



Dame Alice Owen's School

December 2024



Letter from the Head **Hannah Nemko**

There is nothing like the feeling I get when my PA walks into my room waving a piece of paper, *smiling*, and saying that she has something lovely to tell me.

This is what happened last week, almost exactly one calendar year from the day she came to my office to announce that Ofsted was on its way. The news was, of course, that we had been named **'Sunday Times**

Comprehensive School of the Year in the South East'. When the tables were published, we were able to see that we were, in fact, the top performing school, with a fully comprehensive intake and ranked at position 112 in the national table which considered all Independent, Selective and other State Secondary Schools. The next school, similar to us, came in at rank 196, showing just how well our students achieved last year.

There is so much to be proud of when we think about our school: the kindness we see throughout the student body; the hours of additional support the staff provide to fan the flames of curiosity and creativity amongst our young people; the support we are given through the OSA and the wider parent body, be that through their generosity of time or donation.

My thanks and congratulations extend to our whole school community on our award: students, staff, parents, governors and the Dame Alice Owen's Foundation through the Worshipful Company of Brewers. Just as the words of the school song tell us, it is only when 'the whole school works as one' that we can achieve such fantastic results. Let's hope that we can continue to #strivewithawill and that 2025, and beyond, continues to bring us all health, happiness and continued success.

Wishing you all a restful break,

Hannah Nemko.

Hannah Nemko
Headteacher



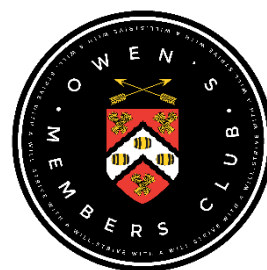
ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

BEYOND CLASSROOMS

Read more on pp.5-16.

SUBJECT BY SUBJECT

Read more on pp.17-39.



OWEN'S SCHOOL ASSOCIATION



In its 50th year of fund-raising, the OSA set an ambitious target of **£50,000**, which was successfully reached and donated to the school this month. Many thanks to everyone who have made it happen – be it with their time, efforts or money. A similar target is set for next year and, should this year's level of commitment and generosity continue, the Owen's Sports department will see a very significant benefit for all pupils in 2025-2026.



The OSA's ever so popular quiz night returned this autumn term as Quiz and Curry Night. Expertly organised by Simi & Jig, led by quiz master Alex and catered by DAOS chef Jake, this was yet another great opportunity for Owen's wider community to get to know each other better in an informal and relaxed atmosphere. £5,500 was raised at the quiz night which seems to increasingly draw interest of our 6th Formers. This year they were represented by 4 teams – highest number so far!



Jubilant winners



As announced earlier, Online Nearly New Uniform Shop was on the third week of November and raised an astonishing £745.50 in 4 days! Kind to the environment and parents' pockets, this event takes place several times a year and grows in demand continuously. However, it takes a great deal of time and effort to keep it up and running. Special thanks go to OSA volunteer Sheena as well as others who helped in the past or continue helping in various capacity. Kindly consider joining their efforts!

Similarly, we invite you to consider joining Tony's amazing team of volunteers – a good mix of current and former Owen's parents, finding delight in supporting the school community with their time. These are the people who make sure that there's refreshments galore at virtually every out-of-hours school event. It's little things like this that take our school events to a higher level and add a financial value too.

Match funding remains a powerful vehicle in ramping up our fund-raising efforts. This charitable top-up scheme from a wide range of employers makes a considerable contribution. We greatly rely on a few match-funders in our parent community and are grateful for their time and efforts. However, it is quite possible that you too might be working for a company that offers this scheme. Kindly inquire with your employer and we'll look forward to seeing you at our next event.

COMING UP NEXT TERM – THAMES BOAT TRIP

- **26th April 2025**, 8pm to 12am, Westminster Pier
- River cruise in style
- Tickets are limited:
- book at <https://buytickets.at/theosa/1475626>
- **Early Bird** offer as well as early payment plan (£25 non-refundable deposit now and later - a balance of £30 are available before 30th January (regular ticket price – £60).



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 you will find links to ticketed events, the Online Nearly New Uniform Shop etc.



The OSA wishes everyone a restful Christmas season and a happy and peaceful New Year!

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, 13th January 2025.** 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 – 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

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.

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, if you could spare a couple of hours.

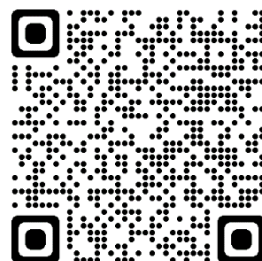
OSA's '200 Club': The OSA operates a Lottery Style 200 Club with a £50 and a £25 prize draw every month, and an extra draw in December. Annual membership is £24 per number and nothing more to do other than wait to hear if your number is drawn. For further details, please contact **Alan** at 200club@theOSA.org.uk.

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 Sourì at 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 these QR codes:

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

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



Careers Department

Year 13 Apprenticeship Evening: DAOS 6th Form held an Apprenticeship Evening for Year 13 on Wednesday, 18 September 2024. This event has been growing in strength from only 7 participants in 2021 to over 75 this year. Parents and students learnt more about this alternative higher education pathway whereby qualifications and degrees are gained whilst undertaking a full-time role in a company. Alumni who have chosen this route recounted their reasons for undertaking an apprenticeship, the application process and their experience as an apprentice. Many Year 13 students are now being supported by the 6th form and careers staff to identify and apply for suitable apprenticeship opportunities. Some students have already been invited to the 2nd rounds of apprenticeship processes.

Year 13 University Applications: Those students for whom university is their preferred next steps have begun the process of choosing and applying for course through UCAS. Each 6th Form student has a personal tutor to support them through this process and 6th form and careers staff are always available for advice and help with choosing courses, writing personal statements and the application process itself.

Year 11 Career Interviews: All Year 11 students have met at least once with Ms Stein to discuss their options post-GCSE. These discussions cover A-levels at DAOS 6th Form, other 6th Forms they may be interested in moving to, college courses and other vocational qualifications they may wish to pursue. Students have been provided with links and information relevant to the decisions and pathways they are considering.

Generation Hertsmere Careers Fair: Hertsmere Borough Council in partnership with The Hertfordshire Careers Hub run a careers fair in November where students from Hertfordshire schools can meet with employers to learn more about the range of roles and opportunities available locally in Hertfordshire. 15 Year 9 and Year 11 students attended the fair on Wednesday, 6 November having a chance to speak with Sky Studios, the army and the police, aviation companies and laboratories.

Young Reporters Scheme: The Young Reporter Scheme, working in partnership with Newsquest Media Group, run an exciting extra-curricular opportunity for students allowing them to experience what it is like to work for a real live newspaper. 26 students in Years 10 to 13 have signed up to participate in this 8-month scheme where they are given topics to write about and deadlines to work to. Every article is published on Newsquest's range of online newspapers – <https://www.newsquest.co.uk/news-brands>. Last month this scheme won a prestigious award – the Best Educational Journalism Programme Award for 2024. Learn more at <https://www.newsquest.co.uk/news/newsquest-young-reporter-scheme-wins-prestigious-award>

National Careers Week: This annual event is coming up on 3rd – 8th March and we will be looking for alumni from a range of professions to kindly take the time to speak to our Year 9 - 13 students to give them the chance to explore possible future careers. If you might be able to get involved or are interested in finding out more, please contact Abigail Stein.



TRAIN TO TEACH

through Dame Alice Owen's School

Have you considered a career in teaching?

Are you interested in doing a PGCE?

Applications are now open for September 2025

WHY TRAIN WITH US:

- ★ Our proven track record for training and developing new staff
- ★ "Teachers are experts in the subjects that they teach" (*Ofsted 2023*) so make excellent mentors for trainees
- ★ A high number of trainees stay on at our school and progress to middle and senior leadership roles

REQUIREMENTS:

- HONORS DEGREE** (2.2 or higher) with 50% minimum content on the subject you wish to teach
- ENGLISH AND MATHS** GCSE/equivalent: Grade 4 or above (Grade C or above under old grading structure)

For more information, please contact Nicola Nicolaou: nicolaoun@damealiceowens.herts.sch.uk



TRAIN TO TEACH: School Experience Day

Monday 13 January, 9.30am - 1pm

Find out about training to become a teacher:

- Learn more about routes into teaching
- Observe lessons with experienced teachers
- Receive advice on making your application

Suitable for anyone thinking about a career in teaching after university or anyone considering a career change

FREE TO ATTEND
REGISTER YOUR
INTEREST NOW



Train to Teach: Have you considered a career in teaching? Or maybe you know someone who would be interested? Our school offers a wonderful opportunity to train through us?

School Experience Day is free to attend and provides the opportunity to receive advice on your application and/or find out more about what is involved.

For more information, please contact Nicola Nicolaou.

The Advanced Learning Partnership is delighted to once again be offering the Teaching Internships Programme in partnership with the DfE and Get Into Teaching for 2025. As in previous years, it is open to undergraduates in any year of study in the following subjects: Maths, Physics, Chemistry, Computing or a Modern Foreign Language.

The idea is to encourage those who may be considering a career in teaching to experience life in the classroom, in the hope that it may inspire the next generation of teachers into the profession.

Applications are now open online: <https://forms.gle/YrvqzhGSaGm9h7uu8> or via the ALP website: www.advancedlearningpartnership.co.uk.

Teaching Internships

Experience the teaching profession and gain new skills. With Teaching Internships, you'll get the opportunity to experience a range of activities to help you get a feel for school life.

The Details

The Advanced Learning Partnership is offering placements at schools in Hertfordshire and North London

You'll need to be a University student interested in teaching maths, physics, computing, chemistry or a modern foreign language

Lasts 3 weeks, from June 2025

You'll be paid £425 per week (£1,275 in total)

You'll gain classroom experience, support pupils, shadow experienced teachers, observe lessons and lots more

You'll receive support after your internship to pursue your interest in teaching, including from the Advanced Learning Partnership and a dedicated adviser

Find out more: visit getintoteaching.education.gov.uk or www.advancedlearningpartnership.co.uk
Applications are now open and close at midnight on Friday 31st January 2025

Apply here: <https://forms.gle/YrvqzhGSaGm9h7uu8>



Eco Committee

The Eco Committee has been energised by the arrival of lots of new members who have been working hard alongside the established Eco-committee team, and under the expert guidance of Marina (Y13), Mrs Knight and Mrs Chan. This term our key achievement is the **Eco-schools Green Flag award with MERIT**, which reflects the exceptionally hard work put into maintaining and developing our programmes last year.



UCL Ocean Health Challenge competition: Over 20 students in Years 7-11 got involved in this national competition run by Mrs Knight and Ms Chan (with advice from Mr Macdonald and Mr Jackson). Students completed a short course, learning to apply their design skills to the task of reducing ocean plastic pollution in a contest where the winning student will win £2000 for their school and £500 in vouchers for themselves. We await the results with baited breath...

Walk to School Week: This initiative is going from strength to strength. This year's winners were Tom and Theo in Year 9 who completed an epic 13-mile walk to school, leaving Islington at 4am and STILL arriving on time for registration. They were awarded bowling tickets in recognition of their fantastic achievement. Although a 13-mile walk every morning is not very practical as a long-term solution, the boys did a great job of showing what is possible, and hopefully they've inspired more people to help reduce air pollution by walking at least some of the way to school. (You can enjoy Tom's and Theo's account of their walking venture on page 14.)

Bath Bombs workshop annual and Christmas Jumper swap:

It wouldn't be Christmas without these Eco Committee's annual events. The Bath Bomb workshop was oversubscribed for the second year running with students from all year groups eager to make awesome hand-made presents for their loved ones – with a fraction of the ecological impact of shop-bought gifts.

Given that fast fashion is a major contributor to climate breakdown, our Christmas Jumper swap is always a fabulous way to spread some Christmas cheer with a clear conscience. This year's edition helped many jumpers have another Christmas, instead of ending up in landfill, or being burned for energy.



Watch this space for updates from Eco Committee in the spring term, including highlights like Hertfordshire's Youth COP and the now legendary DAOS Sustainable Fashion Fayre.

Anti-Bullying Week in the words of our students

Anti-Bullying Week is incredibly important to us at Dame Alice Owen's as it provides a focal point to highlight the fantastic work we do as a school throughout the year to promote anti-bullying, respect and kindness. During the week, there are plenty of opportunities to promote the theme of anti-bullying with a variety of activities and events run by the anti-bullying captains.

This year, three students (Nico S (Y9), Heather T (Y9) and Gracie L (Y8)) and Ms Mangan (Anti-Bullying Lead), represented the school by attending an online Anti-Bullying meeting with the United Against Bullying Team and the Anti-Bullying Alliance, along with four other schools. Each school was given 5 minutes to present their methods of incorporating anti-bullying into their daily school lives within the student and staff body.

It proved to be a really successful meeting, allowing each school to magpie each other's ideas. Also, this gave the schools confidence in their own approach to anti-bullying.

At the end of the meeting, there was also an on the spot Q and A session, where the answers were collected as part of a survey. Overall, this was a great opportunity for Owen's to show off how our school embodies anti-bullying and what we could do even better next year.

Nico S, Y9

This November, at Owen's we celebrated Anti-Bullying Week with a specific focus on respect. To raise awareness, anti-bullying captains worked together to put together assemblies for different year groups, arranged charity badminton matches between teachers and students and created videos and posters designed to inspire our classmates to stand up against bullying and to always show respect. Year 7 students also made bracelets and bookmarks which were sold to the school community and we made just over £63 for the Anti-bullying Alliance.



I was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to take part in creating a video which was shown in assembly. Our message was that we are never too old or too young to speak up and that it should never feel embarrassing to tell a teacher when we recognise unkindness around us; to further emphasise our message we thought it would be crucial to ensure that our video included students from various year groups. This element of our video showcased how everyone deserves respect and how anyone can be a victim of bullying regardless of their age.

Our video was about a Year 11 boy, Sami, who had been ostracised by his fellow classmates, Sami had been repeatedly taunted and tormented for his appearance and the shoes that he wore over a long period of time. One day, a group of year 7 girls witnessed Sami's cruel treatment and decided to try and help him. Sami opened up to the caring year 7 girls before they persuaded him to tell a teacher that he trusted what had been happening.

After Sami had reported everything to his teacher he felt so much better as if a weight had been lifted off his shoulders. The students who had been bullying him were punished for their behaviour and disrespectful actions. They realised what they had been doing was wrong and apologised to Sami.

After watching our video, we hope that everyone who watched it was able to acknowledge just how important it is to know the power that our words hold and instead of tearing each other down with our words we should be lifting each other up and celebrating our differences

We also aim to set an example for younger students who have recently joined Owen's, especially when it comes to refusing to be a bystander. We should all be advocates for what is right and never be complicit in someone else's misdeeds. With this message in mind, I think we should all look to the following words of Anglo-Irish philosopher Edmund Burke, "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good people to do nothing".

Lucy T, Y11

You can watch this fantastic video at <https://t.co/TVbgekrZHs>



CHESS NEWS

It has been another exciting term in the world of DAOS chess. In October, we entered the ECF Eton Schools Open and this time we put two teams into the fray. The event has become rather large and this year, they split the tournament into two, with an Open competition and a Major. Both teams were put into the harder Open tournament and as expected, it was a very challenging event. The A team performed superbly to come 9th out of 36 teams and the B team battled hard to come 33rd.

Both teams performed above their pre-tournament expectations, which was impressive to see (<https://chess-results.com/tnr1032094.aspx?lan=1&art=0>).

The A team consisted of Ridhuan, James, Rock, TaoHai, Jacob and Stephen. The B team consisted of Olivia, Kian, Uthmaan, Sasha, Tudor and Firdaus.



In the qualifying round of the English Schools Chess Championship, we won our event at St. Albans Boys School finishing on 13 ½ points out of 18, to go into the regional heats. The team that day was Rock, Stephen, TaoHai, James, Ridhuan and Uthmaan.

Meanwhile in the National Online School Chess League that is played every other Monday night, we often top Division 1 and in the last week before Christmas, we had 3 teams in Division 1, which is pretty impressive and shows the number of students who are enjoying chess each week. We might even enter a 4th team!!! Thanks as always to Mr Goodlad for his continued support, offering lessons to those students not in a team on a Monday night after school when the NOSCL is on.

As some of you may know, we have an exceptional player in Rock, and over the summer, he won the U14 British Chess Championships, that took place in Hull whilst England was rioting! He managed to keep his concentration to win 6 matches and draw one to take the crown. You can read about it in the Welwyn and Hatfield Times –

<https://www.whtimes.co.uk/news/24497785.potters-bar-teen-conquers-u14-british-chess-championships/>

Have a lovely Christmas and happy chess playing!

Mr Simpson, Director of Chess

The BootStRaP Project

You may recall from the previous issue that Year 8 students Anya and Safa have been selected as Dame Alice Owen's ambassadors for the BootStRaP Project, working with the University of Hertfordshire. The study focuses on the impact of internet use on teenager's mental health and wellbeing. Below is the account of their recent experience of visiting Porto, Portugal with Ms Ogufere and Miss Smith.

Ever since the pandemic, the world, and especially children, have relied heavily on devices and the internet in their day-to-day lives, and this can have a multitude of effects.

I see children my age, as well as other young people, with their eyes glued to the screen, refusing to stop watching TikTok or playing that last round of a game. Every day we have to face all sorts of situations in the real-life world, from lots of schoolwork, to worrying what other children think of us, to our personal lives. The internet can seem to offer a fun, mood boosting, alternative world that you can immerse yourself in and forget about reality, but it can have damaging effects.

That's why when I heard about the BootStRaP project, a group of young people and experts working collaboratively to create an app to help children get over their internet addiction, I was eager to take part. The project worked on an app that would assess how children spend their time on the internet, and work with them, focusing on how they can change these habits and work towards a better, healthier internet usage.

The BootStRaP team held a bootcamp last year that the ambassadors for our school attended, in Buckinghamshire. This year, however, it was in Portugal, which was very exciting. On the trip we created the second part of the app, the intervention, which will aim to help the user find healthier approaches to internet use.

On the first day of the trip, it was mostly just travel and getting to know each other, we travelled with all the other ambassadors from the UK. The second day was when we started developing the app. They informed us what we were doing and we started to brainstorm initial ideas. We were put in teams to discuss ideas and my team came up with the idea of two children having a conversation about their days, and helping each other regulate their emotions. We then had to present our idea to the other groups and the team with the most votes won. I was chosen to present on behalf of my group, which made me pretty nervous, but I managed to say what I needed to say without stuttering.

Fortunately, our group won which meant that they might use or consider our ideas for the final app. The third day we were split up into children and adults. In the children's group we went over the timeline for what was happening in the app, and about emotional regulation. I met a lot of the other children who all had great personalities and different reasons for wanting to take part in the project. There were people from all over Europe – Germany, France, Switzerland, Spain. After getting to know them a little better I realised that they were quite similar to me, also trying to help others find healthier routines online. The third day was a great day as we played games in the evening with some of the other student ambassadors. We also received our certificates for our involvement.

Overall, I think the study is very important and beneficial. It follows the story of a young, amiable astronaut, who is trying to get home, whilst giving you helpful, easy tips to manage your time online.

By downloading this app you not only can take part in an international study, but your participation will also help the researchers gain a greater understanding of internet activity among young people. You might also understand more about different healthy strategies to use when navigating the online world, all whilst helping an astronaut make his way home.

Anya A, Y8



Lectures preparing the ambassadors for their group sessions on co-creating the intervention app

BootStRaP is an easy-to-use application designed to help young people manage their mental health while using social media. In today's world, many young individuals spend a lot of time on social media platforms, such as Instagram, Snapchat, and TikTok, which can sometimes lead to feelings of anxiety, loneliness, or sadness. BootStRaP focuses on promoting healthier habits among its users to help these issues. I decided to sign up for this program because I saw a fantastic unique opportunity to help improve the mental health of young people. I knew I would have the chance to meet new people, and I felt it would be a great overall experience.

I had an amazing time in Portugal! The teachers and BootStRaP members were incredibly kind and helpful. I learned a lot of new things and met many new people. We participated in various activities, such as creating a storyline for the app, learning how to help others regulate their emotions, and finding ways to reduce time spent on social media. I met a really diverse group of people, some from England and from many other countries. Everyone was friendly, especially the ambassadors from Portugal, who were very welcoming. I believe others should sign up for the app, as it can help young people adopt healthier behaviours online.

Safa H, Y8



Presentation of certificates on the final day of the Bootcamp in Porto, Portugal

All year 8 students are eligible to take part in the study and parents can provide consent by following this link [BootStRaP Consent Form](#). Students can't be involved unless you consent for them to take part, so your help is very important to us.

Dame Alice Owen's is one of just four schools across the UK involved in the project and we really need your help to add to the evidence on this topic. Remember all the data collected from students' phones are treated confidentially and the study team will not be able to identify an individual from the data received from their phone. We will be visiting the school again in January to help students download the app where parents and carers have given permission to take part.

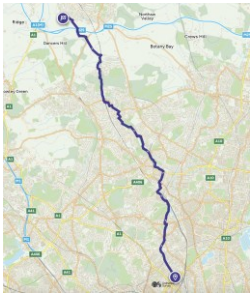
If you would like any more information about the project please click this link <https://www.internetandme.eu/2024/11/15/inspiring-collaboration-at-the-2nd-bootstrap-bootcamp-in-porto/> . If you would like to know anything further, please contact the school.

Thank you!

The research team at the University of Hertfordshire

Congratulations to Cara M (8J) on receiving a Jack Petchey Award from the Guides celebrating her Positive Attitude and recognising Cara as an invaluable role model for her peers.

The Jack Petchey Achievement Award scheme is a programme which recognises and celebrates outstanding young people aged 11-25 across London and Essex.



Hi, I'm Tom H, a Year 9 student. In October, Owen's had their Walk to School week and so, even though I live over 20 km (13 mi) away from school I was up for the challenge with my friend Theo S (Y9), who also lives in Islington, to try and win the competition (just in case this had failed the previous day I walked with my friend Daniel to his house from school which was about 1 hour and 15 minutes) and beat the previous holders who won when I was in Year 8, who walked from Palmers Green.

I began my journey from my house in Holloway. First of all, I walked up Hornsey Road for approximately 2.6 km up to Crouch End.

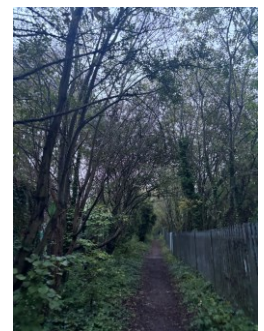
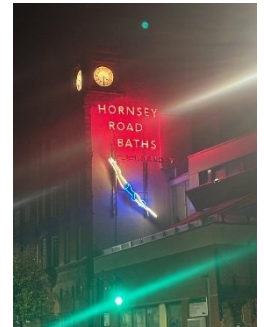
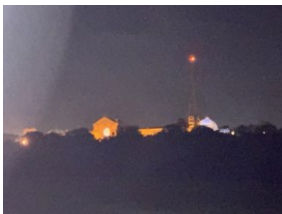
After passing the clock tower, we turned right and walked up Middle Lane and through Priory Park and continued on towards Alexandra Park.

We continued up around the edge of Alexandra Park and finally reached Alexandra Palace, hitting the 5 km mark right outside Alexandra Palace Station. A little more walking brought us to Durnsford Road, where we crossed the East Coast Main Line and then just about bypassed Bounds Green Station, and at the 7 km mark, we finally reached the A406 (North Circular) which signalled we were nearly halfway there.

Next up we narrowly missed Arnos Grove Station and walked through Arnos Park, walking beside Pymmes Brook and the Arnos Park Viaduct for a few minutes up through Brunswick Park, and as we left Brunswick Park, we hit the 10 km mark, which was halfway. Still following Pymmes Brook, we entered Oak Hill Park and finally left the side of Pymmes Brook in East Barnet at about the 12.5 km mark. Walking up East Barnet Road, we walked over the footbridge at New Barnet station, crossing back over the East Coast Main Line.

We walked to the 15 km mark beside the railway line through Hadley Woods. Our final sight of London came with the village of Hadley Wood, walking through it and beside the Hadley Wood Station, following the train line again on our exit of the village. At about 16.5 km, we were greeted by a friendly sign, which showed we had left London and only had the last few kilometres in the Hertfordshire countryside to go.

Several farms lay beside us on Waggon Road, which took us to Ganwick Corner, which put us inside the area of Potters Bar Parish, reaching the hamlet of Bentley Heath around 18.5 kilometres in.

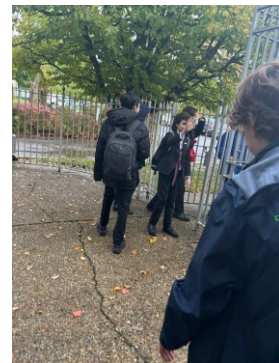




We then turned off the road onto a footpath that took us to our biggest obstacle yet, however a quite precarious bridge let us pass the M25 without playing Crossy Road on the UK's biggest motorway and after descending from the Bridge, we continued along the edge of a field beside the M25 to about the 20 km mark, where we reached road once again, but this one extremely narrow, with no pavement. Sawyers Lane, which you may know as the road which the buses go down out of school, and we were nearly hit by a few 626's, but after 20.7 km and 3 hours and 53 minutes, we arrived at school in good spirits, met by a crowd of our friends who celebrated our achievements in the 2 minutes before the first bell. We weren't late (just about).

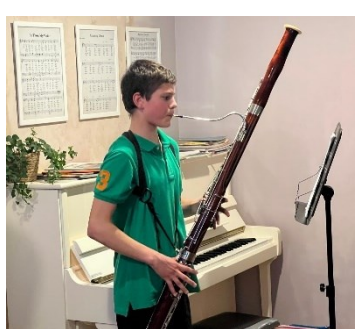
Tom H and Daniel G, Y9

(Photo credits: Theo's dad and Tom's mum)



On 1 December, Solomia M (Y12), together with her younger siblings Marko (Y9) and Luka (Y4), held an Advent recital to raise much needed funds for Ukrainian children living near the Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant.

In their efforts, they were supported by other Owenians – Sarah W-D (Y12), Sami C (Y12) and Xavier W (Y9). The programme included beloved carols played on trumpet and piano as well as well-known solo and duet pieces on bassoon, cello and piano, all followed by sing-along carols. The whole evening turned out to be a great success, both in atmosphere and funds raised. A whopping sum of £1,200 has already been put to use by the charity operating in that region. Special thanks go to the Owen's families who supported the cause!



LIBRARY

Library News

Caroline Green, North London-based author of children's books, young adult thrillers and adult crime novels, came to speak to year 8 on Wednesday 13th November. The talk tied in with the year group's recent work on detective fiction.

Caroline's talk focused on how she writes and on how she generates her ideas. She gave a fascinating account of her experience of getting published for the first time - after a career in journalism, she thought it would be easy to get her book published. In fact it took 37 rejections before a publisher accepted the manuscript of her novel. The novel went on to win two major awards! Caroline said she wanted students aiming for creative careers to understand that rejection is part of the process, and that they shouldn't give up after those first few 'no's.

Caroline talked about where she gets inspiration for her characters, plots and settings (a whole range of sources!) and about her 'formula' which underlies her very different books - the fact that she starts from the question 'What if?' and then sees where the idea takes her. She then challenged our students to come up with their own 'What if?' ideas and kindly awarded prizes for the best ones.



Caroline gives our students her top tips for success as an author

Caroline then took us through the stages of writing a novel, from ideas through drafting, becoming 'obsessed' as she gets into the writing process, feeling negative and then positive about the quality of the end result, and finally sending the book out into the world to readers. She spoke about how strange it feels as a writer when the book effectively no longer belongs to her, but to the readers.



Caroline speaks to a special VIP joint session of Book Club, Creative Writing Club and Student Librarians

Finally, Caroline offered a series of tips for anyone who wants to write a book:

- Read as much as you can and read whatever you enjoy
- Watch films and television, as good storytelling can come from this as well
- Don't be a perfectionist - she said 'allow yourself to write rubbish and the good stuff will follow!'

Caroline then took students' questions (offering prizes for the best ones) and gave really illuminating answers.

At break time, she then spoke to a special joint meeting of our Creative Writing Club, Book Club and Student Librarians team, telling them more about herself and especially about what it is like to teach creative writing in a prison.

We are very grateful to Caroline for taking the time to come and speak to us and hope that her talk will be an inspiration to all you budding writers out there!

GCSE Geography Trip to Iceland

Iceland will always be such an unforgettable school trip. It was nothing short of amazing!

From the moment we arrived, the landscape was breathtaking: dramatic waterfalls and icy mountains everywhere. One of the main highlights which everyone loved was definitely visiting the famous Sky Lagoon, where we relaxed in the warm, natural lagoon surrounded by steam. There was a six-step spa ritual, which included a plunge pool, sauna, mist room, salt scrub, steam room and a delicious pomegranate shot. As well as this, we were blessed to have a hot tub in one of the hotels which we thoroughly enjoyed! We also hiked many of Iceland's most iconic waterfalls and a huge glacier, it felt so surreal.



Two of the nights, when we went out for dinner, we told the waiters it was someone's birthday and even got free dessert (Mr Fry was one of them). Unfortunately, we didn't see the Northern Lights so Mr Fry will have to give us a refund as that was the main reason I went on the trip. In a nutshell, this trip gave me memories that I'll cherish forever and I would 100% recommend it to anyone. We got so many cute photos, made lots of TikToks and enjoyed every bit of the trip.

Aditi D, Y11



A Level Maths Lectures at Emmanuel Centre

On Tuesday, 19th November, a group of Year 12 Further Maths students visited the Emmanuel Centre for a day of engaging maths lectures.

We listened to Colin Wright first, who spoke about combinatorial games such as Nim and Officers, and gave us strategies to always win. Next was 'How to get rich quick' by Sophie Maclean on stock trading and probabilities.

Matt Pritchard spoke about illusions, showing us some videos he created during lockdown. Then, Alison Kiddle spoke about Risk and Reward using examples from when they were on *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire*. We also learnt about micromorts and how risky it is to go for a 17-mile walk.

Finally, was Tom Crawford, who talked about the million dollar unsolvable maths equations, and what we would need to do to solve them. The day also included a session on exam techniques and what markers will be looking for.

Thank you to the teachers for organising such an enriching experience!

Maths Challenge News

In November, thirty 6th formers were invited to sit the Senior Kangaroo follow-on round after achieving a gold certificate in the Senior Maths Challenge.

Congratulations to Samuel G, Zackaryaa I, Sally J and Jonah R who all scored 50 points and were awarded a Merit and joint Best in Year 12. Congratulations also to Nicholas B, Sophie C and Elizabeth Xiang H (year 13) who were also awarded a Merit with 50 points each.

Special congratulations go to Amelia R and Matthew T who both scored 55 points and were awarded a Merit and Best in Year 13.

Dom P, Matei P, Stephen G, Leo N and Sunny Y sat the BMO paper. We eagerly await their results.



Shapes

By Shel Silverstein

A square was sitting quietly
Outside his rectangular shack
When a triangle came down — keerplunk! —
And struck him in the back.
“I must go to the hospital,”
Cried the wounded square,
So a passing rolling circle
Picked him up and took him there.

MODERN LANGUAGES

A Level French Cinema Day

On the 22nd November, 19 French A Level students from Years 12 and 13 (along with Mr Tanner and Mrs Stallard) travelled to the British Film Institute on the South Bank for a French cinema study day.

The morning session was an interactive presentation and seminar (with over 400 students from around the country) examining the cinema techniques developed by the influential directors of the French New Wave in the 1950s and 60s - with lots of clips from classic films like 'A bout de Souffle' (Breathless) by Jean-Luc Godard (1960). We saw how each of these techniques have influenced more recent films, again with clips from more recent films like the amazing 'Bande de Filles' (Céline Sciamma, 2014).

After some free time for lunch on a windswept South Bank, we reconvened for the afternoon treat: a rare cinema screening of La Haine (our A Level core 'text') on the big screen. This was an amazing experience, bringing out new levels of intensity and emotional response, and helping students and teachers to discover new dimensions to the film.



MUSIC

On Tuesday, 5th November, a little bit of Hallowe'en returned to the Edward Guinness Hall for assembly invoked by the *Dame Alice Owen's School Symphony Orchestra*. Performing French romantic composer, Camille Saint-Saens' spooky symphonic tone poem, *Danse Macabre*, the orchestra's prowess demonstrated the composer's skill at representing in music the story of Henri Cazalis poem. Following Kait's (Y13) twelve chimes on the harp, evoking the midnight churchyard, Laura (Y13) played the part of Death on the solo violin with a specially de-tuned E string, the xylophone interjections represented "the eerie clatter of the dancer's bones", as the whole orchestra recreated the waltz and skeletons' ever wilder night-time party, until the oboe played the part of the cockerel, heralding the dawn and leaving Death sad and alone as all the skeletons scatter back to their graves. A rapt Year 7 were a brilliant audience, fully showing their appreciation at hearing their Music curriculum 'set work' brought to life by one of our very own orchestras!



The Owen's Co-curricular concert season got underway on Thursday, 14th November, with the *Evening of Choral and Orchestral Music*. Three of DAOS' orchestras and the five choirs took to the stage in a packed Edward Guinness Hall as nearly 200 performers delighted their audience showcasing their work from the first half of the autumn term. The Symphony Orchestra opened with an invitation to the dance in the form of Tchaikovsky's *Sleeping Beauty Suite*, which included a spectacular harp solo, performed by Kait in Y13. Following the sumptuous romanticism of Tchaikovsky, the *Chamber Orchestra* and the *Senior Strings* presented programmes to cleanse the palette, featuring music of the twentieth century neoclassical era, by Prokofiev and Respighi, alongside an authentic baroque *Concerto Grosso* by Corelli.



Led by our outstanding Y13 musicians - including solos by principal players, Laura, Caitlyn and Dyllen - the Senior Strings greatly impressed their audience by performing self-directed on stage with no conductor.



The second half brought the choirs to the fore, with many members of the *Junior Choir* and *Junior Chamber Choir* performing on the EGH stage for the first time. Their renditions of repertoire, including jazz classics, such as Mancini's *Moon River*, as well as the Scottish traditional *Skye Boat Song*, excited and delighted their audience and were greeted with well-deserved cheers! Following the polished, impressive and ambitious performances by the *Senior Chamber Choir*, including John Kander's *New York, New York*, and the *Close Harmony Group*, including Joe Garland's *In the Mood*, the stage was filled with the seventy-strong *Senior Choir* performing traditional *Loch Lomond* and finally Jason Hurwitz's *City of Stars* brought the concert to an end.

Thank-you to all of our ensemble directors, Ms Bamber, Mr Widden, Ms Sutherland, Ms Makepeace-Lott, Mr Page and Mr Southorn, as well as the accompanist for the evening, Mr Muir, as well as to Music Admin, Mrs King and the OSA for providing the refreshments for audience and performers.

Monday, 18th November, saw a different type of concert where musicians took to the stage in smaller groups for the *Chamber Concert*. Students from Years 7-13 treated us to a wonderful range of performances. Congratulations to the following groups: the Junior Percussion Ensemble; Brass Band; Drumming Club; Vivace Wind Quintet; Year 9 & Year 10 Piano & Strings Quintet; the Bach Clarinet Trio; the Horn Quartet; the Year 10 Baroque Chamber Ensemble; the Guitar Ensemble; the Double Reed Ensemble; Y12 Duo - Hassan & Matthew; the Nova Saxophone Quartet; Spiritus Wind Quintet; and the Year 12 Strings, Piano and Clarinet Sextet. We would like to thank all the music teachers who worked with the groups: Ms McChrystal, Mr Kelly, Mr Crossley, Mr Moutoussis, Mr Widden, Mr Niesyto and Mrs Wild, as well as the performers themselves, some of whom are self-generated ensembles. Our thanks also to the OSA for providing the refreshments for audience and performers.

Our congratulations to Hassan in Y12 who won the international Gregynog Young Woodwind Player of the Year, 2024, on the recorder, and was selected to be one of the grand finalists at this year's Gregynog Young Musician.

The other finalists were string players or a pianist, making his achievement even more impressive!



The *Junior Chamber Choir* and *Senior Chamber Choir* travelled to Southend on Thursday, 28th November, to take part in the competitive *Southend Festival of Performing Arts*. Performing to a packed audience both choirs received immensely complimentary feedback from the adjudicator and we were excited and delighted when the Junior Chamber Choir were announced the winners in their category and brought back to school an enormous silver cup for the trophy cabinet. Congratulations to all our performers and a special thank-you to their director, Ms Makepeace-Lott!



Wednesday, 4th December, brought another feast of music to a packed Edward Guinness Hall as over two hundred performers from Years 7 to 13 brought us an evening of music from *Owen's Bands, Orchestras and Friends*. Featuring a rich range of styles and repertoire the evening opened with the Junior Ensemble's performance of *I Dreamed a Dream*. Jazz Collective took to the stage with no music, having learnt all their set by ear, and showcasing their improvisation skills in, among others, Duke Ellington's *Don't Get Around Much*. The Senior Percussion Ensemble's rendering of *Bohemian Rhapsody* was greeted with delight by the audience, who had never before heard it on such an array of instruments! The Junior Chamber Strings' programme included student conductor, Laura (Y13), as well as solo moments from many members of the orchestra in Vivaldi's *Concerto in B minor*. The first half concluded with Second Band's mixed programme including seasonal favourites, such as *Santa Claus is Coming to Town*.





The second half of the concert featured just two ensembles, but involved 150 performers! The Second Orchestra's set included Prokofiev's *Montagues and Capulets*, the tune made famous by the TV reality show, *The Apprentice*. They then donned their Christmas hats for (one of) the annual Owen's performance(s) of *The Sleigh Ride*. The Concert Band's programme included an atmospheric performance of *Sleep* by Eric Whitacre which incorporated a small chamber choir of singers into the midst of the band (with thanks to Tech Crew for setting up suitable microphone amplification). Ending their set with the swaggering Sir Duke, a cheering request for an encore brought the second performance of *Sleigh Ride of the Evening*, with the addition of party poppers adding to the reindeer's whip cracks and ending the evening in high festive style!

Our congratulations to all our performers and a big thank you to both the musical directors, Ms Bamber, Mr Crossley, Ms McChrystal, Mrs Brady and Mr Kelly, as well as to the supporting Music staff, stage managers and back-stage supervisors, Mr Page, Ms Sutherland and Mr Southorn, as well as to the Music Admin, Miss Jones and the OSA for providing the refreshments for audience and performers.





On Monday, 16th December, Owen's choirs, soloists, Brass Ensemble and readers ushered in the magic of Christmas with the traditional *Nine Lessons and Carols* at the Church of St Mary the Virgin and All Saints.

Congratulations to all the performers for the beautiful quality of their performances, and to the congregation for joining in so enthusiastically!

Our thanks to the choir directors, Mr Southorn, Mr Page, Ms Makepeace-Lott and Ms Sutherland, as well as to the accompanist, Mrs Carter and organist Mr Worley.

The term ended with a musical gathering of the whole school community (in several sittings) in the Edward Guinness Hall on Wednesday, 18th and Thursday 19th December, to be entertained and join in with a range of festive music, drama and readings, hosted by our very own Senior Team and featuring the massed Choirs, the Soul Bands as well as student bands and Year 7 soloists.

The Music department would thank all our fantastic musicians for their inspiration and hard work this term, and wish them all a restful holiday!



SCIENCE

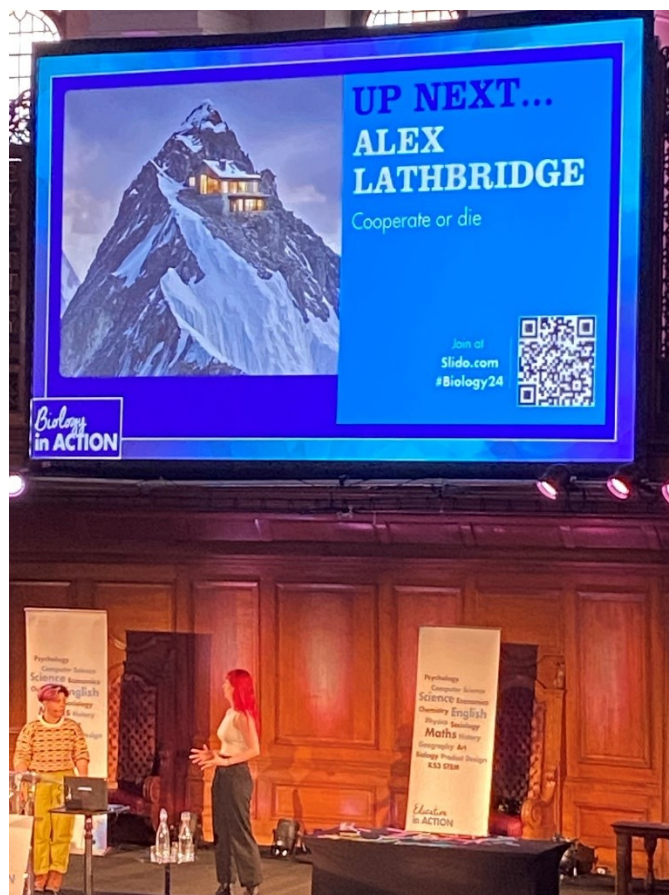
Biology in Action Lecture Day

In the last week of November, Mrs Doust, Head of Biology, arranged a trip for sixty of our A-Level biology students to the Biology in Action Lecture Day in London.

The students engaged with fascinating talks from Lucy Eckersley, Alex Lathbridge, Nessa Carey, Tim Underwood and Sarah Cosgroff – all scientists and science communicators from a huge range of disciplines.

The sessions explored everything from the importance of haemoglobin and the effects of altitude on the body, to epigenetics. Students were amazed by how genomics is being used in the early detection of oesophageal cancer and treatment to be targeted to the individual.

We know that the trip broadened and deepened our students' knowledge of biology, and particularly its modern applications and hope that it may have given them some inspiration for a future career! Huge thanks to Mrs Jays, Miss Elston and Mrs Knight for accompanying them.

**Biology**

By Stephen O'Connor

Is this happiness or oyster-life?
This flexing of muscular torso-foot
joy's wonder? This sifting of silt
from food in the shifting chill-dark?
If, in my mind, there is a life of flight
in the light beyond the over-swirl,
must I unfix my lips from this rock
to be right? Or is my apex to worry
quartz against my shell?

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Football**Year 10 Boys**

The year 10 boys unfortunately got knocked out of the county cup to a strong Broxbourne school team early this half term. The boys continued their success in the district league with a 10-2 win against Mount Grace, which now puts them into the semi-final stage later in the year.

Girls Under 12

The under 12 girls football team played a very strong Sandringham School side in the third round of the County Cup. Going behind to an early goal they showed excellent spirit to fight back to 1-1 thanks to a goal from captain Arya and they were unfortunate to find themselves 2-1 down at the break. Tiring in the second half, Sandringham proved too much as the girls were knocked out of the competition. Arya was selected by the opposition as player of the match.

Girls Under 15

The under 15 girls faced Kings Langley School in the first round of the County Cup. They went a goal up early on courtesy of captain Freya but Kings Langley levelled later on in the half. Owen's again took the lead in the second half with a second goal from Freya but Kings Langley equalised with only minutes of the tie left. The score remained 2-2 after extra time, despite Owen's hitting the woodwork on several occasions, and so the game went to penalties. The deadlock could still not be broken after the initial five spot kicks and the shoot-out went to sudden death. Hannah scored the winning penalty to send the team through to round two and goalkeeper Mahdi who saved several spot kicks was selected as player of the match. In the second round the girls faced Presdales who won the competition last season. With several members of the squad missing, the team battled well but Presdales proved too strong. Once again Mahdi was named player of the game.

Girls Under 16

The under 16 girls faced Samuel Whitbread Academy in round 3 of the English Schools competition. In an excellent showcase of female football the girls found themselves a goal down early in the second half. Emilie scored an excellent left footed goal to square the tie but unfortunately the team went on to concede a goal late in the match knocking them out of this competition. The team should all be very proud of the way that they played. Freya was selected as player of the game.

In the County Cup competition the under 16s played Croxley Danes School away in round one. With only 10 players available due to illness and injury the girls were unfortunate to lose 4-1 and were arguably the better footballing side. Our goal was scored by captain Eva and Freya was voted player of the game once more.



Girls Under 18

In the first round of the County Cup the team faced Sir John Lawes away. In an exciting game the girls were defeated 6-3. The goals were scored by Emilie x2 and Ellie. Mia was awarded player of the match.

In their first County League game the team played away to Haileybury. The girls played superbly and ran out 6-0 winners with goals from Emilie x2, Iyla, Elina, Mia and Yusra. Ellie was picked as player of the match.



Hockey

Girls Under 12

The year 7 hockey team faced Aldenham School in a Saturday fixture. Leading 2-0 at half time several changes were made to positions and personnel in the second half. The girls ran out 3-1 winners with 2 goals from vice-captain Izzy and 1 from captain Autumn with the sisters awarded joint players of the match.

Girls Under 13

On 9th November, the U13s played against Aldenham. Despite not having a goal keeper they performed incredibly well, winning 4-2. Congrats to player of the match Emily.



Rugby

Year 9

The boys have had 3 saturday rugby fixtures this half term but unfortunately have lost them all with the last one against Sandringham being a close fought game and losing by a converted try. The boys continue to develop their skills within games and hope to get the win in next half term.

1st XV

Well done to the senior rugby team, who played against Aylesbury Grammar School on 13th November. It was a fantastic match, with the boys losing narrowly by just three points. On the 4th December they played Sir John Lawes School. It was a closely contested match and the squad have made fantastic progress this term, despite the 29-17 loss. Keep up the good work!



Netball

Year 7

The year 7's have given a tremendous effort in all their matches this term. Although they may not have been victorious, they have shown a great deal of effort and determination in each match. They played RMS, St Michaels and HABS in friendly matches to prepare themselves for their county league matches after Christmas.

Year 8

The A team have had competitive county league matches and have put up a good performance in each game. They played against Queenswood (POM Sasha and Emily) and against Abbots Hill (POM Zara) who were great opponents. The A and B team also had a friendly match vs St Michael's Catholic High School where both teams came up on top with the A's winning 19-6 (POM Zara) and the B's winning 12-4 (POM Ruhi). Well done girls, keep up the good work!



Year 9

It has been a challenging half term for the Year 9 team, losing to St John's 14-10 and then RMS 21-9. However there are lots of positives to take away, including excellent defensive displays from Giselle and Isra.

We have also been trying out different combinations and special mention should go to Captain Bailly, who has really grown into the role, brilliantly supported by vice-captain Anaya.

I am really proud of this group of students, who regularly attend training and are striving to improve week in week out. Keep up the good work girls as we move into the new year.



Year 10A

The U15 girls won their first County Cup game against Ashlyns, 35-22. It was a fantastic team performance from the girls who consistently played well in every quarter.

Well done to the PoM Hannah for her brilliant defensive work!



They then had another County Cup game against Abbots Hill they put on another amazing display winning overall 46-17, well done to the PoM Annabelle.

Most recently they have had a County League game against Chauncy and with a strong performance won 44-24. Well done to the PoM Freya for her fantastic shooting!

Year 10B

Great to see both the U15A and U15B teams play against Roundwood Park School in some very competitive matches. Well done to Arya who was awarded PoM for some great shooting.

The U15B also performed amazingly in their District tournament finishing winners of the B tournament! Well done to Cami and Tia who were Players of the Tournament for their fantastic defending.



Year 11

Great work by the U16 netball team who won their District netball tournament and were unbeaten in the round-robin tournament.

Well done to the Player of the Tournament Ellie. All the best to the girls as they'll be playing against Latymer in a friendly at the very end of term!



2nd VII

The 2nd VII played Queenswood in a friendly, the girls played well and improved quarter on quarter! They lost overall 19-11. Well done to Alexia who was POM! They are also playing against Latymer in a friendly at the end of the term.



1st VII

Amazing work by the 1st VII netball team who won their District netball tournament and well done to the Player of the Tournament Holly. Some other brilliant team performances from the girls in both the County Cup and League.

The girls played Queenswood in the County Cup in a very exciting match winning by 1, 29-28 on the last shot of the game. The team also won against Chauncy in the County League. It was a tight battle throughout, but the girls came out on top 40-32.

Well done to the PoM Holly! Most recently they lost narrowly in the County Cup against STAHS 45-38. The girls didn't give up and smashed the final quarter 13-8! Well done to the PoMs who both shot amazingly Evie and Alice!



Boys Year 9

A group of eleven basketball players, mostly young men, are posing for a team photo on a gymnasium floor. They are wearing black jerseys with red accents and numbers. The players are arranged in two rows, with some standing and others crouching or kneeling in the front. In the background, a basketball hoop with a white backboard and orange rim is mounted on a wall made of light-colored cinder blocks. To the right of the hoop, there is a large, light-colored net hanging from the ceiling. The floor is polished wood with yellow and red boundary lines.



They now qualify for the district final later in the year.



The team continued to play in the county league competition but unfortunately lost to both Queens School and St Columba's College. They have a couple more friendly games in the new year.



The U13 girls' basketball team had their first County League game against a difficult opposition in Sandringham. It was a closely fought game with Emily getting PoM! The girls are playing Queens' next week in their second County League match of the season. With lots of District matches coming after Christmas.

The U15 girls' basketball team got off to a great start by winning their first District League game of the season against Onslow. A very strong performance from the team, with a 48-10 win. Well done to Sienna who was awarded player! The girls are playing Queens' next week in their first County League match of the season. With lots of matches coming after Christmas.



Badminton

Girls Under 14 & Under 16

The U14 and U16 girls badminton teams had their first District round match in the National England Badminton Competition against Watford Girls Grammar School. Both teams performed fantastically and were both successful which meant they progressed through to the County finals. At the County finals both teams were phenomenal and won the County finals!

Shoutout to the U16 team who did not drop a single set in the whole tournament and to Anna who is part of the U16 team as a Year 7. They will now both represent Hertfordshire in the Regional finals, which is an amazing achievement! Well done to Layla, Iman, Yeshika, Sanvi, Anna, Perla, Aayushi and Aditi!



Boys Under 14 & Under 16

The U14 and U16 boys' badminton teams had their first District round match in the National England Badminton Competition against Watford Boys Grammar School. Both teams were unfortunately unsuccessful in progressing through to the County finals.

Cross Country

Year 7

In the district championships the boys came 1st overall with Jack finishing in the top 5 runners. The girls came 2nd overall with Aasha finishing 1st with a great run.

Year 8

In the district championships the boys came 2nd overall with both James and Luke finishing in the top 10 runners. The girls came 3rd overall in a very tight competition with the top 3 places separated by 5 points with Sasha finishing 2nd.



Year 9

In the district competition the boys came 4th overall in a very competitive event. The girls came 3rd overall with Isabella finishing in the top 10 runners.



Year 10

In the district competition the boys came 4th overall with Zak finishing in the top 10 runners

Senior

In the district competition the boys finished 1st overall with the runners finishing 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th. The girls came 2nd overall with Brooke finishing 3rd.



Overall Results

The Mid Herts District Cross Country Championship results are as follows - the boys came 1st overall and the girls came 2nd, meaning we won the overall competition. Congratulations to all the students involved.

Cross Country Cup

On the 7th November the Inter Girls team competed in the Regional round of the cross country cup at Dulwich College. The girls ran well at a very competitive event. Well done for all the girls involved.



Holland Hockey/Rugby Tour

On Monday, 28th October, students from Year 8 and 9 visited Valkenburg in Holland for an exciting programme of girls' hockey and boys' rugby.

The highlight of hockey this term was the tour to Holland for the U13s, U14s, U15s. This was a fantastic learning experience for all girls involved, playing against tough opposition in a country where Hockey is a primary sport. The girls enjoyed two sessions of coaching from both Dutch and English coaches, including specialist goalkeeping coaching. They played three matches against local teams. The U13s performed very well, winning all their matches. Whilst the U14s had a more challenging set of fixtures but showed great improvement throughout the week. It was a brilliant tour.

Well done to all the girls who attended. We hope they are able to make good use of their new skills in upcoming matches in the new term.

The rugby teams had a brilliant tour, playing against local opposition as well as travelling to Eindhoven to play. Both teams won both of their matches on the tour, after 2 fantastic coaching sessions from the Masterclass professionals. Well done to all of the boys who were on the tour, and we hope that they can use what they have learnt in our fixtures across the next term.





Gym and Dance Display

This year's Gym and Dance Display had the theme MUSICALS! We thought it would be the perfect way to showcase all of the amazing theatre shows that have been and are currently on display from both the West End and Broadway. The dance and gymnastic pieces were performed to a variety of songs ranging from timeless classics to more modern shows.

Over 120 pupils were involved this year from Years 7-13 which was definitely a record for the PE department. Thank you to all who supported the Display and those who came to watch.



Other Achievements & Announcements

Congratulations to Emily in Year 8 who has been selected for the Hertfordshire under 13 hockey squad and also the Middlesex under 13 cricket squad.

Congratulations to Hannah in Year 10 has been selected in the U16 London Pulse academy, which is a fantastic achievement.

Congratulations also to Eva in Year 11, who was given the honour of captaining the Hertfordshire under 16 girls football team.

Congratulations to Alex K-W (Y9) who continues to be part of the England Junior Squash Squad, now U15. Recent achievements include, participating at the British Junior Platinum Championships and placing 6th at the Chichester Silver Open. Last weekend he finished 7th in the Manchester Junior Gold Open.

Congratulations to Noah S (Y9) who continues to go from strength to strength in water polo.

On 17 November, his water polo club team *West London Penguin* won the Gold Medal at Swim England U15 Water Polo National Age Group Nags competition in Coventry. Noah has now played his first International for Ireland Water Polo at U14 level and participated at the U14 Boys Inter-Regional Water Polo Championships 2024 in Walsall. Unfortunately, Ireland missed out on a place in the semi-final when they lost their final group match by a goal scored in the last 20 seconds.

A huge congratulations to alumna Maisie O'Shea who has just won Deaf Sports Personality of the Year, a prestigious award which is given to a sports person whose contributions, achievements and personality have made a lasting impression on the visibility of deaf athletes and deaf sports in the last two years. What an amazing achievement! Thank you to everyone who voted.



Recess! Oh, Recess! *By Darren Sardelli*

Recess! Oh, Recess!
We love you! You rule!
You keep us away
from the teachers in school.
Your swings are refreshing.
Your slides are the best.
You give us a break
from a really hard test.

Recess! Oh, Recess!
We want you to know,
you're sweeter than syrup,
you're special like snow.
You don't assign homework.
You make the day fun.
You let us play kickball
and run in the sun.

Recess! Oh, Recess!
You're first on our list.
We'd be in despair
if you didn't exist.
We're happy we have you.
You're awesome and cool.
Recess! Oh, Recess!
We love you! You rule!