



# Dame Alice Owen's School

July 2024



## Letter from the Head **Hannah Nemko**

It is hard to believe that this year has already come to a close! It has been an eventful one with all sorts of highs, such as seeing our students perform on stage, in the classroom, and on the sports fields and lows, such as those stemming from decisions we have had to make due to our increasingly difficult financial position.

You will be able to read about some of the wonderful things that have happened at school this half term on the pages that follow.

As we head into the summer holiday, it is the time of year that we sadly have to say goodbye to some amazing people who have helped to make the school what it is today.

Firstly, our thanks go to David Bobak and Adrian Grzankowski who joined us in September as Lab technicians. Their work has helped to keep the department running smoothly, especially with respect to experiments. Thank you both for helping to make sure that everyone had whatever was needed to help their learning of science. We wish Mr Grzankowski every success as he begins his degree in the autumn and we send Mr Bobak every good wish as he moves to his new job as a marine biologist studying coral reefs in Mexico, a far cry from the prep room of Potters Bar!

Ms Blythe joined the English department in September and has made a huge, positive impression on so many. Unfortunately, she has decided to leave teaching in order to pursue a career in sustainable development. We wish her all the best with her new role.

Ms Askew has been with us for almost 3 years, supporting the work of the Food and Textiles department. Previously a knitwear designer for Armani, it is not surprising that she is looking to flex her creative muscles again, this time in the classroom. We are sad to see her support



### ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

#### **LETTER FROM THE GOVERNORS**

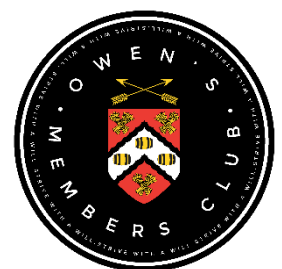
See p.4.

#### **BEYOND CLASSROOMS**

Read more on pp.8-14.

#### **SUBJECT BY SUBJECT**

Learn more from various departments on pp.15-45.



leave the department, but delighted to be able to keep her to help her train as a DT teacher hopeful to inspire the designers of the future!

Ms Common has been with us for almost 4 years. Whilst here, she has had a tremendous impact on so many of us, whether that be through her work on the Senior Leadership Team shaping the way that we teach and learn, supporting the staff in their endeavour to keep all our young people safe, or through the work she has done directly with our students supporting them in the most difficult of times. We have also appreciated her hugely in the History department and are so sorry to see her go. We wish her every success as Head of Sixth Form at Fortismere.

Ms Dounetas has brightened our lunchtimes with her big smile for the last 4 years but increased hours in her other employment has meant she cannot continue to supervise here at lunchtimes. We can only thank her for her help to date.

Ms Dixit has been a thoughtful and gentle presence in the Maths department over these last 4 years. Unfortunately, circumstances have led to her family having to relocate and, as a result she will not be returning to Owen's after her maternity leave. We wish her all the best in her new area.

Mme Stallard has helped so many French students with their oral preparation as one of our French Language assistants. We are delighted she has enjoyed working in this capacity and that she has found working with young people so rewarding that she has also been inspired to train to teach. Although she will be leaving her current role, she will be staying with us to train and we look forward to welcoming her to the French department in this capacity in the autumn.

Ms Koci has supported the DT department for 5 years both in lessons and with the preparation of lesson materials. She has been a fabulous support to the department in so many ways but has decided that she now needs a new adventure. We thank her for always taking such great care of everyone and we wish her all the best for her new chapter.

Ms Goorlah has been a bubbly, smiling member of the Maths department for the last 7 years encouraging, extending and exciting our maths students to be the best that they possibly can. Time has come for her to want to try a slightly different role, thankfully still in maths education, but hopefully she will return to us at some point!

Ms Pueyo has inspired and enthused us in Spanish for 10 years. Her sunny disposition, her love of teaching and her drive to be the best she can be has helped lead the Spanish department to the success it knows today. It will come as no surprise to hear that Ms Pueyo has finally succumbed to the call of a promotion, at a school nearer home. We know that she will be a huge success and we know that we will miss her very much.

If you have ever been delighted (or horrified) to receive your school report, you have, in some way to thank (or otherwise) Mrs Constantinou who, after 18 years of supporting the school with the delivery of the curriculum as well as assessment and reports, is leaving us for new experiences. It will be no surprise to hear that, over such a long time, she has built up many strong friendships and huge expertise in her areas and that she will be missed on so many levels.

Mr Robinson has been teaching at Dame Alice Owen's School for 23 years. He is one of the most accomplished linguists I have ever had the privilege of meeting, speaking everything from Spanish and German to Conlang via Mandarin and now also British Sign Language. Mr Robinson has had a

significant impact on the school throughout his time here, always looking for ways to enrich the curriculum with a plethora of trips, visits, clubs and societies as well as running our Single Equality Policy and, of course, setting up and leading the Advanced Learning Partnership. Through this work, he has supported and helped to improve teaching and collaboration across the local area. Having always been so engaged and interested in teaching, learning and education, it is such a shame that Mr Robinson has now taken the decision not just to leave us but to leave teaching. We can only hope that this move away from the classroom is short lived and that students get to benefit from his enthusiasm and incredible knowledge again soon.

Mr Cotton, an Owenian himself, has taught at our school for 29 years. Throughout this time, he has taught hundreds of people PE, including some of the parents of our current cohort! As Head of Boys' PE, he has particularly enjoyed developing, coaching and encouraging a love of football.

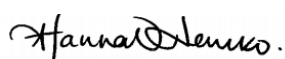
In 1998, when the role of the Advanced Skills Teacher (AST) was introduced, in order to reward and recognise excellent teachers, and to help them to stay working in classrooms rather than following other routes to promotion, he was a natural choice. Through this work, which he has continued even after the demise of the AST programme, Mr Cotton has been involved in developing excellence in teaching at all levels, not just at Owen's but throughout the county, including at a number of teacher training institutions. He has helped to ensure generations of excellent sports teachers.

More recently, at Owen's, Mr Cotton has set up the house system, reviving a tradition from the past, bringing a spirit of competition and collaboration to all that we do. It is hard to imagine school without Mr Cotton, he will be missed by so many, but we wish him every success in his promoted position as Assistant Headteacher in his new school where we are sure he will be fabulous.

Whilst finances prohibit us from replacing all those who have left in a like for like manner, we are delighted to welcome Ms Cantillo (MFL), Ms Donato (Physics), Mr Hannah (MFL), Mr Heath and Ms Ibraimi (Lab Tech) and Ms Kocaslan (MFL) as well as Ms Sorrell (joining us in English in January) to our school. I am delighted to say that this means that we are as well staffed as we can afford to be moving into the new year.

All that remains for me to do is to thank my incredible staff for the tireless work they have put into supporting our young people, and each other, this year. We really are very lucky to have such a wonderful team here at Owen's. I must also thank you, the parent body, for your support: it is only when we work together that we can achieve the very best for your young people. Lastly, thank you to all of our incredible students for being the most delightful cohort a teacher could hope to work with.

Wishing you all a restful summer, sending the best of luck to those venturing off to pastures new, to college, employment and university (remember to sign up at [Owenians.com](https://www.owenians.com) so that we can stay in touch) and looking forward to seeing the rest of you, refreshed and ready to go again, in September!



**Hannah Nemko**  
**Headteacher**

## LETTER FROM THE GOVERNORS

Since joining the DAOS Governing Body only a short time ago, having been a Governor at another local secondary school, there have been several notable events to add to the hundreds of years of history for the school.

One such event was the recent OFSTED inspection, after a long period since the last one. As I am sure you are all aware, the Inspectors were absolutely amazed at the standard of all of the categories outlined in the process. There was no doubt that they found that we were outstanding in all those categories. What a wonderful achievement for all concerned: staff, students and, indeed, the whole school community. It was a great honour for me to sit in on that briefing at the end of day two, and I never thought that I would hear an Inspector start his briefing with "Wow." They were genuinely excited to have found such an outstanding school, which was quite refreshing after the recent criticism of some inspections nationally.

I have recently had the pleasure to attend the school musical 'The Addams Family', which is a show that took me back to my own childhood. It was an amazing performance and the acting, dancing and musical accompaniment was once again outstanding! Well done to all involved and there were quite a few.

We have been very active of late on the Governing Body and unfortunately had to say goodbye to Charles Tracy, not only as a longstanding member but who have led the Curriculum Committee for several years. I have been elected as the new chair and my only hope I can do anywhere near as well as he has in carrying the work of that committee forward.

I read the recent sports newsletter and was very heartened to see how many great individual and team achievements there have been over the winter months. Well done to the PE department and, a very keen sportsman myself, I look forward to reading the results of the summer term. Sport plays a big part in giving students confidence in the classroom and life in general.

**Jon Buoy**  
**Foundation Governor**





### OWENSFEST

It comes as no surprise that this year's OwensFest was fabulous – a sunny, vibrant afternoon treat of wide-ranging live music, fantastic foods, games, activities and school community (and ended with a moment of genius to keep England in Euro 2024!).



Of course, all this would have been impossible without so many people involved. Huge thanks to everyone who attended on the day and to all those who generously volunteered their time, practised their performances, donated, purchased, cooked, counted, lent equipment, set up, cleared up, planned



and organised for months! A fun fundraiser exclusively for the school's benefit and 100% worth it!

Huge congratulations to the PS5 winner (whose family did amazingly well on tombola too!) and special thanks to the donor!



The OSA thanks all of our amazing school staff unreservedly for everything you do at Owen's for our children and wishes everyone a restful summer, however you spend it.

Looking forward to seeing you again in September and welcoming new Y7 and Y12 families!

### Upcoming events

- QUIZZ NIGHT in the Autumn term
- Nearly New Uniform sales
- DAOS bags, mugs and trolley coins for everyone - yourselves, your friends, your family and Xmas stocking fillers



**OSA Committee Meetings:** Come and join in – everyone is welcome! We meet on the first Monday of the month in term-time, at 7:30pm, in the Old Library, above Reception in school. **The next meeting will be on Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> September.** Please come along and meet other parents aiming to support our young people and the school community. Visit the OSA website – [www.theosa.org.uk](http://www.theosa.org.uk) – for comments, suggestions and offers of help.

**OSA Easy Fund Raising:** This is the **easiest** of ways for each of us (and our friends and extended family) to raise money for the school daily without doing anything more than we are already doing, when shopping online. Please follow the link to sign up: [https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/owensschoolassociation/?utm\\_campaign=raisemore&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_content=rm-c20](https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/owensschoolassociation/?utm_campaign=raisemore&utm_medium=email&utm_content=rm-c20)

**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 Sheena at [uniform@theosa.org.uk](mailto:uniform@theosa.org.uk).

**OSA Refreshments:** Have you been to school events, enjoyed refreshments in the intervals and wondered who provided it? Tony tirelessly co-ordinates a small but great team of OSA occasional volunteers. Any contribution of time you can make would benefit the efforts of the pupils and the school. Please email Tony at [refreshments@theosa.org.uk](mailto:refreshments@theosa.org.uk), if you could spare a couple of hours.



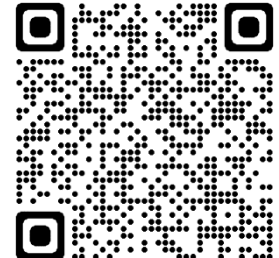
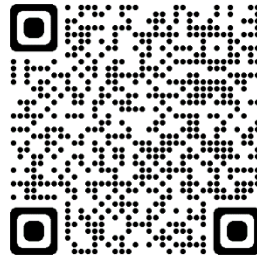
**OSA's '200 Club':** The OSA operates a Lottery Style 200 Club with a £50 and a £25 prize draw every month, and an extra draw in December. Annual membership is £24 per number and nothing more to do other than wait to hear if your number is drawn. For further details, please contact Alan at [200club@theOSA.org.uk](mailto:200club@theOSA.org.uk).

**OSA Match Funding:** Many companies offer a match funding scheme for employees who volunteer time to charities, like the Owen's School Association. Match funding is available to staff in a surprisingly wide range of companies. Friends and family can match fund too – it doesn't only have to be a parent. It can make a very substantial contribution to the OSA's annual fund-raising for the school. Please contact Souri at [matchfunding@theosa.org.uk](mailto:matchfunding@theosa.org.uk).

Completing the form [here](#) can add you to our match funders database. Further information and useful documents can be accessed through this:

[Match funding email to employer.docx - Google Drive](#)

[Match funding FAQ.docx - Google Drive](#)



**OSA's Instagram:** To keep up to date with all OSA events and fundraising schemes, please follow the OSA's Instagram account using this QR code.

There we will post links to ticketed events and the Online Nearly New Uniform Shop.



## ALP AND CAREERS

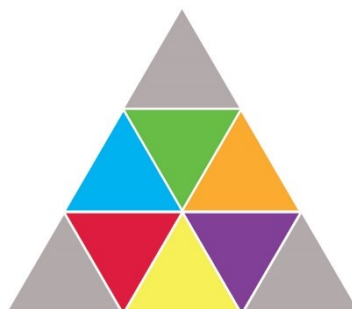
## The Advanced Learning Partnership

This term, the Advanced Learning Partnership has been delighted to once again offer a paid internship programme in partnership with the *Get Into Teaching* service. For three weeks in June and July, we have given 9 undergraduates in Maths, Physics, Chemistry and MFL the opportunity to experience teaching and school life. The placements have taken place at Dame Alice Owen's School, Watford Grammar School for Boys, Queen Elizabeth's School, Queen Elizabeth's Girl's School, Chancellors, Parmiter's School, Mount Grace School and Monks Walk School.

Interns have immersed themselves in school life, getting involved not only with teaching but also with Sports Day, university Q&A clinics, school trips, Culture Day etc. We have been very impressed with their enthusiasm and dedication, as well as their passion for their subjects

We hope we have some budding teachers in the making!

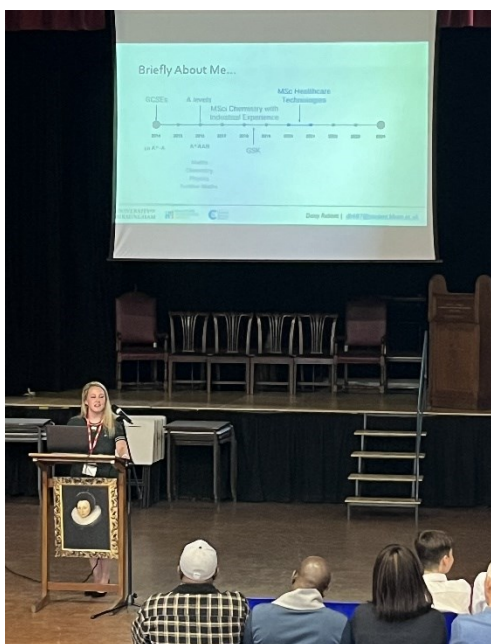
*Mrs Nicola Nicolaou, Advanced Learning Partnership Manager*





**CAREERS FAIR:** On 27th March, Owen's ran our annual Careers Fair for all students in Years 9 – 13. The school gym was filled with an exciting and diverse range of organisations, professionals and further education colleges. Over 30 exhibitors attended from property management, IT and technology, health services and law (4 lawyers from government, in-house, private practice and patent law). Students eagerly interacted with professionals, learning about different careers, educational requirements, and day-to-day responsibilities. Students learnt about the myriads of career opportunities available to them. I would like to thank all our exhibitors for their time and commitment and to all staff who helped in making this event happen.

**Empowering Futures in STEM event:** On June 5th, Dame Alice Owen's School hosted an engaging after-school event aimed at inspiring students to become the next generation of leaders in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). This event was organised by a Year 12 student Eniola A with support of the FEM in STEM committee. This two-hour and fifteen-minute event featured an influential keynote speaker, interactive career stalls showcasing diverse STEM professions, and fundraising activities to support a local charity. A key objective was to encourage greater Female Participation in STEM Industries by having a female speaker, alumni Daisy Rabbit, to inspire female students and the involvement of Stemettes, a social enterprise that encourages girls and young women aged 5–25 to pursue STEM careers.



The event received extremely positive feedback from students, teachers, and stall holders. The stall holders, mostly university students currently studying STEM topics, were relatable to the students due to the smaller age gap compared more experienced working adults who attended the general DAOS careers fair.



**Window to the World of Work:** Students from Years 10-12 have engaged in a variety of experiences of workplaces. Year 10 students were encouraged to spend a day with relatives or friends, giving many the first glimpse into various careers and industries. Year 11 students are supported to take part in longer work placements after their GCSE exams. These placements can help you students to decide whether a certain career path really is for them, supporting them with making post GCSE and Post-18 choices easier at the end of Year 11.

On 1st and 2nd July, Year 12 students visited banks, law firms, dance and football academies, NHS, Rolls Royce and Imperial College laboratories (see photo on the next page). They also engaged in a number of virtual work experiences allowing them to learn about workplaces that are more difficult to visit such as operating theatres, engineering workshops and construction sites.

*Ms A Stein, Head of Careers*





On 15th May, we had the incredible opportunity to visit the Indian High Commission in Holborn, London. Upon entering, we were given a full tour of the building, and the interior design was particularly striking in my opinion. Think: spotless red carpets, ornate walls, flowers adorning each room, and hundreds of hand-painted, hand-crafted designs in each room. After the tour, we were spoken to by the commissioner himself about the role of a diplomat and what his day-to-day job entails, and this was followed by a reception. Overall, the trip was a memorable and informative experience, especially for those of us interested in the world of politics, diplomacy, and the wider world.

By Saffron S





## SCHOOL LIFE AND BEYOND

**CHESS NEWS**

We've had a great year in chess and I'd like to thank all the players who have got involved. In the final National Online School Chess League, we had three teams in Division 1 and the A team won it! A great achievement. In fact, we've been very competitive all year and have got some real strength in depth across the school.

This was reflected in our magnificent performance in the Junior Chess Team Challenge Final, where, despite losing our best player, we came joint 3<sup>rd</sup>! Our best ever performance in a national competition. Well done to TaoHai K, Ridhuan Z, Uthmaan K, James C and Tudor A for representing Dame Alice Owen's so commendably.



We also have a trophy in our cabinet as a group of our students came 2<sup>nd</sup> in the London Junior Chess Team Challenge. Feel free to have a look at in the trophy cabinet by the entrance of our school.



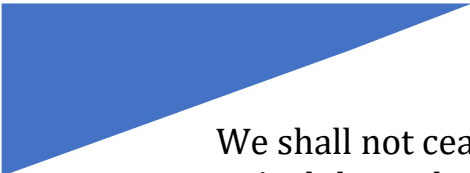
Outside of school, our chess superstar Rock Y has continued to make waves in the world of chess and recently represented England in the European School Chess Championship in Limerick.

17 countries participated with over 200 students and Rock came an excellent 5<sup>th</sup>. Here's a photo of Rock in action.

Hopefully chess will go from strength to strength next year and I'd like to thank Mr Goodlad and Mr Yu for all of their support this year, offering our students lots of opportunities to play chess both inside and outside of school. We are already looking forward to our first event of the next calendar year, which will be the Eton event where we came 8<sup>th</sup> last year. Excitingly, we will be taking two teams this year, so let's see how they get on.

Happy chess playing everyone. Pawn to E4 – your move!!!

*Mr Simpson, Director of Chess*



We shall not cease from exploration  
And the end of all our exploring  
Will be to arrive where we started  
And know the place for the first time.

—T. S. Eliot, "Little Gidding" (an excerpt)



## LIBRARY

This term has seen the return of the great *DAOS Library Classics Challenge* to library lessons! To stretch students as they prepare to move up to the next year group, we have invited everyone to read and respond creatively to a more challenging book. Year 7s have enjoyed children's classics, Year 8s have explored some fiction from around the world and Year 9s have tackled adult classics and modern classics. Students have produced some amazing work which will be on display in the English Department on Open Day. The Library team was kept busy preparing challenge book lists, setting up displays and managing the stock to enable three year groups to take on the challenge simultaneously. We hope everyone enjoyed the challenge and will be enthused to try more books from the challenge lists in future - you can find all the lists at the library desk!

We have been very fortunate to be visited by two authors this term. Well-known anti-sexism campaigner and Young Adult author Laura Bates visited to speak to Year 9s about her new novel *Sisters of Sword and Shadow*. Laura spoke about the power of storytelling to change social narratives, shared some shocking statistics about women in public life and gave us a fascinating insight into the research involved in writing a novel, complete with clips of jousting lessons!

Meanwhile, we have been delighted to welcome poet Ash Dickinson back to the Library on two occasions this term, for events hosted by the English Department. Ash was kind enough to run an extra workshop specially for members of our Library Book Club and the school Creative Writing Club, at which he boosted students' confidence in their own creativity and entertained us all with his trademark verbal inventiveness.



We have also hosted a different kind of visit, this time from a travelling book collection! The 'Eurotoolbox' collection of over 80 children's books in a range of European languages is an initiative of the librarians of the different national institutes in the UK and is coordinated by the French Institute. The collection has been travelling around the country all year and is visiting us for June and July. The books are currently on display and available for classes to use in the Fiction Library. Students can choose from books in French, German, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Polish and - this year's special guest language - Ukrainian.

Work has continued in the background to update and enhance the Non-Fiction Library resources for teaching and learning. We have collaborated with the Biology, DT, History, PE and RS Departments to select and acquire new stock for these subject areas, and we have also been updating our general reference resources, both print and online. You may like to know that we are now providing *Britannica School* online as a starting point for safe and reliable research at all levels. Students can access this resource via the Library Google page (Student Launchpad > Useful Links > Library) when they are logged into their school account.

We have also bought lots of lovely new fiction books for relaxing holiday reading! The table displays in the Fiction Library currently feature a range of summer reading including bright and cheerful reads, exciting and suspenseful reads and challenging literary reads for our older students. We are also offering a range of brand new science fiction books - classic sci-fi proved to be popular during the Classics Challenge, so we invested in some more modern sci-fi for students to enjoy! Do come and visit us to borrow a great book for the long break, and don't forget to try our summer challenge too!

*Dr H James, Librarian*



*(Photo: part of the Eurotoolbox book collection on display)*

What we call the beginning is often the end  
 And to make an end is to make a beginning.  
 The end is where we start from. And every phrase  
 And sentence that is right (where every word is at home,  
     Taking its place to support the others,  
 The word neither diffident nor ostentatious,  
     An easy commerce of the old and the new,  
 The common word exact without vulgarity,  
     The formal word precise but not pedantic,  
     The complete consort dancing together)  
 Every phrase and every sentence is an end and a beginning,  
 Every poem an epitaph.

—T. S. Eliot, "Little Gidding" (an excerpt)



## ART



With over 500,000 photographs, manuscripts and objects of anthropology and archaeology from around the world, our year 10 Art students explored the atmospheric galleries of the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford. They thoroughly enjoyed the experience producing some outstanding drawings for the theme; Nature and the Environment. One student said, 'I enjoyed the freedom to explore the diverse range of historical artifacts. It was a unique experience.'

As ever, the behaviour, work ethic and attitude to learning from the cohort was exemplary. Thank you to Ms Veerayen, Mrs Grigson and Ms Ogufere for their support.

The Art Department





## FOOD & TEXTILES



### The Great Owen's Bake Off

Wednesday, 5th July, saw another round of our lower school baking competition. 38 keen bakers from Years 7, 8 and 9 took part in a 2-hour competition to bake an item that could be served to celebrate the Paris Olympics.

As always, the standard was incredibly high and the students worked very well under pressure to produce an incredibly creative range of dishes that not only looked good, but also tasted delicious!

This year Eleanor B (Y9) was crowned Owen's Star Baker 2022, with her spicy cornbread and dips.

Many thanks to everyone in our amazing food department, all the contestants and our hungry judges Mr Phipps and Mr Simpson.

Well done to all involved!

### Owen's Student wins Tunnocks Teacake Challenge 2024

The Tunnocks Teacake Challenge is an annual food styling competition run by the Food Teachers Centre which is open to all schools in the UK. This year's theme was "The 4 Elements".

There were hundreds of entries from around the country and we are delighted to announce that Chris M-v I (Y8) was the overall winner of the competition with his amazing 'Fire' design.

Many thanks to Mrs Kerim who organised this competition for KS3 and KS4.

### GCSE and A Level Open Arts Evening

On 6th June, the Textiles department held its annual textiles exhibition as part of our Open Arts Evening. The event was very well attended by parents, students, family and friends to view the outstanding work of this year's GCSE and A Level textiles students.

*Ms Cerny, Head of Food and Textiles*





## HISTORY

On the 24th and 25th May, the History department organised two day trips to the historic city of Rochester for Year 7s. Students were given a chance to explore the second oldest cathedral in Britain and its Norman roots before climbing the tallest keep in Britain at Rochester Castle and hearing the bloody story of the 1215 siege.

At the Guildhall Museum, Year 7 historians participated in a workshop, which that brought to life the origins and development of the city. Students even had the opportunity to dress up in replicas of armour from the Norman conquest. Finally, the groups were invited to explore the medieval high street in the spring sunshine, including a visit to the historic fudge shop!

Teachers and locals were both hugely impressed with the enthusiasm and politeness of our students. Both the staff at the cathedral and the owner of one of the sweet shops referred to our students as "angels"!

*Mr. D Latham, Head of History & Politics*



**MATHS****Maths Challenge Results**

Earlier this term, 37 pupils from Years 7 and 8 sat the UKMT Junior Maths Challenge follow-on rounds. In the Kangaroo round we achieved an amazing 24 merits.

Congratulations to the following:

Aishani B, Joseph H, Arthur J, Owen J, Amy K, Kush M, Shreya M, Jayden S, Zafr S, Hoi Ying W, Sasha B, Cameron G, Daniel G, Megan H, Yuhan J, Jed K, Mark K, Xavier L, Katherine M, Kayne S, Meer S, Kian S, Zishan S, Rowan W.

Special congratulations to Katherine and Daniel who achieved joint Best in Year 8 with 120 points and to Shreya in Year 7 who achieved Best in School with 130 points!

The Olympiad results were equally impressive. In Year 7, Arjan P was awarded a Qualification, Anika C and Tudor A were awarded Merits and Anson C was awarded a Distinction. He also won Best in School with 46 points. In Year 8, William H was awarded a Qualification and TaoHai K was awarded a Distinction and won Best in Year with 39 points.

Many congratulations to them all!

*Mrs Hughes, Maths*

**POW 2023/24**

Puzzle of the Week (POW) is a weekly mathematical problem solving competition for Years 7, 8 and 9.

This year we've had eleven amazing individuals (see below) who completed every single one of the 31 Puzzle of the Week problems correctly. An absolutely amazing feat! Well done!

Sasha B, Harrison C, Daniel G, Ammiel G, Kush M, Lucy M, Daniel R, Krishan S, Adam S, Katie S, Charlene S

The Final Results are: 1st – Ammiel G.; 2nd – Adam S.; 3rd – Kush M.; 4th - Daniel G.; 5th - Sasha B.

Below is a photo of some of the POW finalists.

*Mrs Gooriah, Maths*





## MUSIC

## Y12 Music students curate the music at the Open Arts Evening

The Open Arts Evening took place on Thursday, 6th June, with the Art and Textiles departments exhibiting the students' GCSE and A Level work. As part of the event, the Year 12 Music students curated an evening of music with a rolling programme of musical items.

A stage had been set up in the main reception to welcome guests where we had a variety of student-led performances run by our fabulous Year 12s and music filled the halls the whole evening as parents and students passed by, some stopping to watch and listen. We had our flagship Y12 band to perform a variety of pop and jazz numbers.



The Guitar Ensemble and Clarinet Ensemble also delighted passers-by with their repertoire. We also had some fabulous solo and duet performances, including an outstanding Chopin piano solo from Benedict (Y7).

Year 7 drumming club performed a samba batteria and enjoyed teaching the rhythms to the parents, carers, siblings, students and teachers who attended as well. A big thank you to our Head of Percussion Ms Becky McCrystal for running the Samba session, it really was enjoyed by all who took part.





## Year 10 GCSE Ensembles Concert, EGH

On 11th June, Year 10 GCSE students shared their small ensemble pieces with each other and an assembled audience of family and friends. Featuring everything from piano duets, to rock bands and string quintets this was a fabulous evening of musical comradeship, featuring also friends from beyond the Y10 GCSE Music community supporting the ensembles and was enormously enjoyed by all present.

## Summer Concert

The Junior Ensemble, conducted by Ms Katherine Bamber opened the summer concert, on 13th June, with their rhythmically lively version of 'I got plenty of Nothing' from George Gershwin's opera, Porgy and Bess, followed by the Lennon and McCartney classic 'Yesterday'. Owen's Brass Band entertained us with two Ernie Waites pieces, Royal Fete and Paddy's Fancy, conducted by Head of Brass, Mr Kelly.



Junior Chamber Choir performed a fabulous set, conducted by Ms Laura Sutherland, and had the audience in awe with their beautiful acapella version of folk tune 'The Water is Wide' showcasing their stunning harmonies.

A particular highlight of the evening was a dynamic performance of Ozzy Osborne's "Crazy Train" by our fantastic Mega Percussion Ensemble under the directorship of Head of Percussion, Ms Rebecca McChrystal.





Conducted by Mrs Jo Brady, the Second Orchestra closed the first half of the concert with a wide-ranging and varied programme from Purcell's Rondeau from *Abdelazer*, followed by Norwegian Dance No. 2 by Edvard Grieg and ending with a trip down memory lane for the parents, Thunderbirds March by Barry Gray.

First up in the second half, the Junior Chamber Strings directed themselves in a virtuoso and stylish performance of Bach's Brandenburg Concerto no 3 after lulling their audience in a richly luscious performance of John Ireland's 'Elegy'.



Conducted by Mr Neil Crossley, Second Band were fantastic at this year's Summer Concert, giving accomplished performances of both Carnival by Jay Chattaway and, continuing the Lennon & McCartney theme, Hey Jude. They finished their set with a rousing and fun filled performance of "Tequila", much to the delight of the audience.



Junior Choir, our final performance of the evening, did an outstanding job at engaging the audience, beginning with an upbeat rendition of Blue Skies, an emotive performance of Carole King's 'You've Got a Friend' and ending the night with a foot stomping rendition of 'Take Me Home, Country Roads'.

### **OwensFest**

OwensFest this year was expanded to include an enhanced Acoustic Stage line-up, alongside the Main Stage, offering jazz and student groups. This has now become a firm favourite in the Owen's calendar.

Main Stage groups included the Sax Ensemble performing ABBA songs directed by the Y12 students, Jazz Collective playing their 2023-24 greatest hits and both Big Bands firing on all cylinders in their warm-up gig prior to the Jazz Evening a few days later. This was followed by some fabulous student bands from Years 8-12.

The Acoustic Stage greatly enhanced the ambience around the bookstall and indoor café with performances from an eclectic roster of artists, including a clarinet duo, Schubert's Trout Quintet, more ABBA, an all-star vocal session led by Ms Katrina Makepeace-Lott as well as some solo slots and a violin, trumpet and piano group.

All in all, a fabulous music festival in the sunshine, with great food and, unlike Glastonbury, which happens over the same weekend, we had proper toilets and running water!

### **Year 6 Moving Up/Transition Evening**

Once again, on 26th June, musicians entertained the visitors, in this case the parents of new Year 7 students, on the Dame Alice Owen's stage in the foyer. Y8 singers Laura and Seraphina, who also accompanied on the guitar, were joined by Y7 piano soloists, Benedict and Anisa, as well as Y8s, Alex, Nishka and Daisy (voice, flute and piano) and the Year 7 Chamber Violins and Viola.

This latter group also entertained the assembled audience of Year 6s and parents in the EGH, along with the Year 9 String Quartet and Y7 pianist, Anisa.

Well done to our musicians for giving next year's Year 7s a flavour of the musical possibilities at Owen's!

### **Jazz on a Summer Evening**

Possibly our best jazz evening so far! Brilliant performances from Jazz Collective, Big Band 1, Big Band 2 and a student group led by Raffy and Jacob in Y10. The appreciative and supportive audience loved the mix of swing, blues and trad jazz, alongside funk, fusion and even some student-composed pieces. Everyone performer involved was brilliant, but special mentions to Hassan Marzban for improvising on recorder, Matthew for sensational drumming and ensemble playing, and Y7s Ilinca, Benedict and Ethan-James for improvised solos and playing jazz standards from memory in their first jazz event!

### **Performance Platforms**

The Woodwind PP this term was a lovely, supportive event featuring many of our woodwind soloists, playing oboe, clarinet, flute and saxophone. We were accompanied on piano by the fantastic Ms Hannah Gill, and parents who attended were very appreciative of her 'top tips for exams' she shared, as she is also an ABRSM examiner. Everyone performed brilliantly, but special credit to Ethan-James for playing with such clear articulation and dance-like qualities on oboe, James for his beautiful rendition of Tartini's 'Grave and Allegro' and Anasuya for her first solo performance on saxophone, which also featured her improvising.

The series of Performance Platforms ended on Friday 12th July with the Piano Performance Platform. This included both solo performances as well as pianists in ensembles and as accompanists. In addition, we were treated to the first solo performance by Matthew in year 9 on our recently acquired organ.

Well done to all our performers, and our thanks to the Heads of Sections and Miss Gill for organising these events!

### **Music for Youth Trip to Birmingham**

On 5th July, the DAOS Concert Band were invited to take to the stage and participate at Birmingham's Symphony Hall as part of the Music for Youth National Festival 2024. Participating in the Wind and Brass session this was a wonderful opportunity for our musicians, both to perform in an inspirational international concert venue as well as to hear the very best of other similar groups from around the UK.





Conducted by Head of Brass, Mr Lance Kelly, repertoire included a fabulous performance of Arabesque by Samuel Hazo and Miniatures for Wind Band by William Walton (arr. Bram Wiggins).

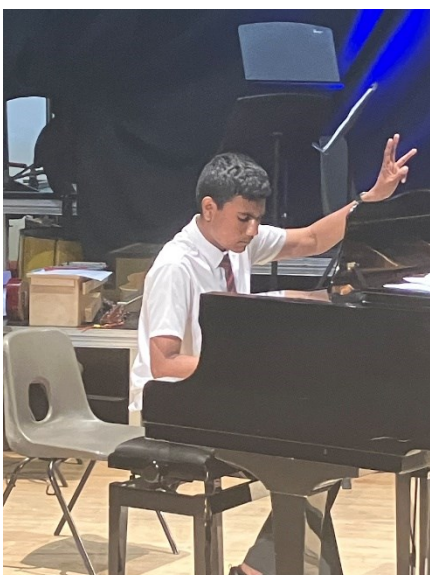
Following their performance, the students were able to watch and appreciate their contemporaries perform, with the Brass Bands being a particular inspirational highlight. A wonderful experience for everyone involved and a big thank you to Mr Kelly, Ms Brady and Mrs King for accompanying the musicians to Birmingham!





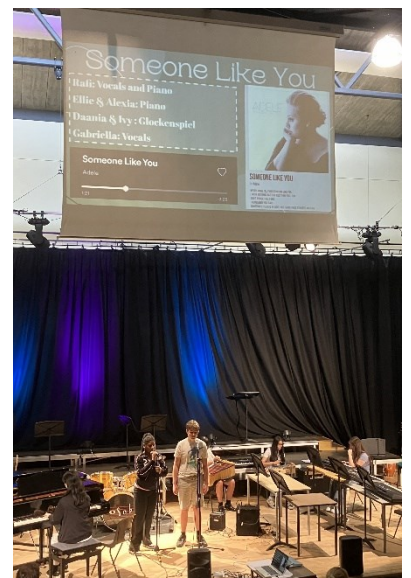
## Year 8 & Year 9 Festivals

Hermitage won a very closely contested first ever Year 8 Festival, in which every student in Year 8 performed a small group piece as well as a piece as a whole class across four festival sessions. Highlights included songs by ABBA and Queen as well as building on pieces learnt throughout the year in class. The Tech Crew lit up the stage so it looked as good as it sounded. We can't wait to see them up their game as they compete for the title in next year's festival. Laura and Seraphina teamed up for a very special duet, harmonising beautifully on 'Stick Season' by Noah Kahan. The audience were silent during their performance and they finished to rapturous applause.



Year 9 ended their Key Stage 3 journey in Music with every student performing in the Edward Guinness Hall, again across four festival sessions, as a whole class and in small groups during the week of the Year 9 Music Festival, now in its third year.

Students performed a variety of songs they had chosen themselves, which included *Riptide*, *Someone Like You* and *Blinding Lights*.





It was wonderful to see the students coming together to make music so confidently and support each other up on stage. One class performed 'It's Coming Home' which we hope will be the lucky charm England need (we'll know if it worked by the time this goes to print!) Rafi and Gabriella sang beautifully together with their group, bringing tears to members of staff in the audience.



Festival certificates were awarded for "Outstanding Performance" and "Highly Commended" in addition to the "Half Year" and "Overall Winners".

Congratulations to the winning classes 8gjt3 and 9lmn2. The Year 9 winning house was Goswell.

### **Pre-Tour Concert & Friends**

We are incredibly excited about this year's DAOS Three Countries Music Tour 2024. On 15th July, our talented musicians gathered in the Edward Guinness Hall for a wonderful evening of music-making, performing some of the repertoire the ensembles will be presenting to audiences whilst on tour.

Senior Choir, Senior Chamber Choir, Senior Strings, the Tour Choir and Tour Band performed their pieces, providing the perfect opportunity to rehearse some of the pieces they will be showcasing. They were joined by the DAOS Symphony Orchestra who played movements from Beethoven Symphony no. 7.

*Katherine Bamber, Director of Music*



## RELIGIOUS STUDIES

**The Religious Studies Department Middle East Adventure to Jordan – Easter 2024**

During my time at Owen's dating back to 1996, I have been fortunate to have taken hundreds of students on incredible adventures all over the world. Destinations have included China, Costa Rica, Ecuador & Galapagos, Egypt, Israel, India, Italy, Morocco, Namibia and South Africa etc. Each one of these adventures have provided experiences and memories that will never be forgotten for those students, parents and staff lucky enough to have travelled. Whether it is the stunning Taj Mahal in Agra, the majestic Great Pyramids of Giza and Valley of the Kings and Queens outside Cairo and Luxor, or camping with an incredible array of wildlife including lions and elephants in Namibia's beautiful Etosha National Park etc. these experiences are irreplaceable and students who have long left Owen's still occasionally write to me reflecting on these wonderful trips.

With Tanzania and Zanzibar cancelled due to Covid back in 2021, and with international travel restrictions pretty much lifted since then, I wanted to identify those parts of the world for the next adventure that I felt parents were unlikely to travel to with their children - and at the same time - provide a range of activities and experiences that would prove unforgettable for students. Jordan ticked both these boxes and more. Of course, this trip did not come without considerable serious concerns for both the school and parents. With the awful events unfolding next door in Israel [long after the trip was booked] it later proved both surreal and poignant standing on both Mount Nebo looking over to the 'Promised Land' and the baptismal site of Jesus at Bethany, conscious that tragedy, pain and suffering had (and still is) playing out only miles away.

Nevertheless, having decided on Jordan as the next Religious Studies adventure back in 2023, the task was to put together an 8-day programme for 88 students [numbers were capped] into two separate groups. The first group, led by myself, consisted of Yr11 & Yr13 students taking public exams in the summer along with a handful of Year 10s. The second group, led by Mr Robinson, was made up of Year 10 students only. The itinerary highlights for this adventure were full on but I hope that the snippets below go some way to showing why it is that Jordan should be on your list of places to travel to in the future. From a linguistic, religious, geographical, historical and cultural perspective alone, Jordan has so much to offer and will not disappoint. The student comments further on will reinforce this.

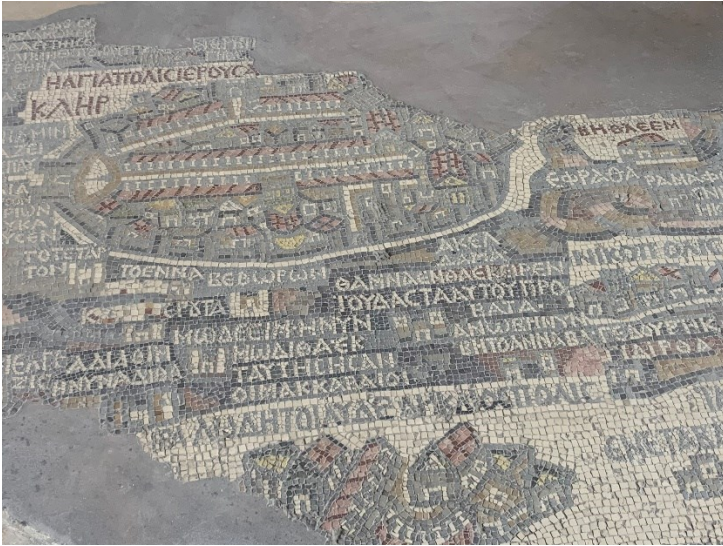
**The language**

On our arrival, the first thing that struck us was the language. Although many do speak English in Jordan (interestingly, the mother of King Abdullah II is British), the official language is Arabic or more precisely 'Levantine Arabic' since it is also spoken widely in Syria, Lebanon, Israel and Palestine etc. Our first morning was marked by the adhan or an early morning wakeup call from the local mosque. In this case from a muezzin at the King Abdullah Masjid (Mosque) just up the road from our hotel.



This call to prayer (Salat) was the perfect start to the tour and left us in no doubt that we were no longer back in the UK. The more observant students also noted that on the ceiling of their bedroom was an arrow – pointing not to a fire exit - but the direction of the Kabah in Makkah for prayer.





## Madaba – The World’s Oldest Holy Land Map

It was here, less than an hour from the capital city of Amman, that we saw the oldest Holy Land map in the world. Discovered in 1884, the now-famous Madaba Map is not found on a piece of paper but rather is part of an intricately designed mosaic floor, now part of the Church of St. George. The map was constructed in the second half of the 6th century C.E. and originally depicted the entire Holy Land and neighbouring regions.

To this day, the purpose of Madaba’s Holy Land map remains a mystery but scholars agree that the detail and accuracy of the map’s geography was the Greek translation of the Bible and on the works of the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus (37-100AD). The map’s creators also clearly relied upon their own experience of the land and its geography.

## Mount Nebo – Mountain of the Prophet Moses

Having left Madaba, a short 15-minute drive brought us to Mount Nebo which rises 4000 feet above the Dead Sea. This was no ordinary peak and is steeped in religious reverence and historical significance. In the Old Testament Bible, it is referred to as ‘a high mountain in Moab’ where Moses viewed the Promised Land before his death. It was here that Moses was also buried although the site of his burial remains unknown:

**“Then Moses climbed Mount Nebo...There the LORD showed him the whole land...Then the LORD said to him, “This is the land I promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob when I said, “I will give it to your descendants.” I have let you see it with your eyes, but you will not cross over into it.’ And Moses the servant of the LORD died there in Moab, as the LORD had said. He buried him in Moab, in the valley opposite Beth Peor, but to this day no one knows where his grave is.”** Deuteronomy 34:1-6

Although the heat made our view hazy, it still provided us with a view of the Dead Sea, Jordan River and the West Bank. On clear days, our guide said that it is even possible to see Jericho and Jerusalem but unfortunately this was not the case for us.





## Jerash – The Pompeii of Asia

Less than an hour from Amman, the ancient city of Jerash is for many a close second to Petra on the list of favourite destinations in Jordan. Often referred to as the 'Pompeii of Asia', Jerash dates back more than 6,500 years although its 'golden age' came under Roman rule and the site is now generally acknowledged to be one of the best-preserved Roman provincial towns in the world. Hidden for centuries in sand before being excavated and restored over the past 70 years, Jerash is an incredible example of the grand, formal provincial Roman urbanism that is found throughout the Middle East, comprising paved and colonnaded streets, soaring hilltop temples, grand theatres, spacious public squares and plazas, baths, fountains and city walls pierced by towers and gates.

We spent all morning here and if you do get to go there yourself allow for at least 3 hours (ideally travel there in the morning before the Jordanian heat kicks in – this place is very open to the sun) and bring along with you some cat biscuits. The site has a number of cats which the guides will frequently feed. At the end of the visit, I think it is fair to say that we all left this ancient city amazed with what is undoubtedly and incredible example of Roman engineering and architecture.



The Roman Citadel at Jerash



A Roman amphitheatre at Jerash

## Karak – The Crusader Castle

At about the half way point of the tour, we began to make our way south along the impressive Kings Highway. This 150-mile road meanders through mountain towns and villages giving us a sense of the Jordan away from the main tourist sites. This highway showcases many of the important phases of Jordanian history not least at Karak Castle. As a frontier in the battle for souls between Christian and Muslims, you do not need to be military minded to be impressed by this enormous construction.

If you have seen Ridley Scott's 'Kingdom of Heaven', our guide informed us that the castle siege by Saladin in that film was based on his siege of Karak in 1177 following the brutal rule of Reynald of Chatillon against Muslim caravans bound for Makkah. It is recorded that one of his favourite pastimes was to throw prisoners from the castle walls onto the rocks below. If you manage to get to see Karak Castle for yourself, Reynald's cruelty leaves little to the imagination. For the record, having captured Karak Castle Saladin executed Reynald personally.

## Petra – 'The Rock/Rose City'

After Karak we eventually arrived at Petra. Rediscovered by the Swiss explorer Jean Louis Burckhardt in 1812 it is not difficult to see why it is without doubt Jordan's most spectacular and treasured attraction. Built by the Arab Nabateans more than 2,000 years ago, the buildings of the city were cut out of the soft sandstone rock. Palaces, temples, the Treasury and various monumental tombs were all carved into the desert rock.





Of course, many people when they think of Petra look back to Harrison Ford's 'Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade' (1989). The merchandise on offer leaves you in no doubt that this was indeed part of a key scene from a major Hollywood picture.

Great as this film was (it is one of my favourite Indiana Jones' movies), this is not really what Petra is all about. That moment you come through the chasm carved into the rock and find yourself in front of the famous 'Treasury' is unforgettable and having seen many of the great world wonders, I do not say this lightly.

Petra on its own is worth a visit to Jordan but if you do go there based on this testimony and those of your children allow for two full days. Petra is a big place and a great opportunity to get fit.

### Wadi Rum – 'The Valley of the Moon'

And so we come to another unforgettable part of Jordan – Wadi Rum, which in Arabic means the 'Valley of the Moon'. This is another example of Jordan offering its spectacular scenery to the Hollywood industry. Whether it is David Lean's 'Lawrence of Arabia' (1962), 'Ridley Scott's 'The Martian' (2015) or Denis Villeneuve's 'Dune' (2021 & 2024), it is not difficult to see why this stunning landscape translates so beautifully to film.



Wadi Rum is a valley cut into the sandstone and granite rock in southern Jordan, approximately 4-5 hours' drive from Amman) not far from the border with Saudi Arabia. It is second only to Petra as the main attraction in Jordan and receives less than 3 days' worth of rain a year. It is the ultimate destination for nature lovers and our time there was spent driving through the desert landscape, climbing sand dunes and observing beautiful sunsets. This was another highlight during our time in Jordan and many of us loved not only the aesthetic nature of it all but equally the opportunity to reflect quietly in the stillness of the desert. As a Religious Studies teacher, Wadi Rum helped me to see how it is that many of the great historical religious figures (such as Moses, Muhammad etc.) found God in the solitude of the desert.

[images: (above) sunset at Wadi Rum; (left) Year 11 group photo; (right) students enjoying the sunset at Wai Rum.]





## Bethany - 'Beyond the Jordan'

**"Then Jesus came from the Galilee to the Jordan to be baptised by John."** Matthew 3:13

**"This took place in Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John was baptising."** John 1:28



The name Bethany comes from the Aramaic 'Beit Anniya' which means 'House of the Crossing' and according to archaeologists (after much debate) we found ourselves at the site where John the Baptist preached and Jesus was baptised. The River Jordan has changed its course over the centuries but this place was surreal for two reasons.

Firstly, it is quite extraordinary thinking that even if we were not in exactly the right spot, Jesus would have been familiar and walked this area two thousand years ago.

Secondly, as Jenny Walker puts it in the Lonely Planet: "It's hard for Christian visitors on either side of the water (Israel and the Palestinian territories are literally at arm's length at this point) to pray when watched over by Jewish and Muslim armed guards, intent on making sure you don't cross the border." Nevertheless, Pope John Paul II sanctified this site in 2000.

[image above: the baptismal site of Jesus, Bethany]

## The Dead Sea

Our Jordanian adventure drew to a close with a visit to the Dead Sea (Arabic 'Al-Baḥr Al-Mayyit') some 1360 feet below sea level. When people say that they have swam in the Dead Sea I think they are not being entirely accurate describing their experience. With a staggering high salt content, it is virtually impossible to swim here. If you try doing the breast stroke you will know what I mean. Just lie back and float. That would be the better choice of word.

The salinity of the Dead Sea is about ten times that of ordinary seawater, creating a unique ecosystem that cannot support marine life, hence the name "Dead Sea." Indeed, the salt concentration can reach up to 34%, compared to a mere 3.5% in the ocean. Fun fact - there is enough salt in the Dead Sea to supply the UK with cooking salt for more than 70,000 years. With temperatures in the mid 30's this proved to be a fitting end to what was a great tour each day packed with culture, history, religion and fun - not to mention the food. Ok, I will be lying if I said that the food was to everyone's liking, but personally, I thought we were spoilt - not least with the lamb, chicken, breads, hummus...



To conclude, going by parent feedback and seeing the students when back at school, Jordan provided wonderful unforgettable and memorable experiences and was a huge success.



Indeed, and I don't often do this following a school trip, but I will be going back there next year with my family. That says it all.



## Words of appreciation

No successful international adventure of this scale can take place without others working behind the scenes. I would therefore like to thank in particular Mrs Nemko and the Governors for their continued support for this trip, especially given the legitimate concerns that I alluded to above. Of course, it is impossible to plan a trip that comes without some form of risk, but I think I speak for most who participated that they were so glad that they could travel.

I would also like to thank the Business and Finance team including Mrs Campbell, Mrs Irons, Mrs Culhane and Mrs Pearce for putting in place the finance and insurance aspect of this trip, a feature that I like to stay well out of. In advance of any trip, we also have to collate all the medical needs of our students and Mrs Kyriacou (our school matron) made sure that every medical requirement was in place before departure. From an administrative point of view a massive thanks goes to Mrs Keating our Trips Administrator. She did a phenomenal amount of work behind the scenes liaising with parents and Kipling Tours. Her support was a godsend.

Finally, a special thanks to the accompanying adults in Group 2 – Mr Robinson, our first aider Mrs Fosh, Mrs Jones, Mrs Gregory and Mr Simpson – for giving up their time and sharing the burden and responsibility of taking a group of teenagers half way round the world. Similarly, in my group I would also like to sincerely thank Mrs Conte, Mrs Lofthouse, Ms Govier and Dr Ingham. Their company, wise counsel and friendship was instrumental in making this trip a smooth and memorable one for me as well. On this note, I cannot overstate how grateful I am for the professionalism and expertise of Dr Ingham who gave up his own time to support Group 1 as our own chief doctor. I don't think many schools do this but for both parents and staff his presence was a pillar of reassurance. I am hoping that he will be up for another adventure in the near future. Until then....

*John Johnstone, Head of Religious Studies*

## Students' testimonies

"It was the most magnificent trip I have ever been on. Mr Johnstone worked his magic and produced yet another once in a lifetime trip. My favourite bits were: riding in the Wadi Rum desert, in the 4x4 trucks with Ms Govier and Ffion, dancing to Arabian music and going so fast it felt like a movie! Also pelting mud at each other in the dead sea. And we can't forget meeting the pilots and going into the cockpit on both flights! Honourable mentions go to the bread we ate on day 2 (I will think about it forever...!).

I feel so grateful to have experienced such magic in Jordan. Thank you to all the teachers involved for giving up their time and taking such good care of us." *Lili F-G (Yr13)*

[image: Captain Lili and First Officer Joshua having just landed at Heathrow]



"The Jordan trip was incredible. All of the sights which we visited, including Mount Nebo, Petra, and Jerash, were all, not only stunningly beautiful, but also superbly interesting to learn about. On top of this, the night we spent in the desert with the Bedouin tribe gave us great insight into the historical way of life for some of the first inhabitants of Jordan, and the traditional practices which they continue to follow. Of course, however, the trip was only made to be so special because of the kind and funny team of staff that Mr Johnstone put together to help out, as well as our knowledgeable, and astonishingly likeable tour guide Ahmad who gave us brilliant insight into the history of the country.

Overall, it was a once in a life time experience, and I am very keen to go to back to Jordan one day to do it all again." *Matthew P (Yr13)*

"Going to Jordan was an incredible experience, especially as someone who hadn't had the opportunity to ever have left Europe before this. My favourite part of the trip was definitely Wadi Rum as it was completely removed from anything that I have ever experienced before and I especially enjoyed riding on the 4x4s. As well as that, visiting Jesus' baptismal site was also incredible, especially as someone who has chosen to study RS at A-Level." *Gabriella Ch (Yr12)*

"It was an amazing trip of a lifetime. I particularly enjoyed visiting the treasury in Petra and the trucks in wadi rum. It was overall a stunning place with very friendly people." *Charlie H (Yr12)*

"I had an amazing time in Jordan, the trip really was a once in a lifetime experience. Being able to see one of the seven wonders of the world, Petra with my friends was an indescribable experience. The whole trip was amazing and all the activities were so interesting and fun! My favourite activity was definitely the car trip through the desert and watching the sunset after, it was one of the most incredible and beautiful experience I've ever had. All the teachers on the trip were so nice and made the trip that much more enjoyable. I couldn't be more grateful to all of them organising such an incredible trip!" *Charlotte Y (Yr11)*

"I had the opportunity to experience a life-changing school trip to Jordan, a journey that created unforgettable memories. The trip was perfectly planned. The visit to the ancient city of Petra, creating an immediate bond among us students as we shared our amazement and excitement. We journeyed to Wadi Rum, a vast desert known for its stunning landscapes and historical significance. Spending the night in a Bedouin camp, we sat around the campfire as conversations flowed freely. The trip also included a visit to the Dead Sea. Floating effortlessly in the mineral-rich waters was a surreal experience.

A significant highlight of the trip was our day in Amman, Jordan's vibrant capital. We explored the bustling markets and enjoyed the local cuisine. offered a fascinating glimpse into contemporary Jordanian life. This urban adventure allowed us to interact with locals, enhancing our understanding and respect for their culture. By the end of our journey, I had not only made new friends but also gained a deeper appreciation for the world's diversity. This school trip to Jordan was more than just a school trip; it was a transformative experience that broadened my perspectives and strengthened my bonds with others." *Temidola A (Yr11)*

"I really liked Jordan. It was a good chance to bond with my friends and classmates and have a once in a lifetime experience such as visiting Petra and the Dead Sea. I had such a good time and will definitely view it as one of my highlights at Dame Alice Owen's." *Maya A (Yr10)*

"Jordan was such an incredible and unreal experience. Everything was absolutely perfect down to the weather, the Jordanian locals, the hotels and the group that I travelled with. The everlasting bonds and memories that I made on the trip is something that will stick with me for a long time. I really enjoyed visiting all of the archaeological sites although my favourite thing was doing the Petra by night experience!" *Chisom M (Yr10)*

"Jordan was a once in a lifetime opportunity. What I enjoyed most was driving in the jeeps through the Wadi Rum Desert. It was an amazing experience." *Danielle M (Yr10)*



## SCIENCE

**CREST Club**

This summer 23 Year 7 students took part in the international CREST Bronze Award. Students had the task of trying to make the fizziest and best bath bombs possible!



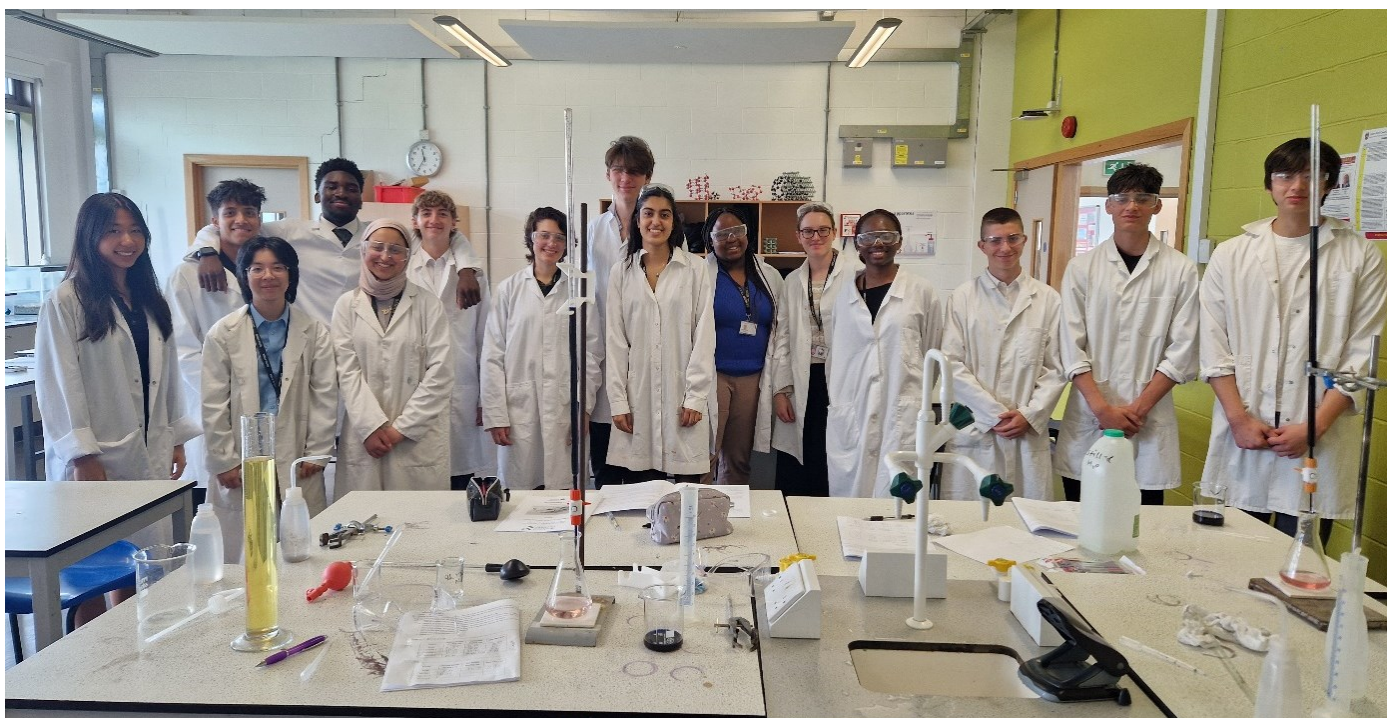
Students researched the chemistry and tried different recipes, ingredients and methods, which as you can image was a lot of fun and very messy!



Congratulations to all students who participated and completed the project who were awarded their certificates!

**Royal Society of Chemistry – National Schools' Analyst Competition**

On Tuesday, 4th June, fifteen Year 12 students took part in the Royal Society of Chemistry National Schools' Analyst Competition. Students were placed in groups and carried out several experiments to analyse a variety of sweet samples and determine which were suitable for consumption and which met trading standards!





Congratulations to our winning DAOS team – Ruairi, Leo and Nathan! Well done to all students for their participation and enthusiasm!

*Joanna Papalouca, Chemistry/Science Enrichment Coordinator*



Earlier this term, 131 Year 10 students entered the National Scientific Thinking Challenge designed by academics from six British universities. The students had to look through data, graphs and text to make deductions, spot trends and suggest hypotheses. The challenge therefore relies upon scientific literacy rather than subject knowledge.

This year, the questions focussed on smart phones, hot-air balloons, treating malaria, environmental science and the search for planets beyond our solar system.

Nearly 16,000 students entered nationally with the top 10% being awarded gold certificates, top 25% receiving silver and top 40% bronze.

34 of our students received a gold award, 32 silver and 22 bronze. A special mention to Ben, Hayden and Daniel who all achieved over 90% in the challenge.

*Mike Jays, Head of Science*



## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

**Athletics****Under 14 Boys**

The team competed in the Regional B Final on Wednesday 12th June at Woodside Athletics track. The boys produced some good performances and came 7th on the day against a strong field of schools.

In the county league the team has qualified for the County League Final.

In the county final the boys performed well but came 7th on the day against a strong field of schools. Kanyi won his event with a personal best throw of over 39 metres in the discus.

**Under 14 Girls**

The U14 girls' athletics team had a fantastic season and improved meet on meet. The girls competed in the Track and Field Regional B Final and finished 3rd on the day which is a very impressive achievement!

The girls also competed in the County League Cup Final after finishing top 4 in their league. In the final, many of the girls stepped up particularly in the field events, where many achieved PBs! The girls finished overall 5th in the whole County which is an amazing achievement. Well done to Isla who finished 1st in the triple jump with a huge jump of 10.32m which is only 2cm off the County record.

**Under 16 Boys**

The team competed in the Regional B Final on Wednesday 12th June at Woodside Athletics track.







The boys produced a good performance and came 3rd overall on the day.

In the county league the team has qualified for the County League Plate Final. At their final the boys performed well and came 3rd overall on the night with Rian and Excel winning their events.



### Under 16 Girls

The U16 girls' athletics team had a brilliant season and were very consistent in all of their meets. The girls competed in the Track and Field Regional B Final and finished 3rd on the day by only 2 points which is a very impressive achievement!

The girls also competed in the County League Cup Final after finishing top 4 in their league. In the final, the girls performed well as a team with everyone pushing as hard as they could for the team!

The girls finished overall 5th in the whole County which is an amazing achievement. Well done to Ellie who finished 1st in the Javelin as well as Izzy who came 2nd in the hurdles and Hannah 2nd in the discus.



### District Athletics

It was another very competitive event which brought some success to the Owen's athletics teams.

The year 7 boys and girls both came third.

The year 8 boys came second and the girls came first

The year 9 boys came second and the girls came first.

The year 10 boys came second by one point and the girls came second.

In the overall boys and girls events the teams came 2nd with the school winning the Overall trophy.





## Hertfordshire Athletics Track and Field Championships

On Saturday 8th June some of our students competed in the annual Hertfordshire County Athletics Track and Field Championships.

Anashe had a great day winning the Year 7 100m and coming second in the High Jump.

Emily won the Year 7 Javelin

Isla came second in the Junior Girls 300m

Excel came second in the Inter Boys Long Jump

Joe came second in the Senior Boys 100m



## Cricket

### Year 7 Boys

AGC

### Year 7 Girls

The girls have continued to grow in confidence and on the 12th June, the As and Bs faced a strong Belmont side. The A team got off to a great start with their best fielding performance of the year. In fact Belmont lost three wickets in the first 2 overs, with superb bowling from Izzy and Betsy. Despite some big hitting from the end of their order, Belmont only scored 60 runs after 6 pairs. Ottie and Eva opened the batting and did a brilliant job. The bowling was fast and straight and they defended well. However, it was a very big boundary and difficult to score runs. The girls showed great composure and kept the run rate going without losing many wickets. With 20 runs needed in the final pairing, it was a tall order. Zara and Betsy did their best to score some boundaries but we lost a couple of wickets and reached a total of 246. Congratulations to players of the match Betsy (bowling), Ottie (batting) and Izzy (fielding).

The B team also got off to a good start in the field. The standard of bowling is really improving and we conceded far less extras. Strong batting from Gabriella kept the girls in contention but Belmont went on to secure the win. It was a great experience for the girls to play against such strong competition and learn more about the game. Well done.

On Monday 17th June, an U13 team (a mix of Year 7 and Year 8) played in the Chance to Compete Herts County competition. It was a fantastic day of cricket and the girls showed what an incredibly talented team they are. They won all their matches comfortably and were crowned County U13 Champions. They have qualified for a place in the Regional Finals. This was due to be played on the 8th July. Sadly, this was cancelled due to a waterlogged pitch (yes in July!). We are hopeful we may be able to play this fixture.

The fixtures have come thick and fast for the Year 7 A team. They convincingly beat RMS away on the 27th June. They beat Latymer on 2nd July and STAHS on the 3rd July. What a way to finish the season and what an incredible first season for the Year 7 cricket team. We are extremely proud of the girls' progress and enthusiasm to play cricket. We look forward to next year.



### **Year 8 Boys**

The Year 8 cricketers enjoyed a number of fixtures this season, which included a fantastic win against Lochinver. Mr McGill would like to thank all students who represented the school this year for their time and efforts.



## Year 8 Girls

The year 8 girls have had exceptional numbers regularly attending Friday lunchtime practices this term. Their commitment and hard work has been evident in the progress they have all made in their skills across all areas of the game and also in their understanding of the sport. The large numbers have meant that we have rotated players to give everyone game time.

Against Queenswood School the girls took more wickets than their opposition but were a little tentative with the bat and needed more aggression in running between the wickets in order to score more runs. They lost by 39 runs but with a little more belief it could have been much closer. Player of the match Isana batted well to score 15 runs off of 6 deliveries.

In their final match of the season the team played The Latymer School. Captain Elizabeth led the team superbly, assisted by vice-captain Sheneli, and they were very unlucky to lose by 1 run. Congratulations to player of the game Gracie.

## Year 9 Boys

Year 9 boys have had a successful season of cricket, reaching the county cup quarter finals before losing out to Bishops Stortford College. In this cup run, our highlight was a 140 run chase against Aldenham School, where Aayush was unbeaten on 94. The boys performed excellently in this game with both the bat and ball and were worthy quarter finalists.

We had friendly wins against Haileybury, St Edmunds and Parmiter's School. All fixtures were competitive and the boys have shown great development across the season.

## Year 9 Girls

Congratulations to the Year 9 girls on a great season of cricket. We had a fantastic day at the Chance to Compete festival at St Margaretsbury Cricket Club After a long wait, the warm sunshine arrived. The competition was tough and the girls played a 20 over traditional format, as opposed to pairs.

Congratulations to Riya who batted exceptionally well all day and was retired twice. Also special mention to captain Ellie N who has led the team exceptionally well and has been a fantastic all-rounder throughout the season.

We had a great win against Hitchin Girls, but then lost out narrowly in the other games.

Nevertheless, it was a fun day and a great end to the season! Well done girls. It has been a pleasure to coach you all this year.

## Year 10 Boys

AGC



## Tennis

### County Tennis

#### Year 9&10 Girls

The U15 girls County tennis team had a very successful season winning all of their league games. This meant that they progressed to the all-day County finals at Queenswood.

The girls faced a very strong opposition in Parmiters in the semi-finals and lost overall 8-4. This meant that they then played in the 3rd and 4th play off. In the playoff the girls battled hard defeating their opposition in the shootout after the score finishing level at 6-6!

Well done girls!



#### Year 9&10 Boys

The U15 boys County tennis team also had a very successful season. They won their final match against Roundwood Park School 12-0. The boys were unbeaten in all of their group games not dropping a single set which meant they progressed onto the County Finals days. The boys were up against Monks Walk in the semi-final. They all performed very well and won overall 8-4 which meant they progressed on to the final against St Columbas.



The latter had some very strong tennis players and the boys lost overall 10-2 meaning they narrowly missed out on the regional finals. However, it was a fantastic achievement finishing 2nd in the County!



#### Year 7 County Doubles Tournament

The Year 7 boys had their County Doubles tournament at HABS boys school. The boys were brilliant powering through some really tough weather conditions as well as 7 out of 8 of the boys coming straight after a whole day school trip! Well done to Jason and Noah who came 5th overall in their A section. Also, a big congratulations to Luke and Ethan who won their B section overall!



## Year 7 County Doubles Tournament

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Well done to Jason and Noah who came 5th overall in their A section. Also, a big congratulations to Luke and Ethan who won their B section overall!

Well done also to Kanghong, Laurence, Arthur and Ryan who were all involved.



## DISTRICT (NICOLA MABBITT)

Since half term we have had an abundance of Nicola Mabbitt tennis matches against different schools in our District such as Chancellors, Sherrardswood, Yavneh and Monks Walk. This competition is fantastic as it sees pupils that have less tennis experience get involved in competitive matches. We entered lots of teams: U13A&B girls, U13A&B boys, U14 girls and boys and U15 boys. After, all of the matches were played the teams that finished top of their group then had the opportunity to progress to the finals competing for the Mid Herts District against other Districts in the County.



Our U13A girls, U14 girls and U14 boys teams all progressed to the finals which was amazing! On the finals day the U13 girls finished overall 5th and the U14 teams both finished 3<sup>rd</sup>.







### U18 Girls National Aberdare Cup

A great run in the National Aberdare Cup for these fantastic girls – Alice, Katia, Dyllen and Aduago. The girls unfortunately got knocked out in the semi-final of the group stage today against a very strong Queenswood side. Well done girls! You had a very good run in our first year of entering the competition.

### Football

Both the U12 and U14 girls teams reached the finals of their respective District 7-a-side leagues. The under 14s faced Hertswood Academy who had defeated them in all of their previous meetings (in their last game in the group stages they ran out 4-0 winners). The girls demonstrated excellent team work and found themselves 1-0 up early on.



They maintained their focus and went on to score 2 more unanswered goals before half time. With substitutions in the second half and positional rotations the team maintained their concentration to finish as 3-0 victors and be crowned District champions. Vice-captain and player of the game Freya scored 2 goals and captain Lilly scored the other. It was an exceptional team performance, well done girls!





The under 12 girls faced Yavneh College in their final. The 2 teams had met in the group stages of the competition and the tie had finished 1-1. This encounter was equally as close. On one of the hottest days of the year so far Owen's dominated the first part of the game and could have been a couple of goals up had it not been for some fantastic saves from the Yavneh goalkeeper.



Anashe put the team 1-0 up only for Yavneh to equalise courtesy of an excellent finish. Captain Amy put Owen's back in the lead but again the girls were pegged back to 2-2.

As the game entered the final minute, Zara received the ball with her back to goal about 20 yards out, turned her defender and hit a wonder strike to win the match. The squad all worked tirelessly in hot conditions and were deservedly crowned District champions.

Well done all!

### Other announcements

Congratulations to Izzy X (Y9) who won the Herts County combined event and was asked to represent the County in the South East England Combined Events, where she finished as the top girl in her team and achieved five PB's on the day. She has also been invited to the English National Schools competition for the High Jump.

Annabelle R (Y9) has had a very successful Summer in all of her very high level gymnastic competitions! Firstly, she competed in a League 2 competition in Cardiff and got a well-deserved gold in her tumble competition.

Annabelle then competed at the English Silver Tumbling in Telford where she finished 15<sup>th</sup> in the whole of England at her level! Finally, she competed at the Inter-regional Challenge Cup National Finals in Birmingham and came 7<sup>th</sup> in her age group for DMT. This included her achieving the highest scoring run in her category.

Congratulations to Tanishka K (Y8) who won gold and bronze medals during her club karate tournament 2024. Currently Tanishka is on brown belt.

Well done, girls! These are amazing achievements!



## Blast Cricket Trip to Lords

On Thursday 6th June, a group of 52 Owens students visited Lords Cricket Ground to watch Middlesex compete in a 20 over Blast Cricket match against Glamorgan. It was a lovely evening. The sun shone and there was some very impressive hitting and bowling on display. Middlesex's opening pair got off to a great start but then the wickets started to tumble. They reached a respectable total of 171 runs. Although it was closely contested, Glamorgan chased them down to cruise to victory with 2 overs remaining. Thank you to Miss Pettengell, Mrs Palfrey, Mr Festa, Mr Dugan and Miss Simeone for supervising on the trip and to Mrs Keating for all her help with the organisation.



## Inter-House Cricket

The inter-house cricket competition took place in the final week of last half term and the first week of this half term. The year 7 girls' and boys' competitions were both won by Clerkenwell and the year 8 girls event was won by Goswell.

## Sports Psychology

A group of elite sports people in years 7-12 were invited to attend 4 one hour after school Sports Psychology sessions with a visiting speaker this half term courtesy of some funding from the Nicholas Barnes Trust. The sessions included information and activities to make them consider the ways in which Goal Setting, Confidence and Anxiety could impact their performances and how they could use these concepts to maximise their outcomes. The students all engaged fully with the workshops and found the sessions both informative and beneficial. Hopefully this will help them as they continue in their chosen sports.

## Sports Day

We were very fortunate that the weather held out for us to run our annual Sports Day on Thursday 4th July. All field events took place in the morning as well as the hurdles, 800m and 1500m races. In the afternoon all students in years 7-10 were either competing in sprint races, the relay, tug of war or cheering their House on out on the field. It was great to see so many students taking part and winning points for their House. The final results were as follows:

Year 7:

1st Clerkenwell - 209 points

2nd Goswell - 200 points

3rd Hermitage - 157 points

4th Isledon - 148 points





**Year 8:**

- 1st Clerkenwell - 237 points
- 2nd Hermitage - 223 points
- 3rd Isledon - 213 points
- 4th Goswell - 189 points



**Year 9:**

- 1st Clerkenwell - 274 points
- 2nd Goswell - 235 points
- 3rd Isledon - 169 points
- 4th Hermitage - 155 points



**Year 10:**

- 1st Hermitage - 230 points
- 2nd Clerkenwell - 173 points
- 3rd Isledon - 170 points
- 4th Goswell - 137 points



**Overall**

- 1st Clerkenwell - 893 points
- 2nd Hermitage - 765 points
- 3rd Goswell - 761 points
- 4th Isledon - 700 points

