



The Awesum mathematician, Miles Johnson. Photo by Kate Fuscoe

## Awesome achievement

Eleven-year-old Miles Johnson beat children from across the UK to take part in the Grand Final of "The Awesum Challenge", a national maths competition held at Birmingham University on Sunday 29 June.

An annual event sponsored by the West Bromwich Building Society and The Mercian Trust, "The Awesum Challenge" is an online game developed to focus on financial literacy for Key Stage 2.

An incredible 100,000 children clicked on to the challenge, with more than 5,000 completing it. Miles, a pupil at Martin Primary School and the only Barnet pupil in the final, reached the top 20, a great achievement.

### In the Great Hall

"When I heard I was going to Birmingham to take part in the Awesum maths challenge, I had a mix of feelings: excitement, nervousness and surprise," said Miles. "I hadn't expected to come in the top 20 out of 5,000 kids.

"On the day we had a huge breakfast but I was too nervous to eat much. We drove to Birmingham University, a large red-brick complex like the Great Hall in the Harry Potter films.

"My stomach was all knotted, and when we entered a large hall with a kind of TV studio feel, my nervousness got even worse. But soon I'd made some friends and began enjoying being there. We sat ourselves down at tables with laptops and began the challenge. Basically, in a time limit of 10 minutes, we had to answer as many mental maths questions as possible.

"I actually got my best score ever in that round, but I came 9th out of 20 people, when I needed to get in the top 8 to go through. After about an hour and a half everyone got their prizes: a big shiny gold medal, £50 voucher for WH Smith as well as a book and the Awesum Challenge game to play on our computer. These were given to us by Hannah England, the quickest 1500m sprinter in England and an almost certain for the Beijing Olympics. Overall this was an amazing experience and I just hope I can do as well as this in the future."

## Barnet Music Festival

If you've never been to the Barnet Primary Schools' Music Festival you're missing something very special. Celebrating its eighth year, the 2008 Festival took place at artsdepot in North Finchley between 9 and 13 June and involved 66 primary schools (more than 2,000 pupils) and five secondary schools.

Emma Galletti di Cadilhac, aged 11, describes the experience:

I was a member of a small choir from Martin Primary School that attended the festival. We were accompanied by eight other schools and we all sang together, as well as doing our own performance piece. Martin Primary sang the Tallis Canon, a four-part harmony.

All the schools had to be there in the early afternoon for rehearsals and had to stay put until our seven o'clock performance. We were all very nervous, but when we saw the sea of beaming parents, friends and relatives the nerves disappeared. All the schools sounded spectacular, and I truly believe that every person there, singing or not, had a night to remember.

## YOUNG ARCHER

### Playing it back

By Diana Cormack

Vish Patel, of Strawberry Vale, has no doubt about the value of youth clubs. As a teenager he regularly attended the Herbert Wilmot Centre. Now Vish has decided to give local children something he would like to have learned at their age.

For well over a year he has been working at The Monday Club teaching DJ skills and other related activities. These include creating and recording music, MCing, rapping and singing. The main aim is for children to produce their own work and some youth club members are now involved in making their own albums. They also learn how to set up and use the high quality equipment Vish provides. He acquired it by saving up and by getting a government grant from a scheme intended to promote new ideas and initiatives.

Funding is vital and Vish told *THE ARCHER* that he could not have done all this without the help of The Green Man Community Centre, where he is able to store his equipment and have a base for working at other youth clubs and schools.



Andre Clemenson gets Vish Patel to listen to his composition. Photo by Diana Cormack

As well as holding workshops, events. Known as DJVUK, he is also available for parties, Vish can be contacted on 07914 children's discos and similar 849172.

## Woodcraft Folk visit Coldfall Wood

By Molly Windust, aged 8

On Tuesday 24 June 20 children from the Elfin Group of the Woodcraft Folk were shown around Coldfall Wood by Linda Alliston, who is a Friend of Coldfall Wood. She told us that the wood is 500 years old and 14 hectares big. It was created when the ice age began.

Coldfall Wood used to be extremely dark and overgrown, but was coppiced 18 months ago, so now the light is let in and you can see more. The light makes things grow, such as nettles, and insects and butterflies love this. The felling and coppicing left lots of tree trunks and insects inhabit these, which is good for the birds because they eat the insects!

There was a big problem in the past with the stream smelling horrible. The Friends discovered that washing machine water and toilet water were coming into the stream from the neighbourhood. They soon stopped this. The Friends planted a reed bed to filter out pollution, and herons and frogs have come to live in this.

The trees now have bat boxes on them to encourage bats, and now Coldfall Wood has over 130 different species of insects.

There is another problem at the bottom of the wood. Water collects there and makes a swamp, which is fun to paddle in, and I did this with my friend, but unfortunately it encourages rats and pigeons. The pipes are blocked under the swamp and it looks bad and smells horrible too. The Friends have asked for £85,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund to unblock the pipes.

I like Coldfall Wood because it is alive with animals and insects and parakeets, and the birds are lovely. I walk my friend's dog there and he loves it. We all need to take care of these special woods!

## New head teacher for Martin Primary School

Martin Primary children, staff and parents will be welcoming a new head teacher when they return to school after the summer break.

Helen Morrison has been the Deputy Head at Gospel Oak Primary School in Camden for the past six and a half years.

Parents and carers were told that she has an excellent record as a teacher and leader, is a qualified Ofsted inspector,

and brings a wealth of experience and knowledge, particularly of school improvement and the raising of academic standards. She has also been highly successful in developing strong parental and community relationships.

## PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWS

### Holy Trinity

Year 1 children were given an eco-friendly bag to take home after a talk about how plastic bags can damage our environment.

More than 150 people attended the school open day and gave very positive feedback to the children and teachers.

Restaurant Ecole served the children with a delicious summer barbecue. They also had ice cream one day as a special treat.

A bike trader board in the playground enabled people to sell or exchange bikes.

The school, which is one form entry, collected the amazing amount of nearly 20,000 Tesco Computers for School vouchers.

### Martin School

For the first time (and in the year of their amalgamation) the school won the athletics cup at the Barnet Primary Schools annual meeting.

The school choir performed with the North London Chorus, repeating an event that proved popular with parents and children last year.

The Summer Fun Day raised over £3000 for school funds.

Year 5 children were offered the chance to participate in Barnet's summer cycling skills training sessions.

Some Year 4 children were selected to spend a day at the Beckham Academy where they collected points as a team for football-related maths work, science (fitness) and English (acting as reporters) before taking part in a football competition with other schools.

Year 2 thoroughly enjoyed a sleepover arranged for them by the staff.

The PTA organized discos for all the children on a non-uniform day at the end of term.