

Dame Alice Owen's School

Newsletter ~ December 2023



Letter from the Head **Hannah Nemko**

Although it probably was not the first emotion we experienced when the call from Ofsted came in, we were all relieved that they were coming before the Christmas break as this allowed us to move into the holiday without having to think about inspection. The Senior Leadership Team and the Governing Body

received extensive feedback from the inspectors at the end of the two days of rigorous scrutiny and we look forward to sharing the outcomes with you as soon as we are allowed. Typically, final reports are published within 38 working days of the inspection. Thank you to all students and parents who took the time to complete the surveys and to speak to the inspectors.

The bulk of this newsletter will, once again, showcase the extraordinary number of opportunities afforded to our young people this term. We know that few of these opportunities come cheap and that, with the cost of living crisis and increased energy bills, money can be tight for many of our families. For this reason, I would like to use the rest of this space to remind you all of the benefits of signing up for **Free School Meals** for your young person, if you qualify. (**Spoiler Alert:** the benefits go far further than just an offer of a hot meal each day!)

The obvious bit: Food

If you are in receipt of certain benefits and you sign your child up for Free School Meals (FSM), the council will give the school money for your child to buy food with at school. We supplement the amount provided by the council so that your child can afford the hot 'meal deal' which consists of a main course and a dessert each day although their daily allowance can be spent on any food from the restaurant or takeaway pods that they want.



ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

OSA – ALWAYS ACTIVE

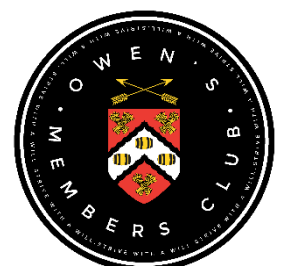
Read pp.3-5 for info.

WE DO THAT TOO!

Read more on pp.6-10.

AMAZING AUTUMN TERM

Learn more on pp.12-54. It's our school!



This money is automatically added to their catering account which means that **no other student** (and in some cases, **not even the student themselves**) **need know where the money has come from.**

Supporting academic progress and wider interests

But Free School Meals are not just about food.

The school receives extra money each year from the government to spend on helping students on FSM, as well as those students who the government deem to be disadvantaged in other ways, progress as quickly as they can. This grant is known as the Pupil Premium Grant and it is proportionate to the number of students on roll who qualify for this status.

The performance of these pupils, as a group, is highlighted in performance tables locally and nationally as the expectation is that this money will be spent in a way which helps this group of students, specifically, advance in their studies and wider learning. Often, Pupil Premium progress can fall behind that of those who are deemed not to be disadvantaged.

The way in which we spend our Pupil Premium money is set out in [this guide](#) but it can also go towards certain academic resources for your child, to subsidise curriculum trips or even some music lessons.

And supporting opportunities for the future, beyond school

Finally, to improve social mobility and ensure access for all, there are some universities who are now offering lower grade offers for places on certain courses, or who are simply more likely to offer a place to students if they have ever been in receipt of Free School Meals. Similarly, there are some employers who also look more favourably on recruiting students who the school can confirm have been deemed to have come from a more disadvantaged background.

So even if your child does not want to eat in the school restaurant, they can still benefit hugely by having Free School Meals status. To find out if you are eligible to apply, please go to [this site](#) and complete the eligibility form. The school will then be informed of any new additions.

Wishing you all the very best for the festive season and a Happy New Year.

Hannah Nemko
Headteacher

Online Safety Tip

Young people have grown up using technology for school, to form and sustain friendships and as an outlet for creativity and fun. For parents, however, the online world evolves so fast that it can be hard to keep up with the risks it may pose to our young people.

The challenge parents face is how to help children reap the benefits of the internet while also putting in place measures to keep them safe online. The NSPCC has published helpful advice about how to do this here: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

AUTUMN NEWS from the OWEN'S SCHOOL ASSOCIATION – what a finish!**OSA £35,000 Donation to School**

Following a successful year of fund raising for Dame Alice Owens's, the OSA committee met and presented Mrs Nemko with a cheque for £35,000.

This really is remarkable especially given the current economic environment. This would not have been possible without you. Thank you for coming along to the events, volunteering at these events and for all the help and time you give. This donation will be shared out across every department so that every pupil at school will benefit.

A special mention also to our match funders who are able to seek donations from their employers.

If you have signed up and expressed interest in **match funding**, please do follow up with Keily or Simon and they will explain how it works. Those few hours of help at an event, for example, makes a significant difference to the overall funds raised each year.

We would love to hear from you!
Please contact us at
matchfunding@theosa.org.uk.

**SAVE THE DATE:**

**Saturday, 20 April 2024, OSA's
50th Anniversary Ball – Tickets NOW ON
SALE**

[https://www.tickettailor.com/OSA 50th
Anniversary Ball tickets](https://www.tickettailor.com/OSA%2050th%20Anniversary%20Ball%20tickets)



Please join us in marking this special occasion and to honour fifty years of fund raising for Dame Alice Owen's School. There will be reception drinks and canapés, followed by a three course dinner along with a DJ.

Tickets are priced at £65 per person. There is also an option to book a ticket with a £10 deposit and the remaining balance to be paid by end January 2024 (including on group bookings).

Autumn Supper Quiz

On Saturday, 25th November, the hall was busy and buzzy with 150 parents and a few tables of 6th formers – all gathered to put their brains against each other in the Autumn Supper Quiz. We were fortunate again to secure Alex & Emma Gilbert as our Quiz Masters. They kept everyone on their toes quite literally with the ever entertaining game of Heads & Tails.

Simi and her outstanding team worked tirelessly throughout the day and evening preparing and serving the supper feast. While Tony & Co made sure the bar was well stocked throughout. Alongside the raffle and silent auction, there were spot prizes handed out between rounds for those who were quick off the mark.

Thank you to everyone for making the night so much fun! Below are some pictures from the night. Hopefully it will encourage you to book either our Anniversary Ball or our annual Quiz Night.



The OWEN'S SCHOOL ASSOCIATION ('OSA') NEEDS YOU... to volunteer, if you can find a little time, to support your Dame Alice Owen's School and pupils in whatever way you can, including:

- fundraising activities and events, from quizzes, the Summer Fete and Cheese & Wine Evening for new parents, to funding the purchase of much-needed equipment;
- refreshments for **over 40 events a year**, including plays, concerts, carols and parents' evenings, and
- opportunities for parents to meet and get involved in the school community.

OSA Committee Meetings: Yes, it is a 'committee', but really it is **you, current parents**, usually on the **first Monday of the month in term-time, at 7:30pm** in the Old Library above Reception in the main school building. They're informal, good-humoured and enthusiastic. The next meeting will be on **Monday, 8th January**. Please come along to try it and to meet other parents keen to support our young people and the school community.

Visit the OSA website – www.theosa.org.uk – for comments, suggestions and offers of help.

OSA 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 (or time) to you. Over 4,300 shops and sites donate to the OSA 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're buying anyway. See below:

https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/owensschoolassociation/?utm_campaign=raisemore&utm_medium=email&utm_content=rm-c20

OSA Match Funding: Are you an Owen's parent who works for a blue-chip or multinational company? You may 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 and Simon at matchfunding@theosa.org.uk.

OSA Nearly New Uniform: Please remember to recycle and donate school uniform items (and support the school's environmental sustainability efforts at the same time). Containers labelled '*OSA Nearly New Uniform*' are located through the main Reception doors, on the right-hand side walkway. Recycling of clothing helps families save costs, gives the school additional source of funding and demonstrates environmental conscientiousness. If you would like to help, please email uniform@theosa.org.uk.

OSA Refreshments: Have you been to school events, enjoyed refreshments in the intervals and wondered who provided it? That's right – the OSA serves the school community in this humble way. Kindly consider to join in, put your name on the rota, then pick any upcoming event and share your time and smile. It **doesn't** have to be much time; it could be as little as half an hour... of course, you may enjoy it so much that you'll ask to stay longer. Please email refreshments@theosa.org.uk.

OSA's '200 Club': The OSA operates a Lottery Style 200 Club with two £50 prizes drawn every month and an extra draw in December. Annual membership is £24 per number. For further details, please contact Alan at 200club@theOSA.org.uk.

OSA's Instagram: To keep up to date with all OSA events and fundraising schemes, please use this QR code to follow the OSA's Instagram account. There you'll find links to ticketed events and the Online Nearly New Uniform Shop.



SCHOOL LIFE AND BEYOND

Teaching Internships Programme at Owen's

Last summer, The Advanced Learning Partnership (ALP) offered 11 undergraduate students the opportunity to participate in the Teaching Internships Programme, in partnership with the DfE and Get into Teaching.

These students completed a three-week paid programme, which involved initially observing lessons before advancing to teaching (small group work, starter activities and whole class lessons). They received training on school policies (such as Safeguarding, Professional Interactions and Behaviours, Learning Theory etc), and they also had the opportunity to participate in activities such as sports day and trips, in order to experience wider school life.

We are delighted to be offering this programme once again to undergraduates in any year of study in the following subjects: Maths, Physics, Chemistry, Computing or a Modern Foreign Language. This year, it is also open to those studying for their Master's degree.

The idea of this programme is to encourage those who may be considering a career in teaching to experience life in the classroom. It is an excellent opportunity for undergraduates to obtain valuable work experience for their CVs; candidates do not have to have attended Dame Alice Owen's School to be eligible for this opportunity.

The placements are for three weeks and will take place from Monday 24th June until Friday 12th July 2024. Interns will be paid £300 per week. Applications open in December 2023 and the form can be found on the ALP website: www.advancedlearningpartnership.co.uk. The closing date is midnight on 31st January 2024.



Internship at The Worshipful Company of Brewers

This summer Brewers' Company members Shepherd Neame Brewery generously hosted a Brewing Internship for Dame Alice Owen's School Alumna, Ibtihaaj Koleoso.

Shepherd Neame's Quality Department hosted Ibtihaaj for 8 weeks between 1 July and 31 August, during her summer break before her second year studying Natural Sciences at Loughborough University.

Ibtihaaj challenged the laboratory team through shadowing and learning analysis and best practices from them. She not only got to spend a few days brewing at the Small Batch Brewery, but she got to create her own recipe and showcase it to the CAMRA members during their annual tour. For a project Ibtihaaj investigated haze stability in Shepherd Neame's beer, this being one of the first things customers look at when deciding if a beer is of good quality or not. Outside of laboratory and brewing work she edited and updated many of the standard operating procedures, conducted hygiene audits around production, and shadowed the engineering team to understand their processes.

This placement brought Ibtihaaj an understanding of brewing laboratories, an introduction to the basics of brewing and practical experience of science in industry. Meanwhile, having Ibtihaaj on board was a great benefit to the Shepherd Neame Production Team and helped the brewery to identify some areas for improvement which they are currently investigating.

The support of Brewers' Company members in providing this sort of invaluable, hands on experience for alumni of our schools is very much appreciated and we look forward to continuing to work with the Brewers, facilitating internships in the future.

(reprinted from The Worshipful Company of Brewers' newsletter)



The TikTok trend setter visits Owen's

On Tuesday, 5 December, DAOS welcomed the TikTok trend setter Formz. Formz is a rapper, BBC Bitesize presenter, writer, and Sky Sports commentator, working in different areas to pursue his dreams. Formz discussed with Year 7 and Year 8 students the importance of working hard at school, why education is so important, how it impacts life after school and the options pupils have after school as well as sharing his own personal stories and achievements. The talk was very uplifting and encourages pupils to work hard and reach for their goals.

The performance was also linked to bullying, which is something Formz has been affected by and a topic that he is very passionate about. Formz spoke to students about the importance of respecting everyone around us for our differences and why it is wrong to bully anyone.

We were also delighted to discover that Mrs Nemko and Mr Jackson had both previously taught Formz at another school.

The performance was also watched by one of our visiting Ofsted inspectors who was equally blown away by the powerful message that Formz delivered alongside his music.

At the end of the Year 8 session, Formz spoke to students and Zain in Year 8 asked advice about his own music. Formz quickly realised that Zain is a talented saxophone player and has invited Zain to join him in his studio to be part of his next single. Well done, Zain!



Tech Crew's Training Afternoon

On Saturday, 16th December, Owen's Technical Crew hosted a training afternoon for its members in the Main Hall. The training session took place prior to the final performance of this year's Winter Play 'Blood Wedding.' Students had the opportunity to enhance their technological knowledge and abilities with the equipment used to run school concerts, plays and musicals.

The training session was run by the Technical Directors, Alex G, James L and Lottie L, each running a specific workshop along with the assistance of other senior crew members. The training afternoon demonstrated Tech Crew's dedication and skill towards extracurricular activities and towards the school community.

Following the training, the crew prepared for the finale of the Winter Play, which concluded with appreciation and goodbye speeches, especially to the three Technical Directors, Alex, James, and Lottie, who have led the crew over the past year. They will now be handing the leadership of Tech Crew over to Ethan Brammah and Leon Shaw. *TBC)



Should any students be interested in joining the Tech Crew, please speak to Ms Sutherland, the Technical Coordinator.

Finally, we wish you all a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

By Alexander G, Technical Director

Diwali Event 2023

Diwali is a major festival celebrated by millions of people of the Hindu, Sikh and Jain faiths. It's a festival that celebrates the triumph of light over darkness and the start of new beginnings. For Hindus, it's based on the epic tale 'the Ramayana', which details Rama's triumph over the demon Ravana. The festival tends to fall between mid to late October and mid-November, but the exact date varies each year. In 2023, the main date of celebration was on Sunday 12th November. At the school, South Asian Society ran a Diwali event on Tuesday the 14th November, thanks to help from teachers, the lower school and sixth formers.



The Diwali Event was held at lunch in the main hall, and had a food stall selling Bhel puri, made of puffed rice and vegetables, as well as bhajis, samosas and mango milkshakes - all traditional snacks in South Asia.

There were also a range of game stalls linked to the theme of Diwali, such as darts, which mimicked Rama's archery to kill the ten-headed demon Ravana, or 'pin the light on the diya', representing how important the imagery of light is during Diwali.

Cup pong was another popular game involved, in which each of the cups represented a head of the demon Ravana. The event had a great turn out, with lots of competitors trying to win each game. The henna stands were highly popular!

In the lead up to the Diwali event, a rangoli pattern was also set up in the reception area of the school. Rangoli is a colourful pattern inspired by natural forms, made with powders, chalks and sometimes lentils. It's meant to herald the welcome of Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth, prosperity and fortune. Rangoli is highly auspicious, especially in the lead up to Diwali.

To sum up, the Diwali event was great fun this year thanks to all the help from everyone involved, and even managed to raise money for UNICEF, which works in eight countries in South Asia to ensure young people's rights are being met.

By Indira Sh



CHESS NEWS

It has been another busy half-term for chess with the main news being that the DAOS Chess Team has qualified for the regional stages of the English National Schools Chess Championship. In the qualifying stage we visited St. Albans School where we took on their A and B teams as well as The Beaumont School. We finished with the highest score and progressed to the next round, where we will face Mill Hill County High School in January. Our team consisted of Rock Y, Rufus J, Stephen G, TaoHai K, James C and making his debut Uthmaan K.



On the same day, we also saw the DAOS Girls Team take part in the 'She Plays to Win' tournament for the first time. This is an online tournament for schools that is encouraging girls to take up chess. Despite only 3 members in the team, we finished in the impressive 5th place. The team were Rachel G, Olivia G and Diana S.

Well done to them and hopefully we can have more players joining in soon.

In the National Online School Chess League, we continue to perform well finishing the year on a high note – we came first with a terrific score of 60 points.

The B Team also demonstrated some strong performance with the debuts in the tournament from Archie I, Akshay M, Jacob S, Kian T and Vishnu P. The B team have managed to win the 2nd division once and have gained promotion again after coming 2nd in the most recent league. So well done to them, captained by Ridhuan Z.

Happy chess playing everyone and have a lovely Christmas!

Mr Simpson, Director of Chess

Our charity chess competition on Tuesday, 28th November, was well attended by students of all ages and we had 33 participants from Y7 to Y12! Congratulations to Rock Y (Y8) who won the competition after beating Stephen G (Y12) in the final! We raised £36 for the London Air Ambulance and hope to run a similar competition later in the year.

By Jacob Sh, Year 10

1	DAOSChess	DAOS_RJ 17 + 14 + 12 + 11 + 6	60
2	Tiffin A team	SomeBritTwit 10 + 9 + 8 + 8 + 8	43
3	WHSB 2023	WhsbEjs19 10 + 10 + 9 + 8 + 6	43
4	St Paul's School A	LiamCleryChess 14 + 8 + 6 + 6 + 3	37
5	St Paul's School B	A1G987 10 + 10 + 7 + 4	31
6	West Buckland School	VinG4205_WBS 12 + 9 + 6 + 2 + 0	29
7	Tiffin B team	TS-AJP-7TW 9 + 6 + 4 + 2 + 2	23



LIBRARY

The Library Update

It has been another busy half term in the library, with all our usual activities now well underway.

Library lessons have continued for Years 7, 8 and 9. This half term, students have explored the themes of Remembrance, Non-Fiction November, winter reading and festivals through text extracts, class discussion, creative writing and borrowing from themed book displays. We have also welcomed several year 12 and 13 English classes to the library to use our resources for their A-Level research. The Librarian has enjoyed visiting the Science department to hear the presentations prepared by year 7 students following their research visits to the library earlier in the term.

New stock added to the library this half term includes a selection of new books from the *Ultimate Football Heroes* series - we enlisted the help of some expert advisors from years 8 and 9 to help us select books on the most popular players, and the titles have been enthusiastically received by students! We have also started to subscribe to a range of news and leisure magazines for the first time since before lockdown. The titles available now include *The Week*, *The Week Junior*, *How It Works*, *Four Four Two*, *All About History*, *All About Space*, *National Geographic* and *BBC Music*. We have also continued to develop the range of online resources available to our students and staff. Resources available include *JSTOR*, the *Hodder Education A-Level Review* magazines, the *Complete Issues* topical issues database, *New Scientist*, *History Today* and *Britannica Schools What On Earth!* magazine, amongst others. All these resources can be accessed via the Library Google site (find it via Student Launchpad>Useful Links>Library).

We have also been delighted to host two author visits this term. In early November, the political author and commentator Ian Dunt came to speak to sixth-form Politics students about his book *How Westminster Works... and Why It Doesn't*. Meanwhile, at the end of the month, author Ciannon Smart visited the school to speak to Year 7 about her new fantasy series *Rayleigh Mann in the Company of Monsters*, about her own path to becoming a published author and about her magical 'recipe' for writing. Students and staff really enjoyed both these visits, and we are now working hard on plans for visits for other year groups later in the year!

Dr H James, Librarian

I had the privilege of attending Ciannon Smart's author visit at our school last week. Her talk not only delved into her latest book for pre-teens/teens but also offered an inspiring motivational session, encouraging us to pursue our passions in life. Learning about her writing process and gaining insights into the world of a published author was truly fascinating.

This visit was a unique and enriching experience, and I'm grateful for the opportunity to have had it right in our own school.

By Sasha, Year 7



ART

Art Workshop with Sarah Hocombe

We were delighted to welcome world-renowned fresco painter Sarah Hocombe to Owen's. Sarah studied Design at Chelsea College of Art, where she learnt mural painting skills, as well as stained glass, ceramic and constructed textile techniques. Her work is displayed and/or incorporated in public and private buildings in the UK, Europe and North America.

Sarah is a Queen Elizabeth Trust Scholar and taught at Chelsea College of Art and Design for a number of years after graduating. Sarah has devised and taught fresco, drawing and mural painting courses both in the UK and overseas.



Sarah demonstrated the techniques of malachite and overglaze painting which the students found incredibly enjoyable. Sarah was impressed by the standard of work produced as well as the disciplined approach of our young artists during the activity.

"It was a real privilege to spend time in the Art department and work with such talented and welcoming students."

We sincerely thank Sarah for delivering such a wonderful workshop and we extend our thanks to Penny Bendall, founder of the Creative Dimension Trust, for the many years of collaboration with our school, providing exciting craft based courses.

The Art Department



THE CREATIVE DIMENSION TRUST

DRAMA

Drama and Theatre Studies

We have had an incredibly busy autumn term visiting the theatre no less than three times to see *The Effect* by Lucy Prebble at The National Theatre with Years 12 & 13, *Pygmalion* by George Bernard Shaw at The Old Vic with Years 10, 1, 12 & 13 and, finally, *The House of Bernarda Alba* by Federico Garcia Lorca with Years 12 & 13.

All three productions will enable our students to have a production to review in their GCSE & A' Level Exams and take inspiration from for their devised pieces.



Our 6th Form students took their Devised Exam in November, producing a hilarious, yet thought-provoking piece entitled *Hooray for Hollywood*, which explored the murder of the film director William Desmond Taylor.

Set in the 1920s, their piece centred round real-life actors who were implicated in his murder, allowing the actors to use a range of research including the 'Hollywood Code of Conduct'. Their piece was performed to Years 10 & 11 during the day and then to parents after school allowing everyone to see the standard of work produced by our most experienced actors.

A week later, our Year 11 students sat their Devised Exam, with three pieces based on an original stimulus of a suitcase. This culminated in three incredibly different pieces ranging from *'What does it mean to be a Man?'* that allowed for poignant questioning about whether or not attitudes have changed through the eras as to a man's role in society to *'El Cartel'* which was set in a South American country and explored issues related to drug-running in a Telenovela style and and finally *'Forgotten Stories'* which was a really moving piece that explored how the victims of natural disasters should be honoured as individuals rather than statistics. Again, our Year 10 actors watched the performances in the day and parents were invited to watch the performances in the evening. Both evenings were very positive experiences for all those involved.



The much-anticipated finale of the autumn term was our production of *Blood Wedding*, written and directed by Ms Govier after Federico Garcia Lorca which took place over three nights in the Main Hall.

The roles of Leonardo Felix and the Bride were played with compelling intensity by Rotimi and Solomia who were very convincing as the couple fleeing the societal pressures that constricted them.

The culmination of their adulterous relationship was defined by the knife-fight between Leonardo and the Bridegroom, which we choreographed together. Both actors were fantastic at developing initial ideas into a really powerful coup de grâce.

There so many strong performances, including that of the Beggar played by Kat whose interaction with the Village Girls often provided comedic yet eerie interludes.



There were three prologues to introduce each of the three Acts which featured the roles of Lorca and his last lover Juan. Zach played the role of Lorca with conviction, demonstrating his strength in the face of adversity opposite Connor. The Chorus of the Disappeared spent lots of rehearsal time perfecting their moves and their use of movement and gesture created an eerie atmosphere.





The opening scene introduced us to the Mother and the Bridegroom played by Anjali and Andrew whose brilliant chemistry demonstrated the high tension caused by the murder of her husband and elder son.

It was clear that the paranoia felt by the mother revolving around knives haunted her as she stalked her son about the stage. Andrew did a particularly great job of showing his frustration, his facial expression, rolling eyes and sighs showing how he wanted to move on from his mother's suffocating hold over him.



Anjali was mesmerising to watch as she quickly moved between abject fear and controlling her son's actions.

Subsequent scenes introduced us to the Bride's family played by Jed as her father and Libbie as her maid.

The transactional agreement between the Mother and the Father was incredibly awkward and it was clear to the audience that Solomia (the Bride) was caught between duty and love. Alone with the ghost of her mother Catalina, played by Iona, suddenly the Bride's feelings were revealed in a really passionate exchange.





The roles of the Bride's cousins were played by Tabitha, Lottie and Hassini who provided a really positive and youthful foil to the Bride's anger and despair.

All three girls were particularly good at surprising the Bride by appearing through her wardrobe and reminding her of the traditional role she was battling against.

In the original play there is only one Neighbour whom the Mother talks to in order to explore her feelings regarding her son's forthcoming marriage and his subsequent demise. In this production this role was split into four roles played by Avin, Simran, Eloise and Isabella. Their use of well-timed pauses and eye-contact made for incredibly amusing moments as they gossiped about the Bride to her potential mother-in-law.



The Felix family causing so much consternation in the play were played by Lottie L as Leonardo's Mother-in-Law, Tiana as the Wife, Rotimi as Leonardo and Agapi as their daughter.

The tension in the household was really raw and was present the moment that Rotimi entered the home. Both Lottie and Tiana did a fantastic job of conveying the underlying tension and distrust that the women felt towards him. This was countered by Agapi who showed the damage that was being done conveyed in the eerie delivery of her dreams about her father's fate.

The Village Girls played by Amber, Lola, Evin, Daisy and Katya were particularly adept at conveying roles younger than themselves in their energy and bright exchanges.

However, they demonstrated that they too were fascinated by the Bride and how she was interfering with the natural order of their world culminating in their atmospheric interaction with the Moon.



The Woodcutters played by Aron, Seth, Francesco, Theo and Zander enabled a sense of camaraderie with the Bridegroom (Andrew).

Their loyalty and attempts to protect him from Leonardo were valiant, culminating in the really powerful moment when they confronted the Father and demanded that he *'Shall not Pass!'*

All the dancing in *Blood Wedding* was choreographed by students, Lottie L, Lottie M, Eva & Eloise. The routines created were a mix of traditional Flamenco and contemporary artists in order to demonstrate the way in which the Bride and Leonardo were breaking with tradition. They also created the role of the 'forest' for most of Act 3, creating an eerie atmosphere for the darkest parts of the play.



Of course, none of this would have been possible without our Stage & Technical Crew led by our Technical Manager James who did an incredible job.

The attention to detail in our lighting and sound design made sure that the production looked as professional as possible thanks to Leon, Charlie & Jacob. Our Stage & Props Managers Izzy and Olly ensured that all the scenes ran smoothly and I think they may have the record for the fastest scene changes ever!



A massive thank you to those members of staff who were involved in the show, Mr Henshaw our Assistant Director & Miss Khan who was ensured everyone got on and offstage safely every night. Thank you also to Ms Stark who painted our beautiful backdrop and to Mrs King who was on Front of House.



Producing a play is more than learning lines, it is hours of rehearsals, Sunday rehearsals, Technical & Dress Rehearsals and then, finally, the first night, a flurry of final preparations and double-checking of props and stage furniture. When the curtain goes up it all looks immaculate from the front and somehow it all comes together.

Creating a play is a labour of love and I'm glad that this was the year that I chose to stage such a mature and challenging production. Every single actor in the production gave their all, from the chorus to the leads and it is testimony to them all that they made this so special.

I'm totally looking forward to next term which will be an extravaganza of GCSE & A' Level Scripted Exams in March followed by the Spring Musical *The Addams Family*, another opportunity to see the amazing acting talent at Owen's.

Ms Govier, Head of Drama





A Nick in Time winner

Matthew P, Year 9, recently won a national writing competition for children organised by history website *A Nick in Time* (<https://www.nickintime.org.uk/>). The brief was an 'exciting connection to the past'.

Matthew's writing was inspired by his great-great-grandfather who was Provost of Coventry Cathedral during the Blitz. Inside the Cathedral as it was bombed, Provost Richard Howard bravely tried to save the building from the flames. When this was unsuccessful, he led the movement for peace and reconciliation that Coventry Cathedral is still known for today.

The competition judges said "Matthew's entry brilliantly captured the drama of a moment in time, while conveying a poignant message about humanity's need for forgiveness. His writing was elegant, evocative and exciting (crucial bit, that!)"

Matthew won a £40 book token and his entry will be published on their website.

* * *

Yesterday is History

By Emily Dickinson

Yesterday is History,
'Tis so far away —
Yesterday is Poetry —
'Tis Philosophy —

Yesterday is mystery —
Where it is Today
While we shrewdly speculate
Flutter both away.

Congratulations

To Gianluca E (Y8) who achieved an exceptional mark in his Grade 5 music theory exam this October!

N.B.: If you have an out-of-school achievement you would like to share with the school community, please feel free to send a brief description of what you have achieved along with a photo, if available, to your Pastoral Director. We'd love to know and celebrate with you!

MATHS

Year 8 Festive Maths

Last week all of Year 8 were involved in a Maths Festive Lecture hosted by 'Think Maths'. It was an interactive session where students took part in a festive lottery, made festive decorations, looked at number patterns and were introduced to the concept of binary numbers.

<https://think-maths.co.uk/merry-mathsmas/>



Year 9 Maths Masterclasses

This term, two Year 9 students, Hannah J and Ammiel G, were given the opportunity to partake in the Royal Institution Maths Masterclasses at the University of Hertfordshire. These sessions were 2,5 hours each, running biweekly, and covered a wide range of maths such as higher dimensions, fractal geometry, combinatorics, and even games such as Dobble!

Here's the students' impressions about the experience:



'It was an honour to represent the school at these masterclasses. They were exciting and when I left I felt a sense of achievement having learnt something new. They really make me think differently about everyday life and how maths is so important to the world. I can't wait to use my new skills in future maths lessons.' - Hannah J

'Each session was something completely different and out of the ordinary, taking simple, everyday things and pushing them to the extreme. I learnt a lot particularly about how you can approach problems from different perspectives, using simple tools such as result tables and matrices to discover complex and important patterns! The main thing, however, was that the sessions were very challenging, which is what made them engaging and worthwhile, and I really enjoyed the privilege of being able to attend these masterclasses.' - Ammiel G

A huge thank you to the Maths Department for arranging this incredible experience and we would highly recommend it to those who are interested!

Sixth Form Maths Challenge News

In November, 183 sixth formers sat the Senior Maths Challenge:

Eiden (Y13) was best in school by getting 116 marks- quite an achievement;

Matei (Y12) achieved Best in Year with 99 marks.

Eiden, George and Rufus were invited to sit the BMO follow on round. We eagerly await their results. 23 more people got a gold and were invited to sit the Senior Kangaroo.

Congratulations to our Kangaroo candidates: Luca, Ryan, Anwar, Elliott, Cassius, Arvin, Rufus, Antal, Sam, Lijing, Rio, Joshua, Alice, Maarten, George, Sophie, Stephen, Elizabeth, Kayan, Amelia, Jacobz, Vansheeka, Matthew, Matei.

Special congratulations to the following students who were awarded a merit: Luca, Elliott, Alice, Maarten, Matei, Kayan, Amelia.

And especially to Joshua (Y13) who achieved Best in Year and to Stephen (Y12) who achieved Best in School, scoring a magnificent 85 points.

A Level and GCSE trip to the Emmanuel Centre

On Thursday, 7 December, 30 year 11 students went to the Emmanuel Centre for the day on an excursion with the Maths Department. Over the course of 5 hours, we received 6 interactive talks about anything ranging from the real world applications of maths to the ins and outs of exam technique.

The first talk was extremely interesting, given by Dr Colin Wright (Maths Doctorate from Cambridge). We learnt about interesting patterns and sequences such as Pascal's triangle. He also showed us his amazing juggling skills, talking about the advanced mathematical calculations involved in juggling tricks.

Other speakers included:

- Matt Scroggs, a UCL graduate who showed us the advanced multidimensional topology behind arcade games.
- Sophie Maclean, a former Quantitative Trader who spoke about intricate design of maths woven into all music.
- Nicole Cozens, a GCSE examiner who demonstrated the process of marking Maths GCSE exam questions, and how to gain the most marks possible on difficult questions.
- Ayliean MacDonald, with a huge social media presence, who experimented with amusing ways to use a chessboard for various creative puzzles and chess variations.
- Dr Tom Crawford, a mathematician at Oxford, with the calculations behind the most intense sporting moments in history, such as the football World Cup Finals and Mo Farah's world record marathon run.

A huge thank you to Education In Action for organising the event and of course to Mrs Bond and Ms Gooriah for planning the trip and taking us!!!

By Zacharyaa I and Jonah R, Year 11

One of the GCSE speakers took a selfie with the audience (Tom Crawford) - please see the link to his twitter page.

We had front row seats...

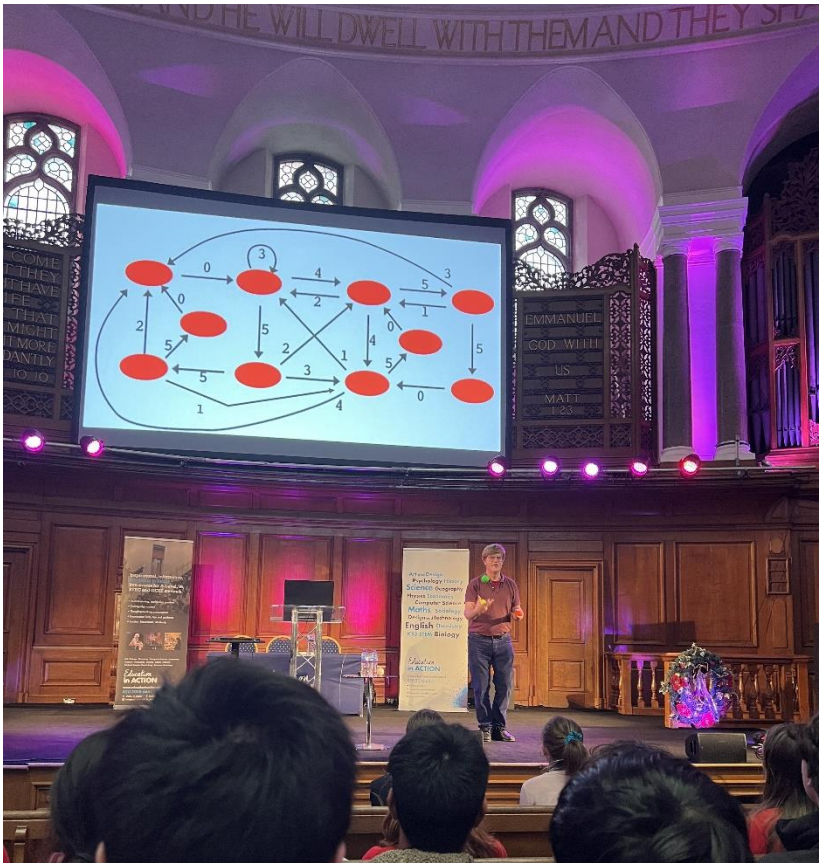
<https://twitter.com/tomrocksmaths/status/1732813388424630659>

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On Thursday, 16 November, the Further Mathematicians went on to the Maths In Action Lecture in London.

Simon Singh was an amazing speaker. He illustrated the importance of tenacity, conveying the history of Fermat's Last Theorem and the dedication of Andrew Wiles to solving it at the tender age of 10. The speech has lit a new fire for me to keep on striving no matter how impossible it may seem.

Colin Wright helped to expand my understanding of shapes, which allowed me to develop my critical thinking skills, which are required for my desired career in engineering as it allows me to understand how complex shapes are formed.



Dr Yolanda was my favourite speaker as demonstrated how Easily maths is translated to solve real-world situations and how it can be used in research to improve society.

I was truly inspired by Simon Singh's speech. His account of Andrew Wiles' dedication to solving Fermat's Last Theorem at the young age of 10 reminded me of the importance of tenacity. It ignited a newfound motivation within me to keep striving towards my goals, no matter how impossible they may seem.

By Eniola A-F, Year 12

MODERN LANGUAGES

WER FREMDE SPRACHEN NICHT KENNT, WEIß NICHTS VON DER EIGENEN

This term has been a busy and exciting one for languages students. Mr Robinson has organised many events for students in all Key Stages. Here are some of the highlights.

To celebrate German National Day and the Oktoberfest, Mr Robinson and the Restaurant Manager, Jake, organised for the whole school to experience German food in the Restaurant early in the term.



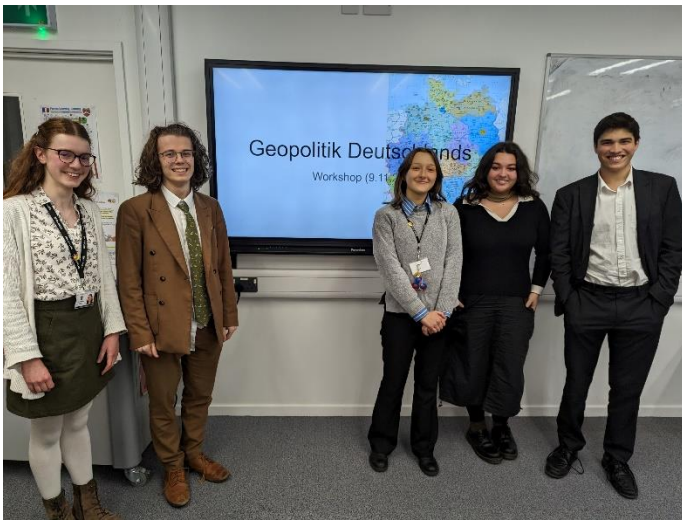
Bratwurst sausages were particularly popular among the students, as were the schnitzels and a number of scrumptious desserts.

In October, Sixth Form students joined together with linguists from across North London to take part in an evening Symposium on Fairy tales, Folklore and Fables at North London Collegiate School. We participated in a number of talks and presentations, including a Key Note on mermaid myths and Mr Robinson's presentation on the Romantic origins of German comics.

German A level students attended the British Film Institute (BFI) in London in November as part of their A level German film studies and were treated to a valuable presentation and workshop on film analysis, followed by a screening of 'Goodbye Lenin!' in the afternoon. Many thanks to Miss Möller for organising the event and Mr Robinson for accompanying the students.



The day after the BFI, Sixth Form Germanists attended an online lecture at school from the LSE on the significance of the 9th of November in the history of Germany. It was fascinating to learn how many momentous events took place on that date! From Napoleon's coup that led to the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire (1799), to the failed establishment of the German Constitution (1848), to the declaration of the Weimar Republic (1918), Hitler's failed coup (1923), the pogroms (1938) and, eventually, the fall of the Berlin Wall (1989).



In addition, in November, Mr Robinson coordinated the National Language Competition with GCHQ for students in Year 9. 18 students participated in teams of three or four and, although we didn't win on this occasion, two of our teams reached the top 35 teams out of nearly 700 participating schools across the UK. All students received a well-earned certificate for their efforts. Students who took part have also been invited to participate in the GCHQ Christmas challenge in December.

Throughout November and December, Mr Robinson organised a series of lunchtime talks on various careers involving languages, delivered on a voluntary basis by some very kind parents. Topics included Phonetics & Phonology, Creating Conlangs, The Law and LLMs, AI in HMRC, working abroad in Banking and Finance, and the intersection of Music and Linguistics. The talks were well attended by students from all Key Stages and proved to be very popular. In January, a new Linguistics Club will be running, led by Mr Robinson on creating conlangs from scratch.





German students in Years 9 and 10 have begun to work on our second edition of the school's German-language newspaper *Die Drei Fässer*. Mr Robinson is the newspaper co-editor together with Adam S and Amir S in Year 9.

Throughout this half term, all students have been invited to take part in a German Abstract Art competition led by Mr Robinson. Students have been coming up with a visual representation of the German language in any visual art form they like. Entries are due to be handed in by the end of term and will be judged over the Christmas holiday.



Just before the end of term and straight after our Ofsted visit, Mr Robinson accompanied almost 90 students in Year 7 and Year 8 to Cologne on a trip organised by Mrs Wheatley.

Students had the opportunity to sample the delights of Christmas markets, visit the famous Gothic cathedral, look explore the Lindt chocolate factory and let off steam in the Olympics Museum.

I'm not sure anyone slept very much, but it was a wonderful and memorable experience for all.





In the middle of Hanukkah week, Mr Robinson organised a dreidel competition and Kosher food tasting to celebrate the occasion.

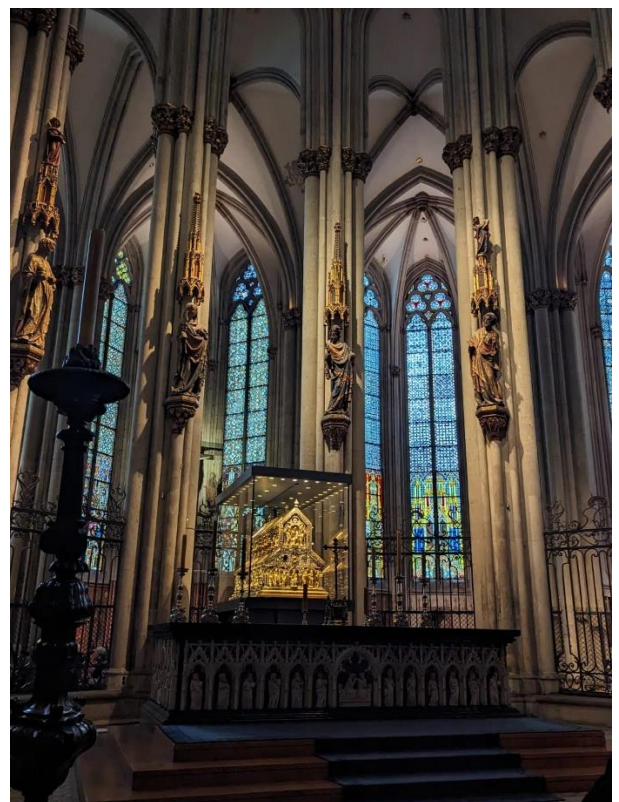
Students joined in from across the school and competed to win a rather fetching dreidel champ t-shirt. Congratulations to Eleanor (Y9), Adam (Y9), Rafi (Y7) and Sophia (Y9) who won. There was also the opportunity to ask questions and learn about Judaism and Israeli history and politics, take part in a Hanukkah Quiz, and even learn some Yiddish!

Finally, from January 2024, 30 students in Year 7 will be able to learn British Sign Language at school thanks to some funding from the OSA and the support of our Advanced Learning Partnership Manager Nicola Nicolaou. Mr Robinson will be overseeing the course and will endeavour to add this language to his ever-growing collection!

Window into The World

80 of our Year 7 and Year 8 German students recently visited Cologne to experience three different Christmas markets, including the wonderful Heumarkt Market, had an engaging guided tour of Cologne Cathedral – the world's most impressive Gothic cathedral, and went to the lovely Lindt Chocolate Museum and the Olympics Museum.

Everyone had a fantastic time and the students behaved superbly well on this memorable trip. Here's what some of our students have got to share about the trip:





"I really loved the trip to Germany. It was the first time I had ever been to Germany and I loved every moment of it. I would love to go again. Everyone was really nice and my favourite part was definitely the German Christmas markets as there were so many new things I managed to experience and buy that I had never even seen before. It is a trip I will never forget. Thank you so much for organising it." James G-S, Y8

"I really enjoyed the trip to Germany. My favourite bit was going to the chocolate factory and getting to see how people make chocolate. The sports museum was also very fun. I also really enjoyed the ferry but it was very tiring. Thank you for organising a very memorable trip." Betsy M, Y7



"The trip to Cologne was an amazing experience. For example, we got to practise our German skills in shops and stalls where the people serving us did not speak any English, which helped us use ambitious vocabulary and develop our speaking skills. In addition to this, I managed to try German foods like Kartoffelpuffer (potato pancakes), BratWurst and especially pretzels (personally I had three). We also got to spend more time with our friends and each other along with having fun with our teachers.

Overall, it was certainly a memorable experience, with museums, sightseeing and cultural activities included." Diana S, Y8

Many thanks to Mrs Conte, Mrs Fosh, Mrs Friel, Mrs Hatch, Mr Robinson, Mrs Simpson and Mr Thompson who accompanied this trip.

By Mrs Wheatley, MFL

Spanish at BFI

Eight Year 12 students ventured into London to attend a film study day at the BFI Southbank. The group are currently studying *Pan's Labyrinth* by Gulliermo del Toro, and spent the day in interactive lectures designed to develop their awareness of the Spanish Civil War and the historical context of the film, along with the techniques and themes covered in this brilliant, award-winning picture.

The day ended with a viewing of the film on one of Europe's biggest cinema screens!



MUSIC

A busy half term for Owen's Musicians!

Owen's musicians kicked-off the half term on Thursday, 1st November, with the student-run event, **the Octoberfest**, where a wealth of bands entertained the audience in the Main Hall, both those seated and those dancing, with their songs and tunes! The whole evening was organised, and made to sound, and look, fabulous by our very own **Owen's Tech Crew** and saw student groups from Years 9-13 performing a wide range of grooving tunes. In addition, there were also some original songs written by our own musicians alongside some well-known favourites.



The wildly bopping audience were also treated to a performance by *The Lines* (Owen's very own staff band) who always add a certain 'je ne sais quoi' to the evening, featuring Mr Simpson in an unforgettable costume as well as new member, Ms Sutherland, on saxophone adding new colour to the band.

On Tuesday, 7th November, **Y11 GCSE** musicians performing their **Ensemble Performing** coursework treated us to an absolute feast of music, from Mendelssohn to Bill Withers, from flutes to the Final Countdown, this was an evening that really showcased the musical richness this year group can produce.



Prepared largely by the students themselves, working together with their peers in small groups from 2 to 6, the evening featured over 50 musicians in 21 separate musical items. Their audience was amazed and delighted at the range and quality of the students' work, providing a wonderful and entertaining concert!

The annual performance of '**Danse Macabre**' by the **DAOS Symphony Orchestra** to Year 7 students took place in assembly in the EGH on Thursday, 9th November. Our musicians thrilled the audience with their representation in music of the spooky occurrences in a graveyard at Hallowe'en: the twelve chimes of midnight; the devilishly out of tune tuning of the main protagonist, Death, on his violin; and the eerie clatter of the dancers' bones, among many others. As the oboe gave us the cock-crow, signalling the end of the skeleton's party at day-break, the assembly drew to a close, and our brilliant audience of Y7s were sent off to period 1 for a normal day of lessons!



Owen's choirs took to the stage for the first time this academic year in the **Choral Concert** on Monday, 13th November, both the long-accustomed performers of the **Close Harmony Group** and **Senior Chamber Choir** (directed by Ms Makepeace-Lott) as well as some of our new Y7 singers, taking their place on stage for the first time alongside other KS3 singers in the **Junior Choir** and **Junior Chamber Choir** (directed by Ms Sutherland), as well as the self-directed **Barber Shop Quartet** in its new formation.

The concert opened with the Junior Choir in a delightful performance of 'You Can Count On Me' by Bruno Mars. The Barbershop Quartet transported us with their performance of 'As Time Goes By' and we were sent off to the interval with the deeply moving performance of 'Follow the Heron' given by the Senior Chamber Choir ringing in our ears. In the second half, the Close Harmony Group thrilled the audience with their performance of 'Chilli Con Carne' and the Junior Chamber Choir, accompanied by Y13 student, Charlie, evoked the spirit of 'Anastasia' with their performance of 'Once Upon a December'. The evening was rounded off with the stage filled by the **Senior Choir**, (who had been lucky enough to have had both Mr Page and Mr Salter as their conductor throughout the term) including their rousing performance of 'Africa' by David Paich and Jeff Porcaro, as made popular by the 1980's band, *Toto*.





The second **Chamber Concert** of the term on Thursday, 30th November, saw a richly varied and wide-ranging programme, both in terms of ensemble, repertoire and genre. Featuring seventeen separate ensembles, including the **Cello Ensemble, Clarinet Ensemble, Guitar Ensemble, Oboe Ensemble (debut performance!)** and **Saxophone Ensemble**, as well as the **Senior Jazz Combo, a Vocal Trio, the Drumming Group** and **Junior and Senior Percussion Ensembles**, alongside more traditional chamber groups such as the **Brass Ensemble, the Y8 String Quartet** and **Les Vents Wind Quintet** the evening gave an extraordinary taste of what Owen's musicians do each week.

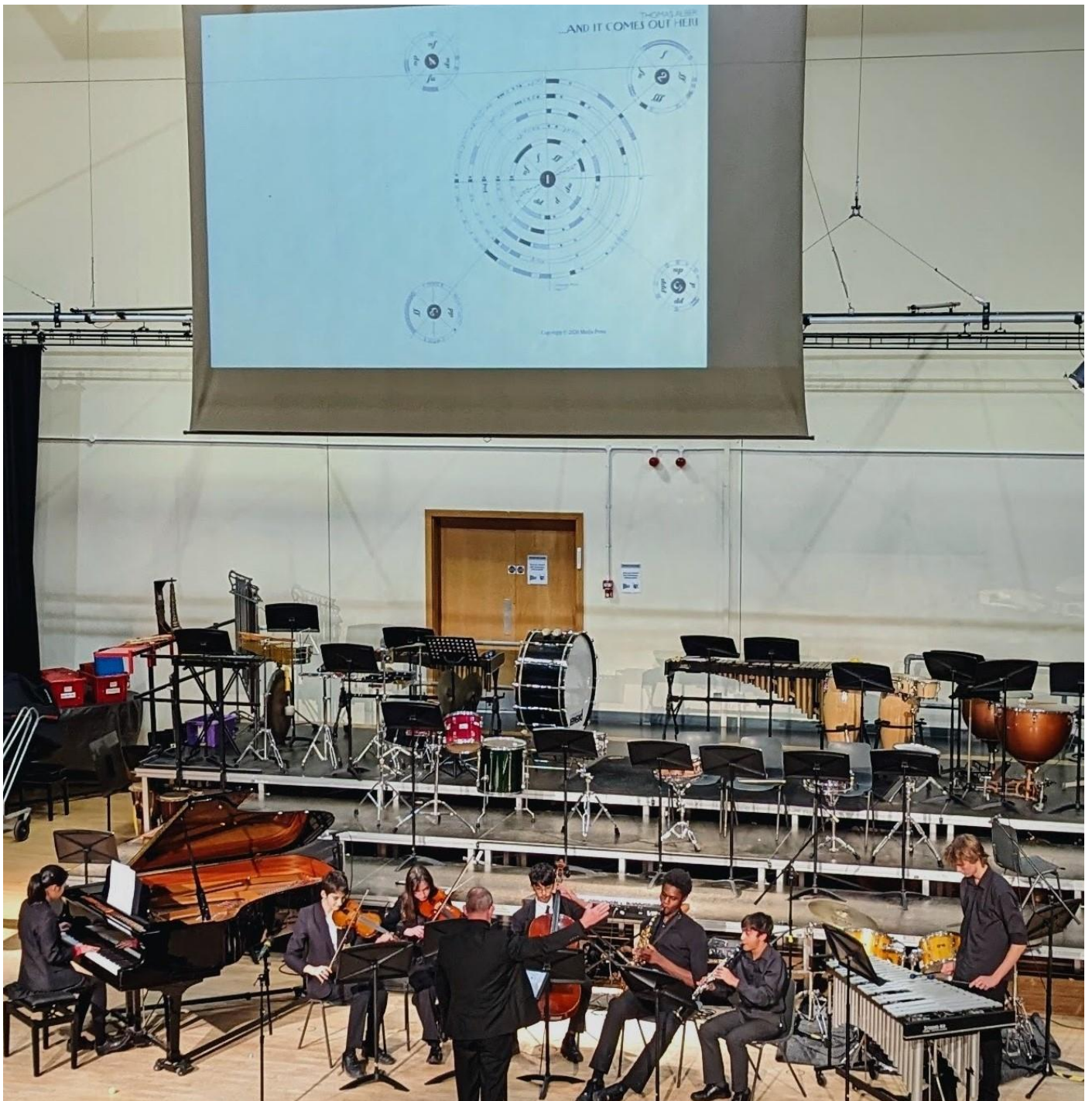
We must surely be one of the only schools to be able to boast a (classical) **Contemporary Music Group!** The audience were fascinated by their performance of 'And it comes out here...' by Thomas Herbert, a piece where the final outcome will be partly determined by the performers according to an experimental score (which was displayed on the screen for the audience to see), and will be unique each time it is played.

Keeping to the theme of contemporary compositions, but this time in a different style, the first half of the concert concluded with a performance of Y12 A-level Music student, Sina's, original composition, 'Close Call'. The audience were also thrilled by Y12 harpist, Kait's, performance of Themes from 'Eugene Onegin' by Tchaikovsky, a 10-minute long piece, delightfully performed and all from memory! One of the Brass Ensemble's pieces also gave a first outing to the newly acquired **organ** in the EGH, played by Y13 student, Rufus.

Our thanks to the 10 different musician teachers involved in helping students to prepare their amazing performances.









'**In London Town**' was the title given to the **Orchestral Concert** on 6th December. This was because many of the pieces were by composers working in London across the centuries, from William Boyce in the mid-18th century, to Joseph Haydn, 50 years later, (composing music for the newly empowered London middle class consumers of culture of the Industrial Revolution), to the twentieth century works of Edward Elgar, John Ireland and Peter Warlock.

The **Junior Chamber Strings** opened the concert with their Y12 student conductor, Laura, giving polished and detailed performances. Performing repertoire in its original form (i.e. not arranged for student groups), many of these musicians were taking to the stage for the first time in a DAOS ensemble.

The second half was opened by the massed musicians of the **Second Orchestra** (conducted by Mrs Brady) who delighted their audience with, among other pieces, Highlights from Harry Potter. The **Senior Strings** (conducted by Mr Widden) had sent us off to the interval invigorated by their impassioned performance of Edward Elgar's Introduction and Allegro.

The **DAOS Symphony Orchestra** (conducted by Ms Bamber) closed the concert with a colourful rendition of the title piece of the evening, Edward Elgar's Cockaigne, In London Town, which depicts scenes in Edwardian London.

Part of the orchestra's offering was the **World Première** of a **Clarinet Concerto** composed and conducted by **Y11 student, Matthew**, for another **Y11 student, Hassan**, to perform. Their performance excited the audience to rise to their feet in a standing ovation – a spine tingling moment for everyone in the hall! Following an impassioned speech from the Head, Mrs Nemko, at the end of our two day Ofsted Inspection, the audience were sent off with the promise of reindeer and sleigh bells with the encore, 'Sleigh Ride' by Leroy Anderson.



A stand out performance was given by the **Jazz Collective** (directed by Mr Crossley) at our **Bands Concert** on 13th December. Playing 'Mercy, Mercy, Mercy', an arrangement by Joe Zawinul based on the 1967 live recording by the Cannonball Adderley Quintet, the performance included lots of improvisation, with student TaoHai (Y8) learning the introduction famously spoken by Cannonball Adderley in the original recording. The students continue to flourish in the Jazz Collective Ensemble, learning to play by ear, without any sheet music and working together as a team.

The **Brass Band's** (directed by Mr Kelly) first performance of the year included two tuba players, Matt and Hassan, who had only recently taken up the instrument as part of Mr Kelly's **Tuba Club**. They had been practising hard in their spare time to get up to standard. Well done!

The Junior Ensemble (conducted by Ms Bamber), many of whom were taking to Owen's stage for the first time, opened the concert with a toe-tapping and rousing rendition of 'Rock Around the Clock' eliciting cheers from their audience for the very first item in the concert! Each half was closed by one of Owen's flagship wind band ensembles with the **Second Band** (directed by Mr Crossley) sending us off to the interval with the promise that Santa Claus is Coming to Town, while the **Concert Band** (Mr Kelly) ended the concert sending us off on a second Sleigh Ride of the term, complete with carefully timed party poppers to urge on the reindeer!





Organ

We are now the proud Custodians of a new Chorum 40-S Organ, generously provided to us on a long-term loan, by the Royal College of Organists, in partnership with Viscount Organs as part of its 'Organs in Schools Programme'.

Its traditional home being places of worship (and not easily accessed), this wonderful instrument will hopefully inspire a new generation of aspiring organists, allowing students from all backgrounds, who would otherwise have difficulty accessing this instrument, the opportunity to practice or start learning. We are looking forward to incorporating the organ into the musical life of the school and eventually showcase this special instrument at our future concerts.

VMT Hannah Gill has been running a series of Organ Taster Sessions for our Students with a view to signing up for organ lessons next term.

Nine Lessons and Carols

As we entered our last week before embarking on our Christmas break, on Monday, 18th December, at St Mary the Virgin and All Saints' Church, Potters Bar, we held a service to celebrate the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols. Family and friends joined in a wonderful carol service for this traditional start to the Christmas celebrations.

The **Junior Choirs** (directed by Ms Sutherland) and **Senior Choirs** (directed by Mr Page) were in fine voice performing pieces including 'Polaris' which was written by Year 13 pupil Eiden Ishraq, winner of the DAOS 2023 Carol Competition. The choirs were joined by all for the congregational carols commencing with 'Once in Royal David's City', the traditional opening solo performed beautifully by Year 7 pupil, Daniel Roberts. A highlight were the glorious descants sung by **Senior Chamber Choir** (directed by Ms Makepeace-Lott).

Our school **Brass Ensemble** (conducted by Mr Kelly) were resplendent performing a piece called 'Wassail Song', an old English carol arranged by Ralph Vaughan Williams.

Thank you to the OSA for making this special evening complete by the provision of mince pies and mulled wine in the Church Hall and to all at St Mary's for having us.



Christmas Assemblies

"...to send everyone home for the holidays with their toes tapping and a song in their heart!" was the aim of the end of term Christmas assemblies. Comprising a mixture of traditional, popular and fun seasonal musical items and readings, featuring school choirs, Soul Band, foreign language songs, as well as other student generated items, and with all invited to join in with singing, this was a fitting way to share a bit of the magic of the season through music.



Football

Boys Year 7

It has been a great start to the season for us. We began our campaign with a tight 4-3 loss, this was an opportunity to work out positions, tactics and formations. For the next few games, we worked together as a team, building confidence and earned a 7-0 thrashing against arch-rivals Mount Grace. Each game we progressed as a team and won 4 games in a row but sadly our streak ended in the league against Monk's Walk. Up next was Lochinver, a private school in Potters Bar and Alex S old school, so this was a huge match for everyone. We didn't need to fear, as we won 4-2 with Alex S on the scoresheet.

Our most recent game was against Sherrardswood, which we won 6-1; a great result for the team and at the moment we are in the district league semi-final.

Stats:

Played-11

Won-7

Drew-0

Lost-4

Goals scored (as a team)- 43

Goal difference- 17

By Capt. Luke Johnson, Vice Capt. Jacob G-C

Boys Year 8

The Year 8's continued with the progress that they have made over recent weeks. They were disappointed to lose 2-1 to Onslow in the District Cup, despite having the majority of possessions and chances on goal. In the County Cup, the team progressed into the 3rd round after beating Marlborough School 4-1 after extra time.

Boys Year 9

The boys have continued to do well in their Saturday fixtures but unfortunately lost in a tight game in the county cup to Simon Balle 3-2.

Boys Year 10

The Year 10's continued their progression in the county cup with an emphatic 6-1 win vs St Edmunds. Our Saturday games have unfortunately been wiped out by the weather but we will hope to progress in the next round of the county cup later in the half term against a strong Tring school.

1st Xi

We've had a difficult start to the season, drawing our opening game and proceeding with two losses with the first being in the national cup: a close 3-2 loss seeing us out in the first round. We then progressed with alternating wins and losses, most importantly winning our county cup match seeing us through to the next round. We found that we continued to miss chances during our matches but our team slowly began to link together as we started to put chances away. Although we have lost half our games played, a big win on the 13th has lifted spirits with the hope to advance into the latter stages of both the county and district cup.

We played St Joan of Arc Catholic school with the aim of qualifying for the quarter finals of the county cup. We dominated the first half and got ourselves 1-0 up before they levelled early on in the second. After dominating the rest of the game and creating plenty of chances we finally found the back of the net in the last two minutes of extra time through Sam P. With one minute to go we got an unlucky penalty given against us and they levelled once more, taking it to pens. Goalkeeper William F made three amazing saves which took the game to sudden death, 5-5 in our favour. The deciding pen was taken by James P who stepped up and smashed it in, boosting us into the next round.

By Capt. Santiago W

Girls Under 12

The U12 squad faced Roundwood Park School in the second round of the County Cup competition. They went 1-0 up thanks to a goal from captain Amy but Roundwood Park equalised in the last few minutes of the game, sending the tie to extra time. A goal from Anashe in the first period of extra time sealed victory and sent the girls into round 2 to face St Albans Girls' School. Anashe was selected as player of the match in this 2nd round fixture.

The same side faced Hertswood School later the same week in the District League competition. The girls secured a 1-0 victory courtesy of a goal from player of the match Izzy.

In the third round of the County Cup the team played St Albans Girls' School. Some great passing and excellent defending saw the squad run out as 2-1 winners thanks to goals from Emily and Izzy. Anashe was voted as player of the match. The team now plays either Marlborough School or Watford Grammar School for Girls in the quarter final.



Girls Under 13

The under 13 girls played Croxley Danes School in the 2nd round of the County Cup. Facing a strong side which contained an Arsenal player they were trailing 5-0 at the break. A change of attitude in the second half saw the girls create more goal scoring opportunities and restrict the opposition's chances. The final score was 6-0. Well done to Mahdi who received the player of the match award.

Girls Under 14

The under 14 side faced Hertswood School in their first District League game. Despite losing 4-0 the girls battled well and played some good football. They were unfortunate not to score. Player of the match was Freya.

In the County Cup competition, the under 14s faced Birchwood High School. The first half was very evenly contested and finished 1-1 with an equalising goal from captain Lilly. The opposition found some finishing power in the second half and ran out 5-1 winners but the girls should be proud of how they played. Congratulations to Freya who was once again chosen as player of the match.

Girls Under 15

In the English Schools' National Football Cup the under 15 squad faced a strong Ashlyns School in round 3. The girls found themselves 3-0 down at the interval. A change in formation saw the team pull the game back to 3-2. Ashlyns then scored again before we managed to pull another goal back to make it 4-3. As the girls pushed forward in search of an equaliser they were caught on the break making the final score 5-3. Ellie scored two goals and Iyla the other. Captain Eva was picked by the opposition as player of the match. Well done on a great fight back girls!

Girls Under 16

The under 16s played in the District 6-a-side competition. The B team finished 4th in their group whilst the A team went on to win the competition, defeating Monks Walk School in the final on penalties to be crowned District Champions. Erin was chosen as the B team player of the tournament, whilst Iyla received the accolade for the A team.

In the 3rd round of the County Cup competition the squad faced a St Clement Danes School side with an England player in their midst. A very closely fought contest was 3-3 at half time. With illness leaving the side without substitutes the girls tired in the second half and eventually lost 7-4 in what was a very entertaining game. Ellie scored a hatrick and Iyla scored the other goal. Captain Eva was the player of the match.

Girls Under 18

The senior girls football team have two remaining County League games to play after Christmas against Beaumont School and Sandringham School.

Hockey

Girls U12

The girls have had a mixed start to the season. They have played in some very competitive matches against strong opposition. The girls were victorious at the Queenswood invitational friendly festival. As we move onto the second term, we will be playing a number of County League fixtures, during the week, which we hope to continue to achieve success.



Girls U13

A mixed under 13 A/B squad faced Aldenham School in a friendly Saturday fixture. A goal from Adaugo put the side 1-0 up but Aldenham managed to equalise before the half time break. Aldenham took the lead early in the second half but Jess managed to level the scores. Despite lots of attacking pressure we were unable to score any further goals and Aldenham went on to convert two penalty corners to win the game 4-2 with the score really not providing a true reflection of how well the team played. Mahdi was voted as player of the match.

Tough matches against Belmont School saw the A team lose 3-0 and the B team lose 5-0. Adaugo was player of the match for the As and Eva received the award for the Bs.

Playing against St Edmund's College in a Saturday fixture the A team were defeated 3-1, with Jess scoring our goal and Adaugo again being picked as player of the match. The B team lost 2-1 with a goal and player of the match performance from Captain Eva.

On an extremely wet Saturday the girls showed true grit and determination when facing a very strong Forest School. The girls were 3-0 down at half time but pulled a goal back early in the second half through Jess to make it 3-1. Unfortunately, they conceded two more goals to give a final score of 5-1 but they should be proud of themselves for battling so hard in such atrocious conditions. Eva was the player of the game.

Girls U14

During this term, the year 9 hockey team has developed their skills as an 11 a side team and have worked well together. They have played frequent Saturday fixtures with a 5-0 win against Wisbech Grammar School (POM Izzy X) and a draw against Aldenham School (POM Emer O and Hannah J). The team also competed in a county tournament progressing throughout the day. After Christmas, there will be more midweek fixtures for the girls to compete in as part of a league.

1st XI

This has been a great season for the 1st XI, having won the County Round of the National Schools Competition. The girls went on to represent Hertfordshire at the East Regional Tournament in Ipswich.

The girls put up a great performance, narrowly missing out on making it to the finals.

Boys U13

Well done to the U13 boys hockey team who had a great first game vs Sandringham. End to end play with opportunities for both teams to score. The final score was 1-0 to Sandringham. Well played to both teams! Well done to Cameron who played really well in defence!

Rugby

1st XV

On Saturday, 25th November, the boys Senior Rugby squad played in their first fixture of the season against a competitive Aylesbury Grammar School. Although the team lost 19-7, they showed great determination and high levels of skills, typified by Toby B finishing off a fantastic team try.



On Thursday, 7th December, the 1st XI boys played another match against Hitchin Boys. It was a challenging game in difficult conditions. Despite losing, the boys showed great determination.

Netball

Year 7A

Congratulations to the A team, who won their friendly match against St John's Senior School 8-2. Well done to player of the match Sasha B.

The girls competed in the Highgate Netball tournament at Highgate. The girls got off to a bumpy start with a 4-5 loss against North London Collegiate School. However, they quickly turned things around, winning the next game against Greys Court 3-2. Their next match was against eventual winners Highgate A, who were a very strong team. Nevertheless, the girls worked tirelessly and the scores were level at half time. Despite losing this match 3-6, they won their remaining three matches comfortably. Congratulations to the girls who finished as runners up.



Year 7B

Well done to the B team who won their friendly match against St John's Senior School 3-2. Well done to Amy S, who was awarded player of the match.

A mixed Year 7 A & B team travelled to St Michael's School in Watford for a friendly fixture on Tuesday, 28th November. It was a great opportunity to try out some different combinations and mix up the shooting circle. Anashe, Cara, Sasha and Christiana showed great versatility experimenting with playing in defence, mid court and shooting. Well done to Ruhi who turned up for the final two quarters and shot very accurately. Congratulations to Anashe and Sasha who were awarded opposition player of the match.

Year 8A

The Year 8A team have only had a few matches, however they have shown great triumphs in their matches. The girls first match was a friendly against JFK with a close win of 6-4, demonstrating a strong performance to kick start their season. Well done to Alya who received player of the match! The girls also competed in the Highgate Netball Tournament, the team had very difficult matches against very strong teams, however, the team finished 4th against 7 teams and showed great performance throughout, well done girls!

The final match played was against St Michael's Catholic High school, the teams were mixed between the A's and B's and was a great opportunity for the girls to try different combinations. Well done to both teams that won! The A's won 9-8 and showed great attacking work throughout.

Year 8B

Similarly, the Year 8B team have only had a few matches, however they have shown great triumphs in their matches. The girls first match was a friendly against JFK with an amazing win of 12-1, demonstrating a strong performance to kick start their season. Well done to Giselle who received player of the match and well done to Bailey who showed an excellent performance as centre throughout the whole game.

The final match played was against St Michael's Catholic High school, the teams were mixed between the A's and B's and was a great opportunity for the girls to try different combinations. Well done to both teams that won! The B's had a smashing performance and won 16-2 and showed great defensive work throughout by only conceding 2 goals!

Year 9A

The Year 9A team have been progressing well within the STAHS league this term participating in four different fixtures winning two and losing two. The girls started off with an impressive win against HABS, 28-16 with an excellent shooting display from Freya. They also demonstrated a very strong performance against RMS, winning overall 34-13. The second half in particular showed some great attacking and defensive work. The team had a very difficult match against Berkhamsted with lots of missing players but battled hard. Recently the girls played STAHS losing narrowly by one goal which they fought back in the second half in some difficult rainy conditions. A big shout out to Freya who has been awarded PoM in every game, amazing work!



Year 10

Well done to the Year 10A and 10B teams who competed in our District Netball Tournament on 1st November at Stanborough. Heavy rain earlier in the day made the conditions really difficult, but the girls fought hard in all their matches. The B team finished as runners of the lower section, losing only to the eventual winners Sherrardswood. The A team were undefeated all afternoon and were crowned District Champions for the first time! Well done to all the girls who took part. This squad of players has progressed a long way in the past year and deserve this success.

Year 11A

The Year 11A team have had a few more games within the STAHS County League playing against schools such as Berkhamsted, St Albans High School and HABS. The girls had a fantastic win against Berko, with the score finishing 30-22. The team also won against HABS 31-13 with another great team performance. Well done to Corinne who was awarded PoM for all three games with some amazing attacking moves and shooting!



Year 11B

The Year 11B team have had a couple of friendly matches this half-term against Berkhamsted and STAHS. Both were difficult matches against strong opposition but the girls fought hard throughout both games. Well done to Molly who was awarded PoM for her fantastic shooting skills!



Seniors

The first VII have had many more matches within the STAHS County league this half term. It is nice to see the team really starting to gel together both in attack and defence. The team has played HABS, St Albans School, Berkhamsted, Roundwood Park and St Albans High School. Two particular highlights have been the St Albans School game where the girls were 8 goals down going into the final quarter and brought it back narrowly losing by one goal. Also, the girls won 42-32 against Roundwood park with a brilliant team performance. There have been many different POMs including: Dyllen, Holly and Bella!



Basketball

Boys

Year 10

The boys competed well this half term, beating both Stanborough and Hertswood. Their only loss to Ridgeway may well be enough to stop them from reaching the final. The year 10 basketball rally was a similar story, where Ridgeway pipped us to the trophy in the final, leaving us in a very respectable 2nd position. The boys should be proud of their efforts this half term.

Senior

The boys played their first game against St Columbus on Friday, 10th November. The match was very competitive but unfortunately the boys lost 82-72. In their second game of the season, they beat Ridgeway Academy 65-45.

Big thank you to all the boys that have been involved and an extra thank you to Teddy L for helping with selecting and coaching the team.



Girls

Year 7/8

The U13 girls' team had their first fixture in the County League against Sandringham this term! This was the first competitive basketball game for this group of girls and they really stepped up. Unfortunately, the girls narrowly lost by one basket but a great start. A particular shoutout to Sienna and Anaya for their performances. The girls will face Beaumont and Queens School after Christmas.

Years 9/10

The U15 girls' team have been training hard this half term. With one of their games being postponed they have their four County league games against JFK, Beaumont, Queens and Sandringham School next half-term.

Badminton

Girls U16

The girls have continued in their Nationals Schools Competition this term. In their third round fixture they faced Queenswood School. The girls won comfortably 6 sets to nil with very very impressive results and performances. The girls then played Kesteven and Grantham Girls School in the fourth round. Once again, they put on a fantastic performance winning 6-0.

Well done to Aditi, Aayushi, Neha and Izzy for their success!



Cross Country

On Tuesday, 7th November, our students attended the annual Mid Herts District Cross Country Championships. All of our teams ran well and demonstrated great determination and resilience.

Our Year 7 and Senior Boys came 1st. Year 8 and 9 Boys, Year 7,9 and senior girls came 2nd. Year 10 boys and year 8 girls came 3rd.

With special mention to George and Niamh who won their races and Luke, Toby, Sasha and Lily who came 2nd.

On Saturday, 11th November, our Senior Boys and Girls teams competed in the regional round of the English Schools Cross Country Cup. All the students ran well, with a special mention to Niamh and George who came 13th in their individual races.





In the final week before the October half term break the PE department organised an inter-house cross country event for years 7-10. The results were as follows:

Year 7

1st boy - Luke, 1st girl - Sasha

Girls - 1st Goswell, 2nd Clerkenwell, 3rd Isledon, 4th Hermitage

Boys - 1st Hermitage, 2nd Isledon, 3rd Goswell, 4th Clerkenwell

Combined - 1st Goswell, 2nd Clerkenwell, 3rd Isledon, 4th Hermitage

Year 8

1st boy - Faris, 1st girl - Isabella

Girls - 1st Isledon, 2nd Hermitage, 3rd Clerkenwell, 4th Goswell

Boys - 1st Hermitage, 2nd Clerkenwell, 3rd Goswell, 4th Isledon

Combined - 1st Isledon, 2nd Hermitage, 3rd Clerkenwell, 4th Goswell

Year 9

1st boy - Zak, 1st girl - Hannah

Girls - 1st Clerkenwell, 2nd Goswell, 3rd Hermitage, 4th Isledon

Boys - 1st Hermitage, 2nd Goswell, 3rd Isledon, 4th Clerkenwell

Combined - 1st Hermitage, 2nd Clerkenwell, 3rd Goswell, 4th Isledon

Year 10

1st boy - Ed, 1st girl - Emilie

Girls - 1st Clerkenwell, 2nd Hermitage, 3rd Goswell, 4th Isledon

Boys - 1st Goswell, 2nd Isledon, 3rd Hermitage, 4th Clerkenwell

Combined - 1st Goswell, 2nd Hermitage, 3rd Isledon, 4th Clerkenwell

Overall Results

Girls - 1st Clerkenwell, 12nd Isledon, 3rd Goswell, 4th Hermitage

Boys - 1st Hermitage, 2nd Goswell, joint 3rd Isledon and Clerkenwell

Combined - 1st Clerkenwell, 2nd Isledon, 3rd Hermitage, 4th Goswell

Congratulations to 8Isledon2 who had the most runners and Hermitage who had the most runners of all houses.

Gym and Dance Display

On 21 and 22 November, we had the Gym and Dance Display performances. This year's theme was *Celebrating 100 years of Disney*. With all the music coming from either classic Disney films from the past or newer more modern Disney films. It was amazing to see so many pupils participating with over 100 pupils involved in both evenings. Well done to everyone involved!



Other Announcements



Congratulations to Alex K-W (Y8) who came 6th in the British Junior Squash Championships in October and came first in Pontefract Gold squash competition in December. The latter was Alex's first win in a big national tournament. He played fantastically well, not dropping a single game all weekend against the top players in the UK.

Alex has also benefited from being part of the England Potential squad, and has attended 3 weekend residential training squads at Lilleshall National Sports centre. Alex strives to be selected to represent England next year. Good luck Alex!



Congratulations to our former student Maisie and the England squad with their Bronze medal in the Women's Deaf Futsal World Cup which was held in Brazil. Maisie also picked up the Young Player of the Tournament award!



On December 2, TaoHai Kh (Y8) competed in the Barnet Cophall Inter-Club Swimming competition, and earned County Consideration Times in 50M&100M Breaststroke for the County Championships at the London Aquatic Centre in January 2024.

Let's wish him the best for the big splash in the new year!



Congratulations to this trio of Year 7 brown belts Luke J, Kush and Stefan who fought hard in the United Karate Association Junior League to come second in their division in November.

A team of students competed in the WUKF European Championships in Antibes, France in November. After a very close fought match score, Luca B (Y13) won silver in his individual section and in the team shobu nihon, and bronze in the team rotation. He also became the European Vice Champion.

Other team members included Luca's siblings – Sofia B (Y10) who was magnificent but narrowly missed a medal and Sandro B (Y8) who was winning but just lost out in the final seconds – next time! Well competed all!



Annabelle R (Y9) competed in a London Regional Tumbling competition on Sunday, 26th November.

She successfully placed second out of 12 gymnasts and has qualified for the Regional Finals next year. A great achievement given the multiple injuries she has sustained this year.

Congratulations to Rona K (Y8) on her tremendous achievements in various County and Regional gymnastics events this year.



Rona won the gold medal in the balance beam discipline at the Eastern Counties Regional Classic Challenge.

As part of the Dolphina gymnastics club team, Rona won the gold medal at the Hertfordshire County Women's artistic gymnastics teams event.

Rona also won the silver medal at the Hertfordshire County Women's artistic gymnastics championships and was selected as a County representative for the regional championships.

