I can totally come up to any of them if I need anything. I love this school."

Fellow student Yanisa Phattharawat, 16, who lives in Fulham, five minutes from the school, was also celebrating a dozen lofty grades including a starred distinction in IT and an A\* in maths which will - she hopes - pave the way to a career in science.

"I started in Year 7, then the quality at the school decreased and we had a lot of supply teachers," she recalled. "In Year 11 we finally got motivated, it became an academy and the teachers taught us the content and syllabus."

"The head is so energetic. His assemblies are full of energy, and it is inspiring. He stays best friends with his past students, and I know I can come back here to visit any time."

For Marshall Opoku, 16, of Rumbold Road, Fulham, gaining nine GCSEs between A\* and C mean he will be winging his way to Kingston College where he will study maths, physics and ICT before hopefully going to university to study computer science.

"When I came here in Year 7 the school was very bad, everyone was very noisy. Mr Wilson has changed it for the better, and it's much easier to learn here now. It's settled down, and it's a good school now."

All new developments, particularly extensions and demolition works, to comply with stricter policies on vibration - or risk being refused permission.

"This administration is committing to providing new housing space in the also ensuring that local residents peace and quiet they deserve," said Andrew Jones, H&F Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Regeneration.

"These robust policies would ensure there are proper measures in place to protect residents in buildings close to construction sites from excess noise and other impacts."

The proposed policies would mean the Council will be better able to protect and wellbeing of residents and will have a public consultation next month on local plan revisions.

Under the plans, future developments will be assessed for sensitivity to ensure appropriate locations and that sufficient measures are in place. This includes whether the proposal is a small development, or a large scale one.

In particular, the changes will protect residents against disturbance from larger construction and demolition works by utilities companies.

Some applicants may be expected to carry out assessments to demonstrate on site and any works likely to require noise disturbance for residents permitted.

Following the public consultation, policies could be adopted by late



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