

# Dame Alice Owen's School

Newsletter May 2023



## Letter from the Head

### Hannah Nemko

When I first got my job as deputy head here, at Owen's, someone I worked with in the school I was leaving sent me an email telling me how lucky I was to be going to work at the 'utopia' of schools. He told me that he had worked at Owen's for a

year, as a maternity cover, and had never found a school as special as ours again.

He was right.

Owen's is a very special place, made so through the facilities we have and the opportunities we afford our students, of course, but what makes Owen's Owen's is the amazing team who works here and the fabulous young people who bring meaning to our days.

When we ask our staff why they love working at Owen's, they most frequently cite the positive relationships with the students, the warmth and support they get from their colleagues and the freedoms they have in the way that they teach.

Arguments about funding, workload and recruitment are all live - and valid - within the profession. Schools are being given more and more of the responsibilities which used to lie with external agencies with no additional funding or personnel. At best, this leads to an unacceptable workload. At worst, it is just dangerous; is it any surprise that teachers are leaving the profession in droves?

Teaching is hard. It is a physical, emotional and stressful job. We put our all into the school and your young people; and that can be draining. We often give up weekends and evenings to support students in their performances, attend meetings about how we



### ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS...

#### NULLIUS IN VERBA

Take nobody word for it - come and experience Owen's for yourself, p.5.

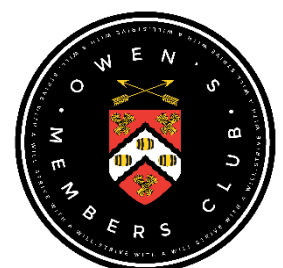
#### WHAT A LIFE!

Read more on pages 7-16.

#### SUBJECT BY SUBJECT

Details on pages 17-33.

It's our school!



to do better, to accompany students on expeditions, tours, exchanges, sleepovers (?!), adventures and theatres. We help prepare them for competitions, we pick them up when they are down, we calm them down when they are heightened. It all takes its toll, but, when you are in a great school, with a great team and even better young people, teaching remains the best job in the world.

It is for this reason that we are excited to have been chosen by the Government to run the new [Teaching Internship Programme](#) designed to give undergraduates a taste of life as a teacher. A DfE funded project, which pays the interns £300 a week, this programme provides undergraduates with lectures on pedagogy, the opportunity to observe lessons in two different schools as well as the chance to teach part of a lesson to small groups or even whole classes. This project will run for the first time this June and then again next year and is aimed at those studying the ever expanding list of 'shortage subjects', that is to say subjects where it is *even* harder to recruit high quality staff. This year, the list comprises of chemistry, computing, languages, maths and physics. Those who finish the experience feeling inspired to [get into teaching](#) will then be mentored through the application process by a member of our staff who will hopefully be able to stay in touch with them and support them into the early stages of their career. We have finished recruiting for this year's interns, but please be in touch if you would like to know how to apply next year. We will advertise on our usual Twitter, Facebook and Instagram pages. Who knows, maybe, through this programme, we will discover some of our best members of staff of the future!

Wishing you all a restful bank holiday weekend,

**Hannah Nemko**

**The Owen's School Association is a committee of volunteer parents which supports Dame Alice Owen's School in many ways such as but not restricted to:**

- Organising Fund Raising Activities and Events such as quizzes and Summer Fete to purchase much needed equipment;
- Providing refreshments at school plays, concerts and parents' evenings – over 40 events a year;
- Providing an opportunity for parents to meet and get involved with the school community;
- Providing an email notification service for OSA events and activities.

**OSA Committee Meetings:** Committee meetings are typically held on the first Monday of the month (term time), 7:30pm. The next meeting will be on Monday, 5<sup>th</sup> June, in the Old Library. Please do come and join us. We meet in a convivial and enthusiastic atmosphere looking for ways to support the school community.

**OSA Website:** [www.theosa.org.uk](http://www.theosa.org.uk) – Remember to check the OSA website where you can find all the electronic addresses to which you can send your comments, suggestions and kind offers of help.

**Easy Fund Raising:** Shopping online via the Easy Fund Raising website is a great way to make money for the school without any extra cost (and time) to you. So far this has raised £16,130 for the school. Over 4,300 shops and sites will donate to Owens School Association for FREE when you use **easyfundraising** to shop with them.

These donations really help us and all you have to do is use **easyfundraising** when you're ordering the things you'll be buying anyway. See the link below:

[https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/owensschoolassociation/?utm\\_campaign=raise-more&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_content=rm-c20](https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/owensschoolassociation/?utm_campaign=raise-more&utm_medium=email&utm_content=rm-c20)

**Match Funding:** Are you an Owen's parent who works for a blue-chip or multinational company? You may actually be! Many companies offer a Match Funding scheme as a perk for employees who volunteer their time for charities like the Owen's School Association. We would love to hear from you! Please contact Keily or Simon at [matchfunding@theosa.org.uk](mailto:matchfunding@theosa.org.uk)

**Nearly New Uniform:** kindly remember to recycle and donate school uniforms items. Containers labelled 'OSA Nearly New Uniform' are located through the main Reception doors on the right-hand side walkway.

The next Nearly New Uniform online sale will be open at Friday, 30<sup>th</sup> June, at 5pm and close on Friday, 7<sup>th</sup> July, at 5pm (items collection – Friday, 14<sup>th</sup> July, after school). If you would like to lend a hand in this endeavour in the future, please email to [uniform@theosa.org.uk](mailto:uniform@theosa.org.uk).

**CLEARING OUT UNWANTED UNIFORM:** Since we will be running an online uniform shop soon and will be selling at the new Year 7 Introduction Evening, we need more uniform items. Please hand in your unwanted uniform in the collection bins through the reception doors. By doing so you are helping families save costs and also making a sustainable contribution to the environment.

**Refreshments:** If you've been to any of the school events, you must have enjoyed refreshments in intervals and wondered who caters them. Well, it is with great pleasure that OSA can serve the school community in this humble way. We'd like to invite you to serve with us: pick any upcoming event and share your time and smile. It doesn't have to be much time, often it is as little as half an hour (of course, you may enjoy it so much that you'll ask to stay longer). Please email to [refreshments@theosa.org.uk](mailto:refreshments@theosa.org.uk).

**200 Club:** The OSA operates a Lottery Style 200 Club with two £50 prizes drawn per month, often with an extra draw taking place in December. Annual membership is £12 per number. For further details, please contact Deepika at [200club@theOSA.org.uk](mailto:200club@theOSA.org.uk).

To keep up to date with all OSA events and fundraising schemes, **the OSA now has an Instagram account**. There we will post links to ticketed events and the online nearly new uniform shop.

Please use the link below to start following and sharing.

Owen's School Association - Dame Alice Owen Parent Association  
(@owensschoolassociation\_dao) • Instagram photos and videos

[instagram.com](https://www.instagram.com)

A promotional poster for the 200 Club Lottery. The background is a dark blue starry night sky. The text '200 CLUB' is written in large, bold, red letters with a yellow outline and a white drop shadow. Below it, the word 'Lottery' is written in a yellow, cursive font. To the left of the text is the OSA logo, which consists of a shield with a cross and four quadrants, with the letters 'OSA' and 'OWEN'S SCHOOL ASSOCIATION' below it. The entire poster is decorated with several yellow and red stars of various sizes.

The OSA run a Lottery style **200 Club** with monthly prizes of £50 and £25, with an additional 13th draw in December.

Annual membership is £24 per number.

For further details please contact Alan Williams via [200club@theOSA.org.uk](mailto:200club@theOSA.org.uk)



## OwensFest 2023

SUNDAY 2 JULY, 12pm - 5pm

### NEW FIRST PRIZE!!

### GRAND RAFFLE DRAW

### PlayStation 5 console with DualSense controller

- 2<sup>nd</sup> prize, **£250 voucher of choice**
- 3<sup>rd</sup> prize, **Everyman Experience**  
(includes 4 tickets & £50 voucher to spend on food and drink)
- 4<sup>th</sup> prize, **£50 Smarty uniform voucher**

**The pupil who SELLS the MOST tickets WINS 2 x Thorpe Park entry tickets  
&**

**The teacher whose CLASS sells the most tickets wins £50 voucher of choice**

We could also really do with more OwensFest sign-ups. Below is a reminder of the number of ways in which you can support this year's summer festival.

- Have an **Auckland Estate Agent Board at your property** if you live in, EN5, EN4, Potters Bar, Northaw & Cuffley, Brookmans Park, Hatfield, Colney Heath, London Colney, Ridge, North Mymms and Welham Green
- **Take out a BROCHURE ADVERT to promote your business.**  
£75 for full page and £40 for half page.
- **Donate to our ONLINE SILENT AUCTION**
- **Volunteer** to help on the day or setting up on Saturday 1st July
- **Lend your gazebo** for use on the day

[OwensFest support sign-up form](#)

**Thank you for your continued support!**

## Careers Department News

A black rectangular box with a yellow diagonal banner across it containing the text "CAREER ZONE" in black capital letters.

**Year 8 Sky Studios Assembly:** Lauren Christy, a talent manager came to address the Year 8 about the myriad of roles and opportunities at Sky Studios Elstree. She emphasised that whilst many of the roles are in the creative and production areas, there are also roles in areas such as HR, finance or construction for those people who are interested in the film and TV industry but are not interested in creative or production roles.

**Year 10 Unifrog Launch:** Year 10 students were introduced to the Careers platform during an assembly on 5 May 2023 and by now have set up their own personal account and have begun to complete the various interest, personality and skills quizzes. Unifrog will then provide a wide range of information related to their interests and aspirations. Along with further assemblies and individual career discussions with Ms Stein, Unifrog will help students consider all their options post-GCSEs.

**Year 12 Lancaster University assembly:** a guest from the University of Lancaster addressed students about choosing a university and course.

**Hop into apprenticeships and T-levels:** Hertfordshire Opportunities Portal are holding a virtual careers fair for parents and carers on **Wednesday 14th June from 17:30 - 19:00** designed specifically for parents and carers who would like to explore the apprenticeship and T Level options available to their child. This event will be particularly useful for those supporting children in year groups 10, 11, 12 and 13. You can visit the HOP website [here](#) for more information and [register here](#) for the event.

*Ms A Stein*  
*Head of Careers*

## **I am not alone: Peer Mentoring at Owen's (an update)**

*'I am proud to be part of a scheme like this as mental health awareness is something I feel really strongly about.'* Year 12 Peer Mentor

This time last year I wrote about the work we had been doing at Owen's to help pupils connect through our Peer Mentoring Programme.

Since then, we have gone from strength to strength, **training a further 108 Peer Mentors** who have worked within our school community on a weekly basis, walking and talking with younger students during form time.

This means that over the last two years we have trained well over 200 sixth form students to mentor younger students within our school community and, by the end of this academic year, they will have worked with approximately 350 students, developing their understanding of wellbeing and positive mental health strategies.

### **Why we Peer Mentor**

- In the last three years rates of mental illness amongst young people have increased by 50% (The Children's Society).
- 1 in 6 (5 in a class of 30), 5 to 16 year olds have a diagnosable mental health problem (Worth It).
- The most common mental health illnesses are anxiety, panic disorder and depression (Minds Ahead)

A study by the University of Sussex found that **peer mentors had a positive impact on the mental health of both the mentors and the mentees**, with benefits including improved self-esteem, increased empathy, and reduced anxiety levels.

### **Why we focus on prevention and early intervention**

**50% of mental health problems are established by the age of 14** (Place2Be) so prevention and early intervention is key in the fight to reduce mental health illness and schools have a critical role to play as they are well placed to spot the early signs of poor mental health and emotional wellbeing.

**The mentors are doing really well.** The work mentors have been doing at Owen's has been recognised by national adolescent mental health organisation **'Worth It'**. We are now a spotlight school for 'Worth It' due to the quality and quantity of our mentoring. For more information, there is a link to the blog on their website here:

<https://www.worthit.org.uk/examples1/peer-mentoring-mental-health>

**Developing what we do.** In addition to this, we were very excited to hear we had been accepted onto a pilot programme developed by the school mental health organisation *Minds Ahead* to **deliver a level 2, externally accredited** (by the Royal Society of Public Health) qualification in **Mental Health - Peer Mentoring.**

This course is enabling mentors to work more closely with particular groups of students and individuals. It is aimed at Y12 pupils and is divided into three sections:

1. Developing our understanding of the impact of mental health on the day to day life of a young person. Identifying and learning about anxiety and depression and understanding how to access help with mental health.
2. Developing our understanding of self-leadership, self-efficacy, positive thinking styles and emotional resilience to support our own mental health and wellbeing and that of our peers.
3. Developing coaching and mentoring skills to support peers. In particular, communication and active listening skills.

Forty two Y12 students have completed the qualification this year. The material is incredible, we have all learnt so much from it. One of the students on the course sent me this reflection:

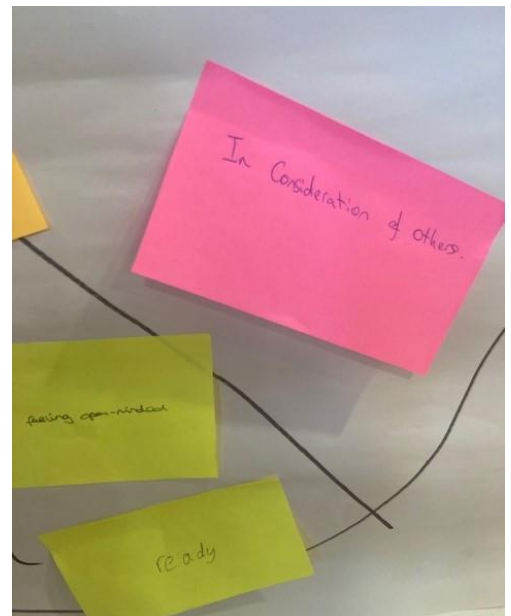
*"The peer mentoring course has been a brilliant way to explore situations and reflect on wellbeing in all forms in a comfortable open space, which I have really enjoyed. It has heightened my own self-awareness and overall sensitivity whilst also being a great forum for developing self-leadership skills. We have been able to discuss the variation of mental health and redefine with clarity the factors that impact it as well as contributing our own ideas in a collaborative way. These sessions have given me the opportunity to refine my communications skills and have introduced us to coping strategies and helpful devices for supporting others and ourselves. All of which I have consequently been more mindful of in my own experiences as well being able to suggest to others."*

**Another of the students on the course, Emilia P, has written a brilliant article "Fighting the Stigma with Peer Mentors" for *This is Local London* describing her experiences of being a peer mentoring at Dame Alice Owen's set against a more general backdrop of young people's mental health.**

You can read what she has to say here:

<https://www.thisislocallondon.co.uk/news/23491755.fighting-stigma-peer-mentors---emilia-pantelides-daos/> and below.

*Dominique Jones*  
Peer Mentoring Coordinator and Teacher of Music





## Fighting the Stigma with Peer Mentors

- In the last three years, rates of mental illness amongst young people have increased by 50%.
- Young people in the UK have higher mental health needs than ever. 1 in 6 young people in England (aged 5 to 16) experienced a mental health problem in 2020, up from 1 in 9 in 2017.
- 83% of young people with mental health needs agreed that the coronavirus pandemic had made their mental health worse.

These are just three statistics that exemplify the current mental health crisis that is sweeping the nation. The pandemic, a turbulent time which transformed life as we knew it, has taken a tremendous toll on the mental health of teenagers in the UK.

More worryingly, secondary schools are struggling to meet the needs of their students with mental health problems. 78% of young people stated that school made their mental health worse, whilst unfortunately, only 23% of school staff said they had regularly been able to access specialist support for pupils with mental health needs. These concerning statistics highlight the huge need for mental health support for teens in schools, and the lack of services available to them.

With budget cuts, a lack of training and funding, and the overwhelming rise in mental health problems amongst teenagers, schools and teachers especially are simply unable to cope single-handedly with the new mental health pandemic.

Dame Alice Owen's School has been working with Year 12 students in order to support students in the lower school, introducing a new 'Peer Mentoring' scheme in which older students spend twenty minutes a week 'walking and talking' with a younger mentee. The school works on a prevention and early intervention basis which is key in the fight to reduce mental health illnesses, as 50% of mental health problems are established by the age of 14. Schools have a critical role to play as they are well placed to spot the early signs of poor mental health and emotional wellbeing. As part of the programme, the school offers all Year 7 students a mentor as they make the daunting transition to secondary school, with the hope that mentors can provide extra support for these new students as they navigate the first few challenging months of their new school.

The Peer Mentors undertake a specialist training day prior to working with a mentee, which teaches them techniques in order to improve their listening skills, safeguarding knowledge and how to build a sense of trust with their mentee in order to support them as best they can. As well as this, the training emphasises what barriers young people may face when asking for help with their mental health and how mentors can recognise and overcome these barriers in order to reduce the stigma around the subject of mental health.

Ms D Jones, the teacher running the scheme, who was also recently commended by staff and students for her 'contribution to making students feel safe and supported' by the school's anti-bullying alliance, has emphasised the 'huge difference' made to the pupils working with mentors. She has said of the scheme, 'I have seen first-hand the power of working with young people to better understand their mental health and developing the skills to encourage positive wellbeing in themselves and others in our school community and beyond, throughout their lives. We currently have over 100 peer mentors in Y12 working with students in our school community' and this exemplifies the huge impact being made to younger students within the school.

In addition, Ms Jones is also leading a Mental Health Peer Mentoring Course, developed by the school mental health organisation, Minds Ahead, which I attend weekly. The Level 2 qualification is aimed at Year 12 students wishing to develop their understanding of mental health in relation to young people, as well as their self-leadership and communication skills. The 12-week course covers everything from what mental health is, how to spot the signs of anxiety and depression, how young people can be supported to improve their mental health and how to communicate with a mentee to address their needs as effectively as possible.

The skills and understanding acquired are then put into practice as the Year 12 students mentor younger members of the school community during the week, working more closely with particular members of the community who are already starting to exhibit signs of declining mental health. This can only be described as an excellent school initiative that will continue to go from strength to strength to provide the much needed additional support to those struggling with issues. In fact, the work mentors have been doing at Owen's has been recognised by the national adolescent mental health organisation 'Worth It'. Dame Alice Owen's is now a spotlight school for 'Worth It' due to the quality and quantity of their mentoring. I am extremely proud to attend a school which has taken these initiatives and is doing their utmost to remove the stigma surrounding mental health in order to ameliorate the wellbeing of students in the community.

One thing I have learnt from the course is if you are experiencing difficulties with your mental health, it is important to seek help as soon as possible. Support is available, and having someone to talk to confidentially, in a safe space with no judgement can make a huge difference.

Some services that provide free support for teenage mental health include:

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/> - Young Minds is the UK's leading charity committed to improving the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people.

<https://www.themix.org.uk/> - the Mix offers online information as well as helpline support to under-25s about anything that is troubling them.

<https://www.childline.org.uk/> Childline is a service for those under 19 to confidentially call, chat online or email about any problem.

Alternatively, text SHOUT to 85258 for free, 24/7 text support for young people across the UK experiencing a mental health crisis

*By Emilia P, Year 12*



### **Eco Committee's success**

The Eco Committee created a 3 minute video detailing the projects they have set into place throughout this academic year to help make our school more sustainable. The video was an entry for The Young People's Trust for the Environment competition and they came runners up! This came with a £1000 prize for the school to continue the Eco Committee's project!

A lot of their projects and ideas are trying to give students and staff alike ways in which they can make more sustainable choices within their own lives so do look out for the sustainability challenge of the month.



"I am so proud of their achievement – the Year 12 students wrote out the script and then organised it all between themselves to video everything, interview each other and then one of the Year 12 boys edited it all together. It was most definitely a collaborative effort. They have worked so hard throughout the school year to design engaging and interactive programmes to improve sustainability around the school and this has allowed more students to take part. They have loads of ideas and plans for the future and the money won will help them to carry out these projects," reflected teacher Mrs Knight.

We look forward to seeing how their prize money is used on future projects!

## The Library Update

Our Library theme for the term is **involvement and participation**. We would really like to encourage everyone in our school community to become more involved with the Library and with the positive benefits of books and reading.

So far this term, we have welcomed more departments to the Library for reading and research projects in their subject areas; worked with the Literacy Coordinator to trial bringing year 10 students back to library lessons in English; held library information sessions for sixth-form students starting work on their Extended Project Qualifications; offered our space as the venue for a staff training event; and perhaps most exciting, have recently taken delivery of an order of brand-new books which were all requested or recommended by members of the school community.

Now we would like to invite parents and carers to become involved with DAOS Library too!

Here are a few simple ways for you to help us:

1. The most important thing of all: please keep sharing books and reading for pleasure with your young people - model the importance of reading, take an interest in what they are reading, help them to find reading material that really sparks their excitement and find ways to keep sharing stories with them. As well as all the other benefits that books bring, they are a great way to connect!
2. Please support students to use their school library - encourage them to take time to come to the library, to explore what we have to offer, to look after their library books and return them on time! Students can find an explanation of how to use the library and answers to many of their FAQs on the DAOS Library Google site, which can be accessed via the Student Launchpad.
3. We will be running a book stall at the OSA Summer Fair - please come and say hello and support us with your spending money!
4. We would be very grateful for new adult volunteers to help in the Library. No experience necessary. If you can spare even a small amount of time on any weekday, please get in touch via the school office.

Happy reading everyone!

*Dr Hazel James MA LIS*  
*Librarian*

## Chess News

Our chess team played in the final Repechage Event for the National Schools Chess Championship this term and performed well in a new format that many had not played in before. Schools who entered the event were put in to two leagues of 10 and there were 3 rounds for each board number in a mini league format.

Overall, we scored 9 points out a possible 18 and came 5<sup>th</sup>, which means that we are finally knocked out of the NSCC for this year.



Well done to all the team who were – Rock Y, Rufus J, Stephen G, TaoHai K, James C and Rachel G!

*Mr Simpson*  
*Director of Chess*

## Duke of Edinburgh

The start of the summer term has seen the return of the DofE expeditions.

Just before Easter, 25 intrepid explorers headed off to the Bannau Brycheiniog (Brecon Beacons) to complete their Gold practice expedition. Unfortunately, the weather was not too kind, providing challenging cold wet conditions. The students, however, showed great strength of character completing a demanding expedition climbing peaks, such as Sugar Loaf Mountain, in order to finish their practice expedition.

Well done to all the participating Year 12 students and I look forward to seeing them complete their assessed expedition in the Lakes in July.





The Year 10s have started off their D of E careers with 95 students taking part in two Bronze expeditions that took place in April and May.

Students completed their practice expeditions in the local area developing their navigation and campcraft skills preparing them for their assessed expeditions in September and October.

Well done to all students that completed their Bronze practice expeditions and I look forward to seeing them complete their



assessed expeditions in the Chilterns next term.

The next expedition to take place will be the Year 11 Silver expedition on 1-3 July.

This is the final part of the award for many students after which they will have completed their award, a great achievement indeed.

*Miss A Lord*



## Young Students' Success Stories

It was a rapturous round of applause, the largest round of applause that had ever happened to me in my eleven years of existence. 'How did it come to this?' I can almost hear you whispering these words as you read my article. Well don't worry, for I will tell you.

It all started with a charity called foodbankaid, which has been collecting and distributing food to foodbanks in North London for the last two years now. This year they held their annual 36-hour fundraising campaign in March with the aim of raising £1 million, in total they raised over £1.2 million. I was called to their HQ, where the CEO set up a fundraising page for me. I began to call all of my contacts, then other people, then people who knew people, asking them all to donate to the fundraising page. Through a lot of convincing calls over the span of two days, I personally managed to raise a total of £1742 for the charity!

Then my brother in Y12 happened to mention it to Mrs Lofthouse on the 22nd March. She told Dr Mitchell, my form tutor, who somehow managed to persuade me to do an assembly to the whole of Year 7.

How do you prepare for an assembly for 199 eleven year olds?

With practice.

I finally told my dad that I had to do an assembly in three days. That was when I actually started creating and practising my speech. At first when I started trying to come up with some ideas of what I should say in my assembly it was quite hard, but with some time and definitely no help from my family (sarcasm!) ...it was ready. Saying it was easy, just imagine that you're talking to your friends but slow down a lot. Try recording yourself, it really helps.

Then on Tuesday 25th April, I stood in front of 199 Year 7s and did my assembly. It was fun and not stressful at all. During my assembly it was almost like talking with my friends and it came naturally. Please try and organise an assembly for yourself, I have really enjoyed this experience and I am sure it could benefit any student greatly in later life. Thank you.

*By Yacoub I, Year 7*



On the stage, Yacoub was joined by Zac M, Year 7, to share about the charity work he had done. After the earthquakes in Turkey and Syria, Zac was moved to create something for the victims. His art was auctioned by a charity and it raised an amazing £900!

Zac shared with his peers that he felt that when a natural disaster strikes, the impact can be devastating for the people and communities affected. It is important to come together and support relief efforts any way we can.

In Zac's own words, "I chose to create a painting that reflected the strength and resilience of the people of Turkey."

Amazing achievement, Yacoub and Zac! Keep up the good work!

*Mrs Sarah Lofthouse  
Year 7 Pastoral Director*

## The Big Sleepover

On the evening of the 12<sup>th</sup> May, over seventy Year 7 students gathered at school, along with many members of staff, for the Owen's first ever Big Sleepover! The event was organised to raise money for the 'Turkey - Syria Earthquake Appeal 2023'.

Throughout the evening, we all participated in many fun activities run by our Sixth Formers. We got to play a huge bingo game (which I was lucky to win!), a card drawing contest, a house football competition and various other team-building games. Later on, it was amazing to see everyone join in for a huge 'Just Dance' performance! For dinner Mrs Blackburn (or should I say 'Chef Blackburn') and the teachers cooked up some pasta which we all enjoyed very much!

Then, all of us - teachers included - watched a film before heading off to bed. Overall, it was a very memorable, fun night with sweets galore! Most importantly, we raised over a whopping £1000 which went towards helping people affected by the earthquake in Turkey and Syria.

A huge thank you to all the teachers and Sixth Formers who gave up their time to organise this successful event!



*By Angelica B, Year 7*





## March of the Bins marching to RA

March of the Bins, Sam's stop motion animation, has been selected out over 21,000 entries to be exhibited both online and at the Royal Academy of Arts for the Young Artists' Summer Show.

This work was inspired by the impact of lockdown. In Sam's own words:



“Following the lockdowns that disrupted schools over 2020 and 2021, I imagined what lonely places school sites must have felt during the pandemic. I thought of the site coming to life as it lay undisturbed with no students around. To show this, I planned a stop motion of the numerous, usually static bins coming to life on the desolate school site. To replicate the emptiness of lockdown, I came to school together with my two friends, Charlie and Eiden, on an inset day in order to film the stop motion undisturbed.”

Congratulations to Sam, Charlie and Eiden in Year 12 and we look forward to seeing the animation at the Royal Academy of Arts from the 18th July.

Follow the [link](#) to watch the animation.

## Raleigh Lecture at Drapers' Hall

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of May, Mr Bird took some keen Business and Economics students to the annual Raleigh Lecture at Drapers' Hall which is organised by The Company of Entrepreneurs. The theme this year - 'Is Enterprise Sustainable?' and here is a write up of the event by A-Level economist Finlay A.

Before setting out for Drapers Hall, I was unsure of what to expect. Would we be met with a highly interesting talk, filled with energetic economists ready to share their knowledge, or a dusty hall filled with half asleep people listening to an old economist ramble on? Before we left, both options had crossed my mind, and I was fearful that it could be the latter. In reality, it was neither of these options, and the experience as a whole surprised me.

Before we arrived at Drapers Hall, the ten of us or so that were on the trip visited the Bank of England Museum. A classic tourist attraction in London, we popped in for half an hour. Despite being a small museum, it holds a lot of value and information. Some activities included making banknote puzzles and balancing an inflation ball, and although these activities may have been for younger children, it didn't stop us from trying them anyway. After these fun activities at the entrance, we moved into the exhibits and into the more serious sections of the bank.

The main exhibit of the museum, and the focus of our visit was the Slavery exhibit. In my opinion, it was truly thought-provoking. The largest and, in my opinion, the most important part of the museum, it offered an insight into how reliant the British economy was on slavery. It changed the way I thought about the bank, and I think it's really important to acknowledge the impact slavery had on this country during its growth and development. It's important to realise that without the horrible action of the slave traders, it's likely that the industrial and economic revolution would have happened, and this left a lasting impression on me. Overall, the museum was a great experience, and definitely taught me a thing or two.

After our visit to the bank, it was time for the main event, and after a quick stop in Tesco's we entered the Drapers Hall. I think one of the initial reactions after entering the place was that we didn't belong there. Furnished with gold and glass, it was an intimidating sight, and definitely let everyone involved know that the event was going to go a certain direction. After dropping off our bags in the cloakroom, we climbed the stairs to the lecture hall. Hundreds of years old, the hall was again full of gold and glass mirrors. As we walked in, the first surprise of the evening was just how many young people were attending. With over ten schools all sending their groups of young economists, it was almost a surprise to see all these young people in such a traditional and old building.

After we had settled into our seats, the topic of discussion for the evening was introduced, and there's no surprise as to why it was chosen to be sustainability. As a large cause for concern in the world at the moment, it made sense to discuss and to try and raise awareness amongst the young people. After a brief introduction by the head of the Drapers company, we were split into random groups and engaged in a discussion about issues relating to the environment. Although interacting with random people was certainly out of my comfort zone, I found it to be surprisingly easy to express my views and interact with the group around me.

The group I was in seemed to be highly aware of current affairs and issues, and this allowed for a highly interesting and intelligent debate. Although the focus was around sustainability, and what could be done to solve it, the discussion eventually branched off into wider economics, and this also interested me. One of the main points made was that there need to be answers to the

problems about climate change – it's not enough to sit there and discuss only what's going wrong. Heavy criticism was put on the large companies, and we came to the conclusion that they need to do more.

In my opinion, this collective workshop was the most interesting and informative part of the evening. It was useful to discuss our ideas with people we hadn't met before, and with the guidance of our supervisor, we were able to make really good points and it definitely helped to elaborate on my prior knowledge about sustainability.

After this group discussion, we moved onto the annual lecture from the Drapers, and in particular Tim Bovey. During his speech, he highlighted the need for companies to be regulated by governments, the necessity of prioritising societies over markets, and in particular the importance of materiality. He focused on how as companies grow, they need to make more detailed reports about how sustainability not only affects them, but also their impact on sustainability. This is the process of 'Double materiality'.

After this talk, we were led to the dining hall. Here, the true wealth of the establishment was shown, as we were offered a variety of foods, one of which was caviar. Despite its reputation for being a delicacy, it just tasted like salmon to me. Although the caviar was something of a disappointment, there was enough chicken to sufficiently feed us, and overall, the food was very nice. This also gave us an opportunity to interact with the other schools in a more informal environment, and this was another useful and interesting experience.

After everyone had been fed, we returned for the last part of the evening, a Q and A with five experts in all sorts of subjects. With a healthy mix of academics, this meant that there was a good variety in responses to questions, and this left room for discussion and debate. What really impressed me was the depth of questions asked by the students at the event. A variety of questions were asked, and my personal favourite was one relating to the introduction of AI such as ChatGPT. I thought it was a really interesting topic to link to sustainability, and the debate that this caused also made me think about the future. It seemed like the younger people in the room were contributing more than the adults during this session, and I think that that is really promising for the future. Although the experts being questioned all slightly disagreed on their approaches to solving the problems we have, they all produced statements of value, and made me think a little more about my role in sustainability.

Overall, the trip was an interesting and informative experience. The thing that really stood out to me was how invested the people attending the event were. Everyone seemed to bring their own previous knowledge to the table, and this meant that almost every discussion was worthwhile and interesting.



Although during some parts of the experience I felt like I was being dictated to, for the most part I felt like my opinion was listened to and in general I think any questions were answered extremely well.

A key takeaway for me after the event was that I need to do more for sustainability, and it made me think about how I will need to implement these changes in my future.

*Mr Simpson  
Head of Economics*

## Henry, Y12, wins Brearley Essay Prize 2023

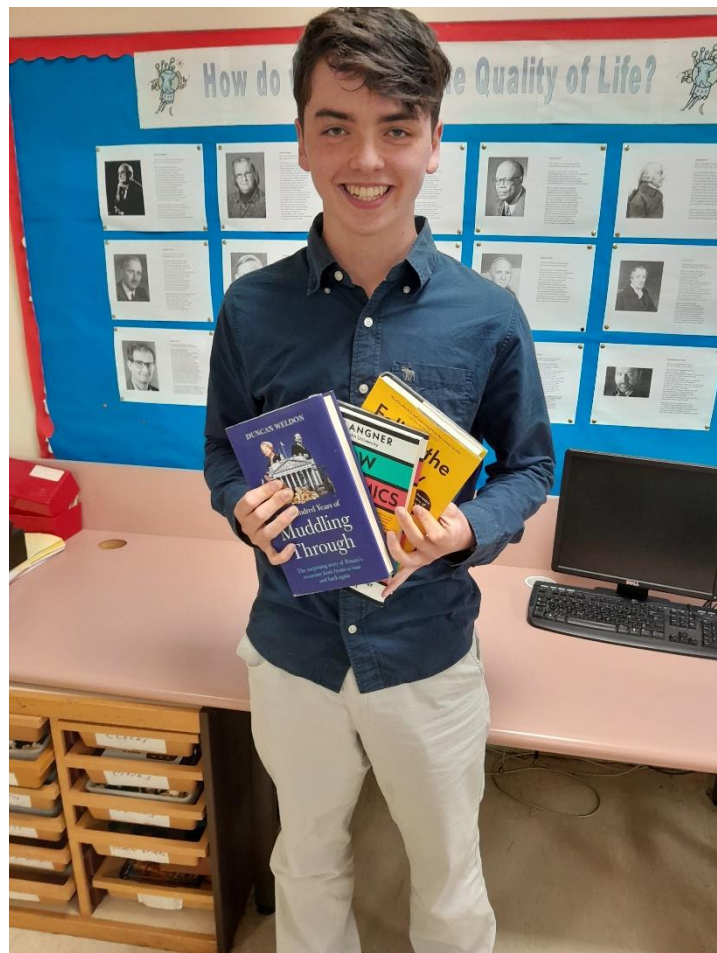
Henry R in Year 12, has won the prestigious Brearley Essay Prize 2023. This competition is run by The Stubbs Society for Foreign Affairs and Defence, an undergraduate society hailing as the oldest officially affiliated paper-reading and debating society at the University of Oxford.

The society was named in honour of Victorian historian, William Stubbs, in 1884, and throughout its history it has welcomed many important speakers across the humanities and sciences sector including Sir Malcom Rifkind (Foreign Secretary, Defence Secretary), Kate Adie (Chief News Correspondent for BBC News), Sir Mark Sedwill (Head of the Civil Service) and Wazhma Frogh (Afghan women's rights activist).

Henry's essay entry on 'What makes a country powerful?' was one of a plethora of extremely high standard entries this year, making his achievement ever more impressive.

When asked about his prize winning essay, Henry remarked, "What appealed to me about the question was just how broad it was; the concept of 'power' is not easily defined, and there are numerous contending arguments out there as to what makes a nation powerful. The winning feeling was incredible - it was so unexpected! It's that feeling when you realise that those long and stressful nights spent dedicated to something were not done in vain. In future I hope to study Economics and/or History!"

Henry's essay can be read in full [here](#).



## Prestigious Christopher Tower Poetry Competition 2023

Lauren L, Y12, was a runner up in the prestigious Tower Poetry Competition 2023 run by Christ College at University of Oxford. Lauren's poem, "**A Black Girl Fears the Sun**", received a commendation by the judging panel.

The competition has been running for over two decades and is considered the most lucrative prize for young poets in the UK. The judging panel bursts with acclaimed writers such as Julia Copus, Gail McConnell and Peter McDonald. This year's theme, 'The Planets', ignited the imaginations of young people across the country and the judges were overwhelmed with over 1,700 entries – a Tower Poetry record! In the end, thirteen poems were chosen anonymously by the panel, with a top three followed by ten highly commended writers.

After speaking with Lauren, post the award ceremony, she said, "I feel really honoured! For me the poem was a welcome challenge to write, and as a writer I felt really liberated in its form, as well as its exploration of the subject matter, which I hope encapsulates some of the social issues so prevalent right now and encourages people to see race in another light."

Lauren was invited alongside all thirteen shortlisted poets to attend the awards ceremony at Christ Church, Oxford. "Attending the awards ceremony was a very surreal moment, as I had never envisaged myself getting to that point. Surrounded by the picturesque college, English tutors, and other incredible young poets, the day will definitely not be something I'll forget. I would like to thank all my family, friends and teachers for their ongoing support."



**A Black Gir Fears the Sun**  
*a golden shovel*

These days spread like caramel, sticking to my fingers like the ashes you gave him. **He**  
Is haloed and here again, rising like helium. I must be dreaming. In this eclipse there **is**  
A tree that wears leaves and a memory that is stuck in main sequence. Then **a**  
Boy beneath, who's too bloody to resemble the moon. In this light, I am almost **celestial**  
With my skin stifled of glow like every other black **body**,  
Except effulgent you, who has wandered in and **distinguished**  
Itself as shadow after being laid to rest, if sounds **from**  
Their mothers' throats are silenced. In space it is quiet. My eyes are **fixed**  
Anywhere but here. During summer, my ancestors plough **stars**  
Endlessly. They do not know what it is like to be free **by**  
Name. It is like **having**  
Skin that burns in your light and chars itself like **an**  
Act of self-sacrifice. They tell me *tek tem* like it is **apparent**  
I am constantly turning in my sleep, whilst you haven't even begun the **motion**  
Of rotating from your grave at dawn. I wish the sunset **of**  
Earth was blue. And you could feel as I do. This boy doesn't deserve death and **His**  
Orbit. This boy deserves to radiate warmth instead of the darkness that's his **own**.

*'tek tem'* - a Krio term meaning be careful

## Year 7 Trip to Rochester

The History Department were delighted to have the opportunity to take Year 7s to Rochester to further enrich their understanding of their current topic of the Norman Conquest. We visited the castle, cathedral and Guildhall Museum. Students were given the opportunity to explore the castle and imagine what it would have been like to be present in the famous siege of 1215. Students were also given a guided tour of the cathedral and particularly enjoyed seeing the painting of the Wheel of Fortune which dates back to the 1200s, depicting how money and fortune cannot equate to true happiness and that life is a continual cycle of high and low moments. In the Guildhall Museum students were given an educational talk about the History of Rochester and how the Norman Conquest changed the city. Students were able to hold replicas of Norman armour, use catapults and some were even chosen to dress up as a Norman knight!

The Year 7s were also given free time in the historic High Street, and were amazed by the wide variety of shops. The students particularly enjoyed the sweet shop, with the shopkeeper commenting on how well behaved they were and their impeccable manners.

When asked to summarise the trip, we received the following delightful comments "It is impossible to describe how fun it was", "It was so interesting to find out how King John sieged his own castle!" and "I enjoyed the whole trip!"

All the accompanying staff expressed that the students displayed exemplary behaviour and were greatly impressed about how well they represented the school. The whole department was grateful to have been able to take the Year 7s on this trip and to see them enrich their learning.







## Maths Challenge Results

Earlier this term 255 pupils from Years 7 and 8 sat the UKMT Junior Maths Challenge with the following results: 63 gold medals, 61 silver medals and 61 bronze medals.

40 pupils were invited to sit the Kangaroo round this year. Congratulations to them all! Special congratulations go to William H, TaoHai K and Rachel G who were invited to sit the Junior Olympiad. William and TaoHai also jointly received best in school. Ansh M achieved best in Year 8.

The following students were invited to sit the Kangaroo round on 14th June.

### Year 7

Daniel G, Katherine M, Sienna S, Yuhan J, Anna F, Rowan W, Michelle X, Gianluca E, Kayne S, Zishan S, Reva T, Sasha B, Yeshan S, Anaya P, Shanti B, Max G, James C, Adaugo N, Daisy O, Sam S, Edward S, Samuel B, Sheneli G, Diana S and Sayuri B.

### Year 8

Ansh M, Imogen N, Adam S, Henry B, Hannah J, Bryan X, Artian K, Rahee D, Sreehari A, Aidan M, Raphael S, Ammiel G, Junaid I, Ira B and Freya M.

We wish them all good luck and look forward to the results.

*Susan Hughes*  
*Maths Teacher*

## Year 7 Mathematics National Finals

On 19 April, the Year 7 Maths Team, consisting of William H, Anaya P, Kayne S, and TaoHai K, participated in the Year 7 Mathematics National Finals! There were many contesting schools, some even having multiple teams.

The challenge consisted of 2 General Maths rounds, a Memory Round and an Estimation Round. However, despite the complex problems and the moments of stress, the DAOS team managed to obtain full marks on both of the General Maths rounds, and did nigh perfect in the Memory and Estimation rounds. Overall, they came second, only a few marks away from 1st place! The team did extremely well, and proved the academic reputation of Dame Alice Owen's School.

*Caroline Bond*  
*Maths Teacher*

## Year 8 Maths Team Bags a Spot in the Herts Finals

The Year 8 Maths Team have advanced to the finals of the Herts for Learning Year 8 Maths Challenge, achieving the highest score ever seen in a heat round! With a total of 226 points out of a maximum of 240, they have proven themselves to be accomplished mathematicians. Below is a breakdown of their scores:

Round 1 - General Maths: 60/60

Round 2 - Memory Round: 51/60

Round 3 - Estimation: 55/60

Round 4 - General Maths (Harder): 60/60

Here is what the students have to say about the incredible victory:

Ira B: "This was a brilliant win for Dame Alice Owen's, and we look forward to proving our school even more in the finals!"

Ammiel G: "It was a fantastic event! Our results were way beyond anything that I could've expected!"

Artian K: "I found the event really exciting and I think that it was a great way to further push our mathematical skills."

Ivy L: "It was an incredible chance to showcase our skills and represent the school while working with a wonderful team to do so Year 8 Maths Challenge - Owen's Bags a Spot in the Finals with a RECORD-BREAKING Score!!!

*Ammiel G, Y8*

## Spanish Exchange trip to Valladolid

After the disruption of the Covid years, we are delighted to report the return on the Year 10 Spanish Exchange with our partner school in Valladolid.

Day trips in Valladolid, Salamanca and Burgos saw our brilliant Year 10 students throwing themselves into a whole host of tasks designed to take them out of their comfort zones and develop their cultural and linguistic awareness. Mr Meekin, Mr Festa, Miss Sahota and Mrs Portman-Pope witnessed our youngsters demonstrating superb problem-solving skills and great enthusiasm to make the most of the opportunities on offer. Spending a week with their host families allowed Owen's students to be fully immersed in the Spanish lifestyle, experience wonderful food and hospitality. Some have said it was the best week of their life and have made friends for life.

Well done to all involved!

*Mr Meekin*  
*Spanish teacher*



## DAOS Senior Percussion Ensemble: The Royal College of Music Festival of Percussion 2023

On Sunday 7th May, 'Coronation Sunday', the DAOS Senior Percussion Ensemble took part in the Royal College of Music Festival of Percussion. Performing a range of pieces, including music by Michael Jackson, Metallica's *Master of Puppets* and music from *the Lion King*, they had the opportunity to work with and receive feedback from professional percussionists and staff at the Royal College of Music, including the Principal Percussionist of the BBC Symphony Orchestra, staff from the RCM Jazz Department and a west end show drummer. Their audience was suitably impressed with the tutor feedback referring to "a great kit drummer" and "a strong groove" and "very confident xylo and vibe parts all held together with bass and drums".

Well done to James, Henry, Cassius, Evie, Pavel, Aarav, Matthew and Mirai!

Thank you to Ms McChrystal for organising the trip.



## **Athletics**

### **Under 14 Boys**

The boys team have been working hard on their individual and team performances and have shown that they are heading in the right direction. On the 19th May the boys competed in the Herts round of the Track and Field cup against some very strong schools across the county. All the boys performed well and demonstrated a great attitude in their events.

### **Under 14 Girls**

The U14 girls athletics team have got off to a fantastic start after three County League meets. After three meets the girls sit at the top of the table with a comfortable 20 point league. In the second meet the girls only dropped one point finishing with an amazing 64 out of 65 points. Some brilliant individual performances throughout all the meets, a particular shoutout to Isla and Mahdi who have been consistently winning their events so far a year young!

On Friday 19th May the girls competed in the Herts round of the Track and Field cup, where there were some amazing performances which contributed to the girls winning the round.

### **Under 16 Boys**

The boys team has started the season off strongly and have demonstrated some great performances and after three meets are sitting in 2nd position, which currently has them on course to make the county league final later in the summer term. Hope the boys can continue to perform well to allow them to do this. On 19th May the boys competed in the Herts round of the Track and Field cup where they performed well and came 4th on the day against some strong opposition.

### **Under 16 Girls**

The U16 girls have similarly got off to a very strong start at the halfway-stage of County League meets. After three meets the girls sit 2nd in the table which is a great position to be in to try to progress to the county final. The girls had a very good team performance at Meet 2 as well as Meet 3 where multiple pupils had to step in with others away on tips. We have had some fantastic individual performances, a big shout out to Frankie and Emily who have consistently won their field events each week. On 19th May the girls competed in the Herts round of the Track and field cup and came 3rd on the day against some strong schools from across the county.

### **Saturday morning friendly fixture**

Some of our athletes from Year 7-10 also had the opportunity to go to Brentwood School on a Saturday morning for a friendly meet. This was a brilliant chance for pupils at the start of the season to experience some competitive races and events at such amazing facilities.



## Cricket

### Year 7 Boys

The Year 7 boys played their first friendly match against Lochinver on Wednesday 17th May. It was a solid start in the field, bowling Lochinver out for 95. However, in tricky batting conditions, the boys were unable to chase down the runs, losing by 24 runs.

### Year 7 Girls

The girls have made a great start to training sessions and enjoyed a session with Herts County Cricket coach Rebecca. They are really looking forward to their first friendly fixture on 12th June against Mill Hill School.

### Year 8 Boys

The boys played their first friendly against Lochinver School. A special mention should be made for Franklin W's excellent batting performance, scoring a great half century.



### Year 8 Girls

We have had a great turnout at training this season. We have been extremely fortunate to have a visiting coach, Rebecca, from Herts County Cricket. Rebecca's focus has been introducing the girls to hard ball cricket with great success.

The girls A and B teams played their first friendly matches on Wednesday 17th May against John Warner School. In a closely fought match the Bs won by 7 runs.



Congratulations to player of the match Ava M. The A team won by 79 runs.

Well done to Hannah J who was awarded player of the match.





### **Year 9 Boys**

The boys played their first friendly match against Chancellors on Thursday 18th May and won comfortably by 80 runs.

### **Year 9**

The girls played their first friendly against Marlborough on Wednesday 17th May. The girls batted brilliantly scoring 78 runs and lost no wickets. They then bowled the opposition out for 48. What a great start! Special mention to player of the match Ellie J.

### **Year 10 Boys**

The Year 10 boys got off to a flying start in their first match, a friendly against Chancellors. They won by 8 wickets. Congratulations to player of the match Sam G.

### **Year 10 Girls**

In their first game of the season the team played Aldenham School. A nail biting match went all the way to the last ball where the girls unfortunately lost by 1 run. A special mention goes to Evie who took 3 wickets and captain and player of the match Neha.

## **Tennis**

### **Year 7&8 Girls**

The U13A team had their first County tennis match against St Edmund's College, this term. They had a great start with a 8-4 win overall. Well done to Anaya, Clara, Dinelly and Freya.

Freya and Clara were also involved in a friendly match against Aldenham which was great experience for both girls.

The girls also have their next County match against Queenswood next week.

### **Year 7&8 Boys**

The U13B team had their first County tennis match against St Edmund's College, a fantastic start for the boys where they won the match 10-2 overall. Great work by Markos, Murat, James and Alex.

The U13A team faced Aldenham in their first County match. The boys fought well against a very strong opposition. Well done to Taohai, David, James and Albert.

Next week both teams face Hitchin Boys in their next matches.

### **Year 9&10 Girls**

The U15A team had a very difficult first match in the County facing St Edmund's College. The girls fought well against difficult opponents but lost overall 10-2, well done to Mia who won her singles!

The girls have lots of upcoming County matches next week against Queenswood, Sandringham and RMS.

## Year 9&10 Boys

The U15A boys have their first County tennis match against Sandringham next week as well as more following after half term.

## U14&U18 Girls – County Doubles Tournament

For the first time in many years, we were able to take pupils to the County Doubles tournament which this year for the girls was hosted at HABS girls' school. We took two pairs consisting of Anaya and Aduago and Ellie and Mia in the U14 competition as well as one pair of Alice and Dyllen for the U18 competition. All girls' pairs did fantastically with Aduago and Anaya finishing 5th overall, a brilliant result as they are both two years young. Mia and Ellie finished 4th overall, just losing out in the Semi-final and 3rd/4th play-off. Finally, congratulations to Alice and Dyllen who finished runners-up, just losing out to Sandringham in the final.





## Other Achievements

On Sunday 23rd April Rosie K took part in a regional diving competition at The London Aquatic Centre in Stratford. She dived very well and as a result she qualified for the National Diving Skills Championships. These are to take place in the Summer on 14th & 15th July 2023.

The Under 14 Girls' Football team played St. Clement Danes School in the County Final on Friday 21st April. It was an extremely even contest and could have gone either way but St. Clement Danes were crowned County Champions with a 1-0 win, courtesy of a goal from their U15 England Player!

Player of the match in the final was Eva. The squad have had an amazing season and should be extremely proud. Well done!

Congratulations to Freya, Y8, who has been selected to represent Hertfordshire at Under 14 football next season.

Congratulations to Fred T who has been selected for the U15 Hertfordshire Rugby County Development Pathway.

Congratulations to Benedict V from Y13 who has been chosen to play for the GB under-21 canoe polo team, competing in various European cities this year. In France, over Easter, they finished 8<sup>th</sup> out of 20 in their division against some adult national teams.

Harry S, Raphael D and Stanley M (all Y7) and Leo T (Y9) played in the Herts Mid Handicap golf tournament at Royston golf club. They all conducted themselves brilliantly and performed very well in a field of over 30 competitors aged 11-18, playing on a very challenging course in extremely difficult conditions. They should be very proud of the way they played and will have gained valuable experience for events in coming years.

The future is bright for Owen's golf! A special mention for Stan, who has been selected to represent the county after a superb top six finish!

