



# Newsletter

## Dame Alice Owen's School

March 2026



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



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This is always the shortest term but you would never have guessed as much, given the amount we have managed to fit in!

Those of you who were with us at our Golden Anniversary Concert at the Royal Festival Hall will agree that the performance was exceptional. I was in awe of our students whose poise and composure belied their age. The musicality on display was breathtaking and akin to that which you would expect to hear at a professional concert. Watching them move on and off the stage so seamlessly, you would have thought they had been rehearsing in that space for weeks rather than only having been able to practise the transitions once! Congratulations go to all of our brilliant musicians and dancers but also to Ms Bamber and the entire Music Department, to Ms Locke and alumna Gemma Campbell for the choreography, to Mrs Acosta for her exceptional planning and management of the whole project, to Mrs Campbell and Mrs Barlow for the ticketing and all-important merchandise and programme, to Ms McClean and Mr Fry for their logistical minds, Mr Anastasi for the photos, alumna parent Ms Bryden for calling the show and alumni Sam and James Levy for their stage management of the whole event. There were, of course, hosts of other people involved, too many to mention, who helped to supervise and safeguard our children throughout and at the end of the day – thank



you all for your dedication and support in making the event such a memorable success.

Our fundraising weekend also exceeded our wildest expectations. An incredible 1,633 donations came in across 55 teams, raising a matched amount of over £440,000 for the school. Particular shout-outs must go to Year 8 for their remarkable generosity in raising over £49,000 between them!! It was also fantastic to see our incoming Year 7 families getting so involved and contributing so enthusiastically. In fact, our year group teams raised a (matched) average of around £31,000 each, with our staff and alumni raising the balance. Thanks to the energy and commitment of our community, we are now only around £100,000 away from achieving our final fundraising target of £1 million.

There is still plenty to look forward to. We are now selling the **LIMITED EDITION, CELEBRATION BEER** that The Master of the Worshipful Company of Brewers has put together for us. Please see the advert on the left and **scan the QR code to order your bottles!** Alongside this, we have the **finale of the Starter for 10** competition after the Easter break, our **Buy a Brick** campaign continuing to gather momentum, and of course our **Summer Ball**, taking place on **11 July**, rapidly approaching. You can reserve your tickets [here](#).

Over the Easter break, please encourage your young people to take every (**safe!**) opportunity to continue to grow their £10 into as much as possible for the Starter for 10 competition. The Finance Team will be collecting all earnings between **13–15 April**. Remember, every pound raised will be converted into **House Points**, bringing us closer to discovering which House will win the House Shield and the much-anticipated **trip to Thorpe Park** in the summer.

Finally, I am delighted to share some more positive news about our school buildings. We have been successful in securing a **Condition Improvement Fund grant from the government** to replace the curtain walling on the main block. Work will begin over the Easter break, starting with asbestos removal and the replacement of windows and panels of the main school restaurant but spreading to the west and south faces of the school over the next 12 weeks. Please bear with us during these works. The new thermally efficient glazing will help keep the building cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter, welcome news for everyone who works and studies in the main school restaurant, the RS and History rooms, the gym, drama spaces and surrounding areas.

Thank you, as ever, for your continued support. It is the combined effort of students, staff, families and friends that makes our school such a vibrant and ambitious community.

Wishing you all a restful break,

Hannah Nemko

**WOW!**  
**£440,000!**



**THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT!**



## 50 Years in Potters Bar

# Alumni & Fundraising



### Alumni 'Back to School' Day – 8 February

We were delighted to welcome alumni and their families back to school for a special Open Morning.

It was wonderful to see so many former students of all ages return, with some visiting the school for the first time since they left.

Guests enjoyed the opportunity to walk around the school, hear from current students about life at Owen's today, visit the 'tuck shop' and catch up with some very special guest former teachers. There was even a reminder of school days past, as everyone had to listen out for the school bell to make sure they were not late for 'assembly'!

Mrs Nemko delivered an engaging and entertaining assembly, and the morning ended on a particularly memorable note when the alumni audience spontaneously erupted into the school song, a wonderful moment of shared pride and nostalgia.

### Fundraising Weekend:

#### Celebrating our past, securing our future

On 6–8 March, the whole school community came together and accomplished something magnificent for our young people. An enormous thank you to all of you who donated, to our champions and to those who encouraged family and friends to support us. We are also immensely grateful to our incredibly generous private donor who ensured that every donation was doubled. If you would still like to make a donation, you can do so here [www.owenians.com/donate](http://www.owenians.com/donate)

**The Golden Anniversary Fundraising Concert at the Royal Festival Hall** was a truly special and unforgettable evening. We have received so much positive feedback from parents, alumni and guests who were blown away by this spectacular occasion which showcased the very best of Owenian talent while raising vital funds for the school. A full account of the evening can be found on page 18.

## Save the date

# 50th Anniversary Fundraising Ball

## Saturday 11 July

Don't miss this exciting evening which promises exceptional dining, entertainment, dancing and glamour. Get ready for a night of pure retro energy with an 80s DJ set from Martin Kemp. Best known as the bassist of the iconic band Spandau Ballet, Martin now brings the ultimate throwback party to the decks, spinning the biggest and best hits of the decade. Expect wall-to-wall 80s anthems, sing-along classics, and a packed dancefloor as Martin delivers a feel-good set full of nostalgia, energy, and timeless tunes.

Get your friends together and reserve tickets [here](#). Look out for updates soon at <https://owenians.com/BALL>



## Sports Hall update

For the first few months of the project, there was a lot of work on the services under the ground, the boiler and demolishing the old changing rooms, but the last couple of weeks have seen some more visible progress on the Sports Hall project. The foundations have all been laid for the changing rooms, storerooms etc, and brickwork is starting to go up. The roof of the Sports Hall itself has virtually all been removed and the cladding on the sides is coming down. Hopefully, over the next few weeks we shall see the layout of the changing rooms really taking shape and the new sides to the Sports Hall being built, so this exciting project is beginning to feel like more of a reality.





# Opportunity for all to contribute and enjoy ...

## for your diary 28 June OWENSFEST

The hugely popular OWENSFEST is a festival of fun, fab food, magical music, awesome art and excellent entertainment. You may be mingling with future superstars! The event attracts large numbers of alumni, current and prospective parents and children and local people who love the school. We need plenty of volunteers to plan and staff it – please save the date and offer some time to support if you can. Give your support or ask further questions at [festival@theosa.org.uk](mailto:festival@theosa.org.uk)

## Owen's School Association

We are a group of busy parents/carers, volunteering where we can to raise money which directly enriches the daily life of our children at DAOS. We would welcome new volunteers to bring ideas, suggestions or expertise to help us to explore new development opportunities for the OSA. You can get involved a little or a lot; it's really up to you. We are a friendly, inclusive group of parents from all backgrounds and cultures. We love a social get-together too – in December, we had the OSA Christmas Social, and we were out in full force at the incredible Royal Festival Hall concert in March.

Members of the OSA also championed the recent double-matched fundraising event, where we supported the school to raise over £440,000!

Families move on, and we need new volunteers every year. If you have ideas about events you would like to see the OSA run next, why not start by having a look at the [OSA website](#), or speak to one of the volunteers at an event. We look forward to hearing from you.

### Current OSA committee vacancies

#### Refreshments Lead – be like Tony!

Have you enjoyed refreshments at school events and wondered who provided them? Tony has diligently coordinated a small but enthusiastic team of OSA occasional volunteers for some years. However, Tony is having to hang up his corkscrew and cocktail shaker when he leaves the OSA at the end of this school year. **Could you be the new Tony?** Get in touch with [refreshments@theosa.org.uk](mailto:refreshments@theosa.org.uk)

We really need more volunteers to support Tony and the team; it's good fun and a great way to get to know other parents in the school while supporting your budding musician or mathematician. Any contribution of time you can make would really help. Please email **Tony** at [refreshments@theosa.org.uk](mailto:refreshments@theosa.org.uk)

**for your diary**  
**13 April AGM**

**OSA Committee Meetings**  
**Annual General Meeting**  
**Notice**

Everyone is warmly welcome to join the OSA. We usually meet on the first Monday of each month during term time (excluding December and January) at 7:30pm. Meetings take place in the Old Library (above Reception in school) or online.

Our next meeting will be **Monday 13 April, held in person**. After that, meetings will alternate between face-to-face and online.

Please come along to meet other parents and carers who are working together to support our young people and the wider school community. Visit [the OSA website](#) for comments, suggestions and offers of help.

**OSA Easy Fundraising**

Have a quick look at this please – it is the easiest way for us, friends and extended family to raise money for DAOS daily. It involves doing nothing more than we're already doing, when shopping online and with over 8,000 retailers. Please follow this link to sign up: [Easy Fundraising – why wouldn't you?](#)

**OSA Nearly New Uniform and Merchandise**

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 an additional source of funding and demonstrates environmental conscientiousness. The next sale will be in June. We will publish the exact dates on our Instagram and through WhatsApp groups, however we really need some help with organising this. If you could offer to help, please email **Sheena** at [uniform@theosa.org.uk](mailto:uniform@theosa.org.uk)

**OSA's Instagram**

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

**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. A one-off annual membership fee of £24 per number and nothing more to do other than wait to hear if your number is drawn. For further details, please contact OSA volunteer **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 OSA. Match Funding is available to staff in a wide range of companies. Friends and family can match fund too – it doesn't only have to be a parent. It can make a substantial contribution to the OSA's annual fundraising for the school. We would love to hear from all of you. Please contact OSA volunteer **Nadine** at [matchfunding@theosa.org.uk](mailto:matchfunding@theosa.org.uk). Completing the form [here](#) can add you to our match funders database. Further information can be accessed through the QR codes.

**Instagram**



OWENSSCHOOLASSOCIATION\_DAO

**Match funding**  
**FAQ:**



**Suggested Match funding**  
**email to employer:**





# Window to the world beyond the classroom ...



FIGURE 16



FIGURE 17

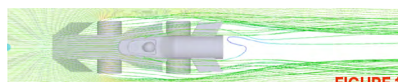


FIGURE 18

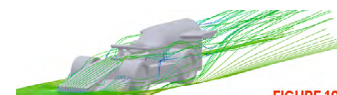
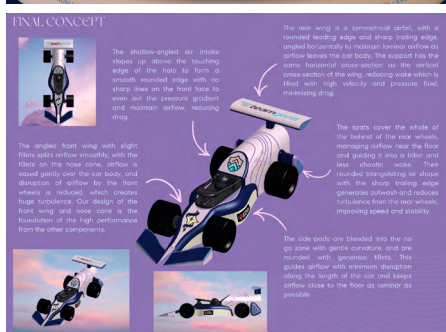


FIGURE 19



## STEM Racing Competition

Congratulations to our three teams who competed in the STEM Racing Regional Finals competition on 12 February. The nationwide competition, previously F1 in Schools, teaches students aged up to 19 to design, make, test and race miniature cars through real-world engineering, marketing and project management.

The all-day competition took place at Harlow College and involved 41 teams based in and around the North London area. As well as designing and manufacturing their cars, the teams prepared design portfolios, enterprise portfolios, engineering drawings and constructed pit displays. The teams were also required to give verbal presentations about their projects in front of a team of judges.

The students worked incredibly hard in the lead-up to the competition and are to be commended for their outstanding teamwork and for the advanced STEM skills they developed and demonstrated.

**Team Velocity** (Nico, Raphael, Eisa and Meer, Year 10) achieved 7th place out of 31 teams in Development Class.

**Team Nova** (Audrie, Emily, Belle, Catherine, Yuli and Muntaqa, Year 12) achieved 16th place out of 31 teams in Development Class.

**Team Frontier** (Ben, Max, Kian, Yelindu, Matthew and Usayd, Year 12) achieved 4th place out of 10 teams in Professional Class.

P Stensel



## Fashion Swap

The Eco-Committee recently hosted an exciting event welcoming participants from students to staff, fashion fanatics, or those who are looking to freshen up their wardrobes – for free!

Our goal was to reduce the effects of mass consumption in clothing that produces millions of heaps of cheap, unused and non-biodegradable fabric annually. Untouched clothing ends up in horrendous heaps of textile waste in landfills, causing detrimental effects to the environment and the locals. To counter this dystopian trend, we wanted to promote the idea of normalizing thrifting and reusing second-hand clothing through this event. Instead of splurging money on masses of low-quality clothing with short lifespans, why not shop for new, free, long-lasting clothing?

Essentially, our idea was for students to bring in any item of clothing that they either no longer wear or grew out of, in exchange for tokens that reflect the number of pieces of clothing bought in. Students could simply then scavenge as many items of clothing that they wish for, up to the amount shown on the token. At the end of the day, the leftover jeans are offered as tribute to the textiles department, and the rest of the clothes are donated. A win-win situation for everyone.

Overall, the Fashion Swap was a huge success – not only for the participants who walked away with fresh style and bright smiles, but also for the members of the Eco-Committee who thoroughly enjoyed managing and organising the event, and we look forward to planning future activities.

Brandie T

## Wyllyotts Theatre Production

We are delighted to share the news that three of our students have been cast in the upcoming production of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* at The Wyllyotts Theatre, Potters Bar.

A huge congratulations to George B (Year 9), Aaryan B (Year 8) and Aria V (Year 8), who were all successful at audition and will be performing as part of the company in this exciting musical production.

The performances will take place at The Wyllyotts Theatre on

**Thursday 11 June at 7.30pm**

**Friday 12 June at 7.30pm**

**Saturday 13 June at 2.00pm**

**Saturday 13 June at 6.30pm**



This is a fantastic achievement and a wonderful opportunity for the students to develop their talents, grow in confidence and be part of a full-scale community production. We are incredibly proud of them all and wish them every success with rehearsals and performances.



## Year 12 Economics and Business Trip

Last week, me and a few other Year 12 students had the privilege of attending the 'AI for Good?' Business & Entrepreneurship Lecture at Drapers' Hall. The event brought together entrepreneurs, business leaders and students to discuss one of the most important questions shaping our future: how artificial intelligence can be used responsibly while driving innovation and progress.

Throughout the day, speakers explored the impact of AI across different industries. However, the discussions also emphasised the responsibility that comes with developing and using these technologies. Entrepreneurs and companies must carefully consider how AI systems are designed and implemented so that they benefit society as a whole.

A particularly valuable part of the event was speaking directly to experienced leaders like Manon Dave (an award-winning creative designer and music producer) and Rita W Bologna FRSA (C-suite leader and entrepreneur). Their insights into entrepreneurship, leadership and the future of technology provided a real-world perspective on the challenges and opportunities facing the next generation of innovators.

Attending this lecture was an inspiring experience and a reminder of how important it is for young economists and entrepreneurs to think not only about what technology can do, but also about how it should be used.

Arnav



## Youth Speaks debating competition



This term we have been busy rehearsing and performing in the Rotary's 'Youth Speaks' competition. The first round was held at the school on the 21 January, with six teams from Owens competing against each other in a closely fought contest. The victors in the Y9 competition were Katie, Ethan and Nylah debating whether the death penalty should be reintroduced in the UK, whilst the Y12 winners were Muntaqa, Stella and Tiana who spoke on the intriguing subject of aging 'being humanity's deadliest disease'. Massive well done also to Zeynepsu, Hassini, Maya, Ishita, Julia and Kezia (all Y12) and Ilinca, Hailey, Siddhi, Aarya-Sky, Lily and Anya (all Y9) who all took part and spoke with confidence and authority on their chosen topics.

The two category winners moved on to the District Finals held in Bedford on Saturday 28 February and again delivered their presentations brilliantly. The Year 9 team of Katie, Ethan and Nylah were crowned champions, a tremendous achievement in a very tough district, with Katie receiving the award for best opposer as well. Our Year 12 team of Tiana, Muntaqa and Stella just missed out in their category. A massive congratulations to all participants as the competition is a rigorous one, demanding strong public-speaking skills. All our students met this challenge and made the school proud!

We wish the Year 9 team the best of luck as they represent the region of Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire in the Regional Finals in May.

Ms Lawson and Mr Jones



Major champions



Girls champions



Junior runners-up



Junior champions

## Chess

The winter season was an active one for DAOS chess, with teams competing in the Monday online league battles, the National Schools League against North London and Hertfordshire schools, the Hertfordshire qualifier for the British Team Chess Challenge, as well as the standalone Hertfordshire Schools Championship.

In January and February, both the A and B teams achieved a major milestone by qualifying for the National Schools regional semi-finals. The A team defeated St Albans away but later lost to Habs B, while the B team beat Mill Hill County before ultimately falling to QE. This was the first time ever that DAOS put forward a B-team into the National Schools, and they held their own!

Both the senior team (Rock, TaoHai, James and Archie) and junior team (Mark, Sebby, Bella and Firdaus) travelled to St Albans Boys school and won the Hertfordshire qualifiers for the British Team Chess Challenge. Special shout-out to Archie, a last-minute replacement, for winning all of his games and proving instrumental to the team's success! Good luck to both teams in the National finals on the 22 June in Nottingham.

On 12 March, DAOS hosted the Hertfordshire Secondary Schools Chess Championships in the dining hall and achieved a remarkable clean sweep, winning the Major, Minor and Girls sections. The Minor A-team won all three team matches and scored 11/12, whilst the Major team edged out Beaumont School (who we drew 2-2 with) by half a game point!

Earlier in the term, at the annual Eton Schools Rapidplay on the 18 January, the Open team finished 10th out of 24 schools, matching their seed – a great achievement, as this is one of the strongest events in the school chess calendar. Meanwhile, the B team finished 10th in the Major section, remaining undefeated in their five matches.

Finally, a special thank you to the teachers who supported chess this term: **Mr Fry** and **Mr Simpson** for supervising and driving teams to events, **Dr James** for running the Monday online inter-school battles, and **Mr Korczak** for supervising the Hertfordshire Schools event and the lunchtime chess club.

Rock Y



## Duke of Edinburgh's Award latest

### Expedition Dates

#### Silver practice

Fri 24 April–Sun 26 April  
(Year 10)

#### Gold Practice

Tue 19 May–Fri 22 May  
(Year 12)

#### Bronze assessed 1

Fri 5 June–Sat 6 June  
(Year 9)

#### Bronze assessed 2

Sun 7 June–Mon 8 June  
(Year 9)

#### Gold Assessed

Mon 13 July–Fri 17 July

This half term, students have continued to make excellent progress towards their Duke of Edinburgh's Awards. Participants have been busy completing the volunteering, physical, and skills sections of their awards through a wide range of activities. These have included rock climbing, the Couch to 5K running programme, ice skating, volunteering at food banks, fundraising for charities, helping at community gardens, learning touch typing, developing coding skills, and even studying Arabic.

It has been fantastic to see so many students in Years 10 and 11 complete their Bronze Award and progress on to the Silver Award. Students who have finished their award should remember to see Miss Lord to collect their certificate.

Currently, 62 students in Year 10 have moved on to the Silver Award and will be taking part in their Silver expedition in the Chilterns at the end of April.

In Year 12, forty students are working towards the Gold Award. They have been attending after-school training sessions where they have been preparing for their expedition in May by planning routes, organising meals and equipment, and practising emergency first aid.

Year 12 and 13 students have also been completing their residential section. This requires students to organise and take part in a residential activity lasting five days and four nights. Students have taken part in a wide variety of experiences including Scout and Guide jamborees, geology courses in Wales and Scotland, medical training courses, and volunteering projects in India.

Finally, we are delighted to hear that a number of current and former students will be attending a special ceremony at Buckingham Palace at the end of May to receive their awards. This is a fantastic achievement and a wonderful celebration of their hard work and commitment.



# Excellence in everything from our departments ...

## Chemistry

### Junior Chemistry Challenge

46 students from Years 10 and 11 sat the Junior Chemistry Challenge in February. The questions required GCSE knowledge to be applied to scenarios that would normally be met in A level chemistry.

The top 15% nationally were awarded gold certificates, the next 25% were awarded silver and then another 45% were awarded copper certificates.

Our students achieved 11 copper, 26 silver and 9 gold awards.

The gold winners were TaoHai and William in Year 10 and Henry, Manu, Hannah, Imogen, Adam, Haruna and Atticus in Year 11 with Atticus achieving the top score in the school.

Mr Jays



## Maths

### Maths Challenge Results

In November, Andreas E, Kian T and Vanshika T, all in Year 12, sat the **British Maths Olympiad**. Andreas and Vanshika were awarded Merits and Kian was awarded Distinction and Best in School. Huge congratulations to them all.

Earlier this term, 261 pupils from Years 9, 10 and 11 sat the **UKMT Intermediate Maths Challenge**. Of these, we achieved 67 Gold medals, 87 Silver medals and 59 Bronze medals. We had 49 students invited to sit the follow-on rounds this year; congratulations to them all. Special congratulations go to TaoHai K who achieved Best in Year 11, to Ammiel G who achieved Best in Year 10, and to Anson C (Year 9), who achieved Best in School with an amazing 104 points. He was also invited to sit the **Cayley Mathematical Olympiad**. The students who were invited to sit the follow-on rounds are:

**Grey Kangaroo** (Year 9): Tudor, Shreya, Nadi, Jayden, Joseph, Owen, Nylah, Trisha, Teddy, Lucas, Rafi, Rosie, Ilinca, Hayden, Uthmaan, Anika C and Anika P

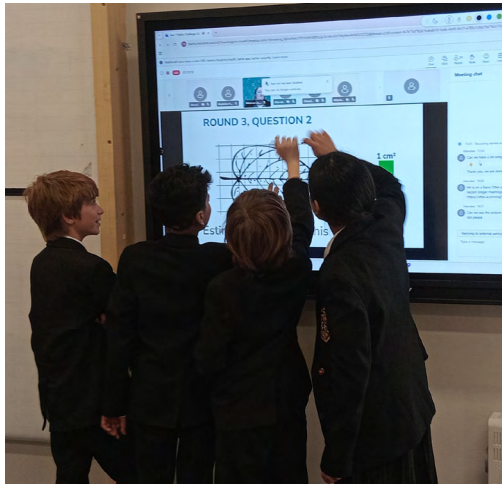
**Pink Kangaroo** (Years 10 and 11):

Year 10: TaoHai, Katherine, Megan, Zain, Yuhan, Lily, William, Clarabelle, Reva, James, Kayne, Isaac, Cameron and Gianluca.

Year 11: Ammiel, Adam, Raphael, Harrison, Riya, Henry, Ira, Dillon, Artian, Kushal, Imogen, Christopher, John, Manu, Deen, Eleanor and Hannah.

**Olympiad:** Anson (Year 9)

We eagerly await their results.



### Year 7 Herts for Learning Team Maths Competition

On Tuesday 24 February, we competed in the Herts for Learning Education Annual Year 7 Mathematics Challenge. There were two teams: **DAOS Team 1** and **DAOS Team SILK**.

They required excellent communication, problem-solving and team-working skills, as well as mathematical skill and insight. The competition consisted of 4 rounds which included two general maths rounds, a memory round and an estimation round.

There were questions that included quick-thinking and teamwork to speed up the process.

One of the questions was along the lines of:

*'I thought of a number. The tens digit is 2 integers higher than the units. It is between 60 and 80. The number is not 64.'*

We thought of all the possibilities which led us to the answer 75.

Another question was:

*'Estimate the length of this route from ... to ... using the scale below.'*

We helped each other by grabbing a piece of paper and marking along the route as we manoeuvred across the map on the screen.

Another estimation question involved the heights of the mother and the father (165 cm and 176 cm). We were told to guess the baby's height with images projected onto the screen.

We were also faced with a problem involving balancing numbers, where the examples provided showed us the method.

We didn't just think mentally – we broadcast our calculations throughout the entire challenge. We all played an important part in this and gave our best effort which fortunately made us the top scorer.

After an hour and a half of intense problem-solving, **DAOS Team 1 finished in second place and DAOS Team SILK won the qualifiers**. Both teams got a fast pass to the final in Stevenage as they finished in the top three.

We are looking forward to competing in the final on Thursday 23 April.

Josh S, Jacob I, Mark L and Anuva K  
(DAOS Team SILK)



## French

### Years 10 and 12 French exchange

Year 10 and Year 12 recently took part in the French exchange, when a group of French pupils came to visit London for a week. It was a great opportunity for them to immerse themselves in English culture and make valuable friendships with their exchange partners. One of the highlights of the visit was the theatre trip (*Phantom of the Opera* for Year 12 and *The Lion King* for Year 10) where after spending a tiring day at school, the students got to unwind and watch an amazing show. French students also enjoyed a day in Cambridge where they punted along the river Cam and had guided tours across the city. They also spent a day in London, visiting Covent Garden, Madame Tussauds and other brilliant sights across the capital. Over the weekend, students travelled all across London with their exchange partners, seeing more sights like Big Ben and Buckingham Palace, and – of course – fitting in some shopping in Oxford Circus.

We all had an amazing time and can't wait to go to France in May, where we will have an opportunity to delve fully into French culture and strengthen our relationship with our exchange partners.

C Tanner

## Drama

It has already been a very busy term, starting with our trip to see **Ballet Shoes** at The National Theatre, taking all our upper school Drama classes, Years 10, 11, 12 and 13, to see a truly innovative adaptation of Noel Streatfeild's novel. The students came away with plenty of ideas for their forthcoming written exams as the production really did incorporate an impressive range of design elements. It is always excellent practice to see how professional actors bring the narrative action to life and the clever weaving of three young women's aspirations onstage was truly magical in every way.

The next event in our calendar was the revival of **Annie** at the Royal Festival Hall, with a Concert Selection of three songs from the show. Although we weren't able to be in costume or dance due to the license agreement, there was no stopping our performers and musicians from doing their very best to bring the music to life! It was a fantastic opportunity for all, including for some students, a solo moment at a professional venue. I know some were a little nervous to begin with, but once they'd set foot on the stage and completed a cue to cue, you could feel the excitement rising and the evening proved to be a fabulous rendition by all involved of 'A Hard Knock Life', 'N.Y.C.' and 'I Don't Need Anything But You'.

In this penultimate week, our Year 11 students will be performing their **GCSE Component 2 Scripted Performance Exams** to an external examiner, with two classes this year making up our cohort. This year group were the first to study Drama in Year 9 at Owen's and as we've been watching them rehearse, it is rewarding to see them use their time industriously at lunchtime and after school to make sure they are well prepared. Most students are performing naturalistic extracts, many of them comedic in contrast to the serious style and content of the Devised Exams they wrote and performed in November. There are also some groups that have chosen to work in the style of frantic assembly or incorporated their love of movement and dance into their work which has been rewarding to watch. Our Exams will take place over two consecutive evenings on 16 and 17 March after school in our Drama Studio, which will enable our guests, made up of parents, relatives and friends to come and watch their hard work in practice.

Our **A Level Component 2 Scripted Performance Exams** will take place after Easter to an external examiner and there will be two lots of performances, monologues and duologues, followed by a group piece of 45 mins. The students have been working hard to make this their best performance yet, as for some of them it will be their final performance at Owen's to our guests of parents, relatives and peers.

The final event of this Half Term will be an adaptation of Buchner's **Woyzeck**, which is set in 1940's occupied Paris. This will be the final opportunity for our Year 13s to perform onstage at Owen's so I have honoured them by writing them this adaptation as their final hurrah. They will be hugely missed, both from plays and musicals so thank you to those students who are involved in this production: Theo, Emily, Aron, Bhavya, Bella and Francesco who have filled the rehearsal room with endless chatter, laughter and superb acting onstage.

Ms E Govier – Director of Drama





### Music Department

What a wonderfully packed term with such a wide range of music performances!

#### Year 7 Music Festival

At the start of February, every student in Year 7 took to the stage in the Edward Guinness Hall, performing both in a whole class African Djembe Drumming piece, as well as small group instrumental and also whole class singing of 'Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika'. Congratulations to Year 7 for the joyous and spirited music-making, equally impressive in the performing as in the attentive listening to each other. Your teachers were immensely proud of you! Our thanks to Ms Bamber, Mr Page, Mr Southorn and Ms Sutherland.



#### Soul Band Evening

On Wednesday 11 March, one of Owen's favourite music events of the year took to the stage in the Main Hall. Soul Band 2 and Soul Band 1 took a half of the show each to entertain their audience with a range of soul, funk and pop classics, ending the evening with a massed performance of Kool and the Gang's Celebration that had the whole audience dancing around the tables! With guest performances from Y12 band, Mount Fuggi, and first performances of two original songs by Owen's band, Guess Who and Y12 A-level Music student, Oscar S, this was an evening showcasing some of the best of Owen's popular music talent! Our thanks to the Tech Crew for making us all sound and look even more fabulous! Thank you to Mr Crossley, Mr Page and Mr Southorn for all the work preparing bands.







### Chamber Concert

Monday 23 February, first day back after the half-term break and already Owen's musicians were taking to the stage in the Edward Guinness Hall in smaller groups, entertaining their audience with a range of performances that included Year 7 String Quartet, Y11 Piano and Strings, Drumming Club, Junior Percussion Ensemble, Vivace Wind Quintet, Spiritus Piano and Winds, Guitar Ensemble, Recorder Ensemble and the premiere appearance of Y11 student-led Jazz Five. With music by composers as wide-ranging as Mozart, Clifford Brown and Gotye as well as a Bolivian folk song, this was an evening rich in variety! Well done to all our fabulous performers! Our thanks to Mr Crossley, Ms McChrystal, Mr Niesyto, Mr Widden and Ms Wild for their work in preparing the students for their performances.

### South East Schools Chamber Music Competition – performance masterclasses

On Friday 27 February the Year 7 String Quartet, the Year 9 Violins and Piano Trio and Spiritus Piano and Winds Quintet made their way to North London Collegiate School to perform and receive coaching from Royal Academy Professor, Nicole Wilson. Performing music by Mozart and Moszkowski, these were accomplished and stylish performances and the musicians responded well to the coaching they received. Well done to the Year 9 trio who were subsequently invited to perform at the Finals Concert in this highly competitive event. Thank you to Ms Bamber, Mr Crossley and Mr Widden for their work and time in preparing the musicians and enabling the event trip to take place.





## The Royal Festival Hall

### DAOS Golden Anniversary Fundraising Concert

On Tuesday 3 March Dame Alice Owen's School headed to the South Bank in London to take over the thrilling venue of the Royal Festival Hall for a remarkable celebration of the school's 50 years in Potters Bar. The performances brought together 450 performers from Owen's students past and present.

The striking opening of Carl Orff's 'O Fortuna' featuring the 120-strong Symphony Orchestra and Massed Choirs of over 250 singers sent shivers down the spine, opening a programme that positively revelled in the joy of collaborative music-making, as nine different conductors directed musicians from at least ten different school ensembles, with the added excitement of alumni musicians joining to enrich the experience. Featured ensembles included the Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ms Bamber and alumnus musician Sam Scheer; Senior Strings conducted by Mr Widden; Massed Winds, made up of Concert Band and Second Band, conducted by Mr Kelly and Mr Crossley; Massed Choirs, bringing together the Junior Choir and Junior Chamber Choir, the Senior Choir, Senior Chamber Choir and Close Harmony Group, along with an instrumental band, and percussion conducted by Mr Southorn, Mr Page and Ms Makepeace-Lott, with Ms Sutherland as Junior Choir trainer and Ms McChrystal directing the percussion, plus as accompanist, our very own alumna pianist, Jade Brooks; the cast, chorus and band from the winter musical production of Annie conducted by Mrs Brady with cast and chorus direction from Ms Makepeace Lott and Ms Govier; Soul Band 2 and Soul Band 1, incorporating members of Senior Strings, directed by Mr Crossley and Mr Page.



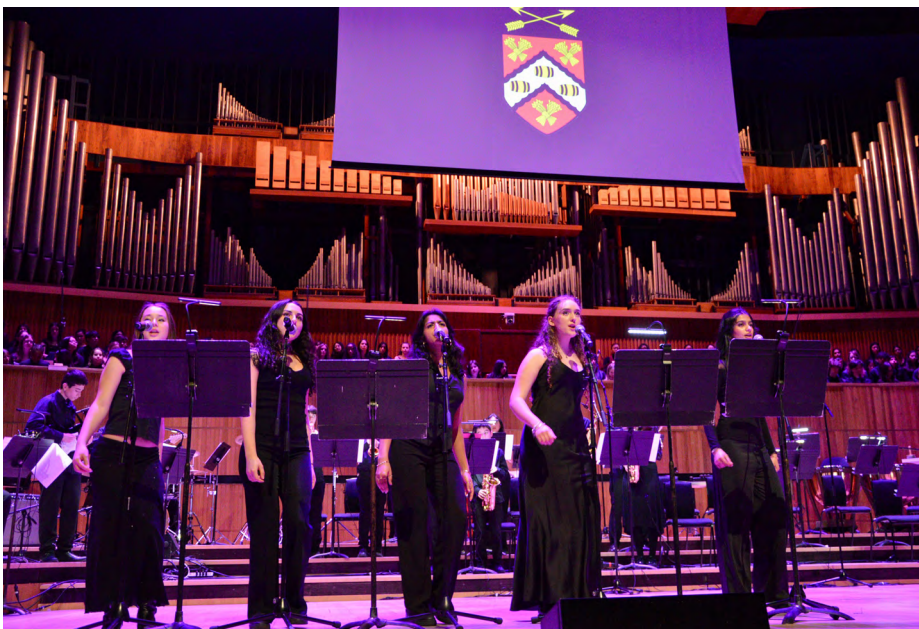


Following the massed opening, the compère for the evening, Radio 3 broadcaster and former Owen's parent, Ian Skelly, introduced the Symphony Orchestra's next piece, Handel's joyous 'La Rejouissance' from *Music for the Royal Fireworks* before alumnus conductor, Sam Scheer, joined the orchestra for the famous 'Montagues and Capulets' movement from Prokofiev's ballet suite, *Romeo and Juliet*. The set finished with a thrilling performance of 'Jupiter' from *The Planets* by Holst. The Senior Strings continued the programme with a sweeping performance of the first movement of Tchaikovsky's *Serenade for Strings* before a complete stage change ushered in the Massed Winds. They began their programme with Concert Band's brilliant performance of *Transcendent Journey* by Rossano Galante. This was followed by '1926', a composition by alumnus musician Seb Skelly. The first half ended with an Owen's concert tradition (as established by Owen's musical legend and former Concert Band Director, Mr Bernard Bean) with 'The Final Countdown' by Joey Tempest.



The second half of the concert began with the Massed Choirs' items, first of all the Close Harmony Group's suave performance of 'Nobody Does it Better' by Carly Simon, with their forces then being swelled by the Senior Chamber Choir for a captivating performance of 'Measure Me, Sky!' by Elaine Hagenberg. Following this, the stage was then packed with the full Massed Choirs and the instrumental band as Hassan's lone recorder solo opened a powerfully moving performance of 'Sail On Boys' from the musical *Operation Mincemeat*. The following performance of African songs from *Zimbe* by Alexander LeStrange began with a beautiful Alleluia, moving to end with the joyous 'Freedom is Coming', with Ms McChrystal's devised percussion parts bringing the choir items to a thrilling climactic ending.

News from our departments





Then the stage was set for the cast, chorus and band of *Annie* and we were treated to a revival of three songs from December's stage show: 'N.Y.C.', 'It's a Hard Knock Life' and 'I Don't Need Anything But You'. Following this, the Soul Bands took to the stage, with Soul Band 2 confidently taking us into the realm of soul with a medley of songs by KC and the Sunshine Band. A medley of Robbie Williams' songs, arranged by Mr Page and Matthew Gearing (Y13), united Soul Band 1 with the Senior Strings and the dancers choreographed and trained by Ms Locke and alumna Gemma Campbell. With the massed choirs also joining in to sing the chorus, this was a spine-tingling and thrilling performance that had the audience dancing in the aisles! Then came the point when the celebrity alumni joined the band: Gary Kemp and Steve

Norman of Spandau Ballet, who were students at the school 50 years ago when it moved from Islington out to Potters Bar. With Gary Kemp sharing a microphone with Soul Band 1 singer, Theo, and Steve Norman's saxophone solo leading to an exchange with Matthew on the congas, they really did become part of the Owen's band for a joyous celebratory rendition of their own song, 'Gold'. As Mrs Nemko joined the Spandau Ballet alumni, Ms Bamber returned to the stage with her baton, and the concert ended with the inevitable rousing rendition of the School Song reminding us all to 'Strive With a Will!' Our thanks to the immense team behind it all, including: the amazing extended Music, Drama and Dance staff team who collaborated, created and supported with such expertise

and inspiration; our wonderful and extraordinary Event/Stage Manager, alumnus Sam Levy, along with his family team of Maz Bryden and James Levy; Miss McClean and Mr Fry for their point-perfect (cheerfully patient) logistical precision in the weeks leading up to and right throughout the night itself; Mrs Acosta for her tireless, expert coordination of the event as Concert Manager and for enabling so many happy alumni to join us; Mrs Doust for always being there as another pair of hands; and an enormous team of Owen's staff who showed up at various points throughout the day, looking after performers, driving vans, loading and unloading equipment. And, finally, to Mrs Nemko for dreaming big, and driving the whole event to bring about this privileged, unforgettable experience.



### Chamber Concert – Y13 and Friends

This is the time of year when we begin to say farewell to our Y13 musicians. Monday 9 March saw them taking to the stage in the EGH in a range of performances that demonstrated the range of their music-making as well as the joy they find in musical collaborations. A series of vocal duets from four different pairs of performers – Mathilde and Flora, Imogen and Emily, Elizabeth and Theo and Soraia and Esther – bringing songs from musicals, punctuated the evening, which also saw the Espinazi String Quartet reconvene to charm us with Mendelssohn and thrill us with Shostakovich. We saw Y13 musicians at the heart of the Senior Brass and Senior Percussion Ensembles, as well as in debut collaborations, such as Schubert's 'Shepherd on the Rock' with Imogen, Hassan and Raffy, and Evelyn and Ewen taking every opportunity to explore the repertoire for their respective instruments with a performance of a song by Brahms for Tenor, Viola and Piano, and Evie taking a leading role in 'Ghanaia' for Percussion Trio with Ms McChrystal and Matthew. We were delighted that Y13 was able to show off its classical guitar prowess with a Guitar Quintet entirely from their year group. Guest artists for the evening were the Junior Chamber Strings performing Nielsen's 'Intermezzo' before joining forces with Hassan for *Vivaldi's Concerto in C* for soprano recorder and strings. Hassan also treated us to a preview of the programme he will play for the first televised round of the BBC Young Musician of the Year, collaborating with Matthew and accompanied by Jade. Soraia, Steph and Ourania treated the audience to a range of expressive and virtuosic solos with music by Schubert, Saint-Saens and Bruch.

Our thanks to Mr Kelly, Ms Makepeace Lott, Ms McChrystal and Mr Niesyto for their work with the musicians. A special mention to Ms Jade Brooks for her outstanding accompanying throughout the evening!





### Senior Concert

Thursday 19 March sees the final Senior Concert of the term where we continue to celebrate the Y13 musicians in the midst of our musical community. Featuring performances by the Concert Band, Senior Chamber Choir, Close Harmony Group, Senior Strings, Chamber Orchestra and Symphony Orchestra, this concert includes repertoire shining a spotlight on Year 13s:

Vivaldi's *Concerto for Four Violins*, movements from Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*, Berlioz' *Harold in Italy*, (3rd movement), Dvorak's *Humoreske* and Bruch's *Concerto for Clarinet and Viola*, as well as the second movement of Tchaikovsky's *Symphony No. 5*.

We would like to thank the Year 13s for all their work, contribution and shining examples within Owen's Music over the years. We wish them well for their future plans and hope that they continue to love their music-making and that they spread a little bit of Owen's music-magic wherever they go!



**CONGRATULATIONS** to Hassan M who has won the prestigious Y13 Prize at the Junior Royal Academy of Music performing a 20-minute recital in the Dukes Hall on Saturday 14 March (much of which we have been privileged to hear previewed in DAOS Chamber Concerts in the EGH). Hassan was joined in his performance by Matthew G (Y13) playing djembe drum in pieces that they have devised themselves.





## Football

### Boys Year 7

Throughout the Spring Term the Y7 boys football team have successfully made their way to two finals: the District League and the County Plate!

Having been undefeated in the District League group stage they faced Monks Walk in the semi-finals, winning 2-1. A huge congratulations to the team, who were then crowned District League Champions in a comfortable 4-1 against a strong Stanborough side. Goals were scored by Z Turner x 2, G Marshall and L Dawson. The player of the match was given to G Marshall.

Our County Plate run also saw us play Monks Walk away and after a competitive battle, we won 3-1 and made it to the final. We will play Goffs Academy in the plate final at the Hertfordshire county ground in April. A true reflection of all the hard work and dedication the boys continuously show! Well done to all those that have been involved.

### Boys Year 8

Having qualified for the District Cup semi-final by finishing top of their group before Christmas, the Year 8 boys played Ridgeway in what was an extremely competitive fixture, unfortunately losing 2-1, despite a wonder strike from Emre Y.

Two days earlier, the team played in the semi-final of the County Plate against Leventhorpe. The team went 2 goals down within 5 minutes of the start, but staged a spirited comeback to lead 3-2 at half-time. Despite missing numerous chances to increase the lead, the team held on for the win and now look forward to playing in the final after the Easter holidays. Well done to everyone involved.

## PE Department

### Boys Year 9

This season has been more successful than last year, and the boys should be very proud of themselves.

In the County Cup, the boys first played Bushey Meads and won convincingly 5-2. In the next round we faced Chauncy, who knocked us out in Round 1 last year. This time the boys turned it around and won a very tight game 1-0. That result took us into Round 3 against a very strong St Michael's side. The game started evenly with chances for both teams, but we went 2-0 down before half time. After the break the boys came out strong and fought back to make it 2-2, but unfortunately we fell at the final hurdle and lost 4-2.

In the District competition we progressed through the group stages with flying colours, scoring 19 goals in 4 games. We then faced Monks Walk in the semi-finals and won 2-1 in another close match. The boys now have the final to play.

To keep up to date with everything Owen's PE, follow [@DAOS.PE.Dept](#) on Instagram.



[@DAOS.PE.DEPT](#)

## Football continued

### Boys Year 10 – 1st XI

In the District League the boys have won 2 games against Monks Walk and Stanborough which has led them to qualify for the final. In the County League they have beaten both Richard Hale and Beaumont but narrowly missed out on qualifying for the final. In the County Plate competition they have beaten Townsend, St Margarets, St John Lawes and Katherine Warrington to reach the final. In the final they played a strong Leventhorpe side but they came through victorious, winning 2–0.



### Girls U12

In the District League competition the under 12 squad played 3 games, winning 2 and losing 1 which meant they qualified for the semi-finals. In their semi-final they faced Chancellor's School and produced a dominant display to win 6–0 and reach the District League final. Etti scored 4 goals, player of the match Isha scored 1 and Eloise scored 1. The coach's player of the match was Florence.

In the District 7-a-side tournament the team showed great determination to reach the final against Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School. Despite dominating the game, it remained goalless after extra time and the girls were unfortunate to lose the penalty shootout 5–4. Isha was selected as player of the tournament.

In the County Plate competition the girls faced Sandringham School in the quarter-finals. They put in an excellent display winning 5–1 with goals from Jessica x 2, Florence, Etti and Elsa. Jessica and goalkeeper Lucy were voted players of the match. They subsequently played Queens' School in the semi-final, and in their best team performance of the season, were 6–0 winners courtesy of goals from Jessica x 2, Sofia, Isha, Olivia and Etti. Lucy was once again selected as player of the game, this time alongside Etti. The team now face Kings Langley School in the final.



### Girls U14

Having won their first District League match earlier in the school year, the under 14 squad went on to top their group following victories over Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School, Monks Walk and Queenswood, scoring 10 goals in the process and conceding none. They then progressed to the final where they will face Ridgeway School.



### Girls U16

The U16 girls made it through to the semi-final of the District League where they battled hard but lost to a strong Ridgeway side. They also unfortunately lost to Presdales, which saw an end to their County Cup run getting through to the quarter-finals. Well done to all those who have been involved!



### Girls U18

The Senior Girls team have successfully made their way to the County Plate final. They played very well in the quarter-final against St Edmunds College, winning 6–1 despite being a player down! The semi-final was conceded to us and as a result they will play Parmiters in the final at the Herts FA County ground.



## Basketball



### Boys Y7

The boys started the season off with winning the District Rally and have played well this term with 4 wins and one loss in the Mid Herts District League. They have one more league game before the semi-finals later this year. Good luck boys.

### Boys Y8

The boys started the season off with winning the District Rally and have played well this term with 4 wins and one loss in the Mid Herts District League. They have one more league game before the semi-finals later this year. Good luck boys.

### Boys Y9

The boys have had a mixed bag of results in the league with 3 wins and 3 losses but in the recent semi-finals they beat Onslow 24-18 (after losing to them earlier in the year) to qualify for the final later this year. Good luck boys.

### Boys Y10

The boys in the District League have been unbeaten and head to the semi-finals later this year. In the County League they have won and lost 3 games but qualified for the semi-finals, where they narrowly lost to St Columba's in a great game of basketball. Good luck in your next games.

### Girls U15

The Girls U15 team have really enjoyed taking part in the County League this year as well as the District Rally in which they gained 3rd place. This was a new sport for many of the students which we hope they will enjoy in the future.

### Girls U19

The U19 girls have played in the County League and have shown great determination in all their games but narrowly lost them all. The team is made up of Y11 girls so are the youngest in this age group and we are very proud of their efforts.

## Rugby

### Senior Rugby @ Herts County 7s (St Albans School) – U18 Plate competition

The senior boys made the most of the opportunity to play in the Herts County 7s U18 plate, where Owen's took a squad of 14 anticipating a strong physical challenge. Despite having not played together this year, the Owen's boys represented brilliantly throughout the competition, finishing 2nd overall, thanks to 2 wins, one draw and a loss. While all the squad had their moments, Albert T and Ronne H-D (both in Year 11), impressed.



It has been an extremely busy term for the Owen's netball teams with the Saturday programme taking place and over 100 different students representing the school in fixtures. We have also had KS4 and KS5 students stepping on court looking smart and ready for serious netball in their new netball dresses.

### Netball

#### Year 8

This amazing group of students has not missed a single weekend fixture, showing such commitment to Owen's and their passion for netball. Both teams have progressed with connections forming on court, skill level improving and strategic play developing, all resulting in better outcomes. Some key results:

- beating St Columba's 12-4
- U13A beating Forest 14-4
- U13B beating Forest 13-1
- U13B team coming 2nd the District B team Tournament
- U13B team beating Haileybury 23-9

The PGL Tour takes place on 20-22 March therefore, the update will be in the next newsletter.



#### Year 9

The Year 9 teams have shown particular strength in their tournament play this year with both the A and B teams winning their respective District tournaments. The A team also had an opportunity to play in the Janice Cook Hertfordshire Emerging Schools Tournament and made it into the Cup competition finishing 3rd in their group!

#### Year 11

This group have worked so hard whilst balancing their academic commitments, ensuring they represent the school in a range of midweek Cup and League games including some weekend friendlies. Some standout results:

- Beating Presdales 23-15
- Beating Stanborough 28-1

Shout out to F Mahendran, A Reusch and H Johnson who were integral in the 1st VII success in the County Plate too.



#### 2nd VII

It has been brilliant to see the 2nd VII develop together on the court, working on those vital connections and being so determined to achieve. Beating Chigwell 37-23 and beating Forest 20-15 in February was a particular highlight. In March, they also hosted a new Verulam team and showed great sportsmanship whilst securing a 25-5 win and took a trip to St Margaret's Bushey and showed great dominance winning 29-7.



## Netball continued

### COUNTY PLATE FINAL



**DAOS 1<sup>st</sup> VII 18-13 Tring**  
**POM - E.CHADWICK 🌟**  
**CPOM - S.WATKINS 🌟**

#### 1st VII

The main focus for the 1st VII has been the County League (ongoing) and the County Plate knock-out games. They also performed really well in a friendly against Forest School in which they won 38-26 and inspired the Year 7 and 8 students who were watching before playing their own games. The journey to success in the County Plate is below:

- Quarter-final - beat John Henry Newman School 27-18
- Semi-final - beat Herts and Essex High School 22-20
- Final - beat Tring School 18-13

## Other achievements

Congratulations to Annie R (Y11) who competed in the London Gymnastics 13+ Female Tumbling competition in Redbridge and came 1st, meaning she has qualified to represent London at the England Nationals this summer.

Congratulations to C Worrell and L Worrell (Y8) who came 1st and 2nd in the Stratford-upon-Avon Open Championships competing with Irish Dancers from across the UK!



## Cricket

#### Girls U13

The girls have started their season very well, with a great turnout at indoor training sessions. They have already taken part in one indoor tournament where they were able to show the skills they have been learning.

Across the four games played, the girls performed strongly, winning two and losing two, which placed them second in their group. Throughout the day, the girls showed excellent communication, teamwork and a great team spirit.

#### Girls U15

In the Hertfordshire indoor tournament, the girls achieved a perfect record, playing four games and winning all four. It was an outstanding display of skill and teamwork, with the team seeing every game through convincingly.

This fantastic performance means they finished top of their group and have now progressed to the next set of games, which will take place in a week's time.



## Never stop learning news from the library ...

### Library lessons

This term the library lessons programme for Years 7, 8 and 9 has included a library skills session covering some of the resources and tools that the library provides to help students to make good book choices, lessons exploring literature on topical themes including Children's Mental Health Week and International Women's Day, and special activities to mark World Book Day. We have also been delighted to welcome Year 10 classes for visits to encourage them to keep up their leisure reading!

### New Library stock

Our Fiction Library stock has received a wonderful boost of £500 worth of new stock after we qualified for a generous special offer from our library system supplier. In line with our current collection development plan, we decided to enhance and update our selection for Upper School students, expand our extremely popular range of graphic novels, and continue to add Lower School and Young Adult series sequels to encourage sustained fiction reading.

### Supporting student volunteering

Our team of Student Librarians and Duke of Edinburgh's Award volunteers continues to provide invaluable help to students and staff every breaktime and lunchtime. We currently have a waiting list for students to join the team. As well as developing their customer service skills by staffing the library desk, volunteers have also learned to repair books, created displays and helped to support our World Book Day event.



### **Award shadowing**

Spring is the season of book awards, and we encourage students to participate in shadowing activities to widen their reading and explore some of the best new books available. Students read some or all of the books shortlisted for an award, and are invited to critique and rate the books and participate in discussion and voting on their favourites. Depending on the award, student votes may count towards the actual winner, or towards a 'shadowers' choice' award. This term, students have been able to join our Library 'virtual book group' to shadow the books shortlisted for the Excelsior Award for graphic novels and manga. Next term, a similar group will enable students to shadow the Carnegie Medal for Writing, which features some of the best-quality new fiction published for children and young people.

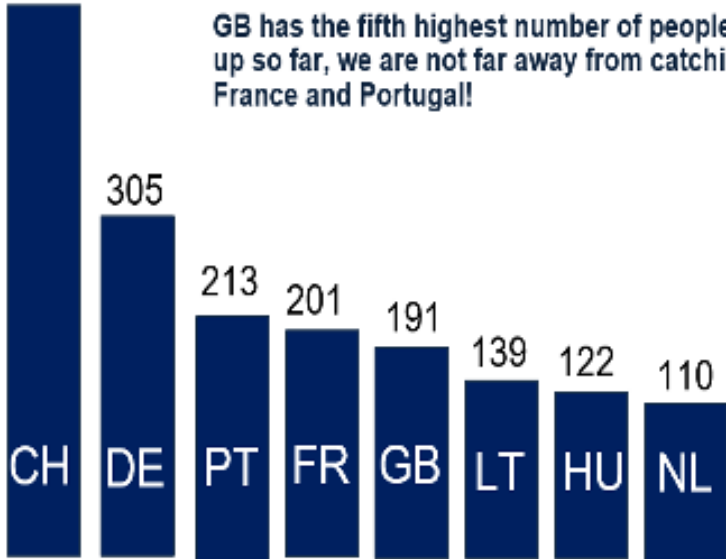
### **National Reading Champions Quiz**

On Thursday 26 February, two teams of DAOS students competed in the Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire regional online heat for the National Reading Champions Quiz. The library took on the feel of a game show studio as the two teams gathered round laptop screens to tackle a series of different question rounds, whilst seeing all their opponents on a giant video call on our big screen! This year, themes for the rounds included book openings and endings, book 'dingbats', and identifying books from a tiny section of their cover image! The teams worked together brilliantly to tackle the questions and to show their support for all the competitors throughout the event. Although we didn't make it through to the next round this time, both our teams scored within the top ten out of 25 teams in the heat and we were really proud of them.

### **And finally... World Book Day!**

Our focus for World Book Day this year was on introducing students to more great books whilst having some celebratory fun! During the fortnight around World Book Day, Years 7 and 8 participated in 'book speed-dating' in their library lessons, which resulted in 30 students choosing to take out books they might not have considered trying beforehand. Year 9 tried an all-new 'Book Traitors' game, putting on excellent deadpan expressions as they presented real or fake books to their classmates at their library 'round tables'. We are pleased to report that most of our traitors were successfully unmasked and banished by our well-read students! On World Book Day itself, we held a 'Library Unplugged' session in the library, reserving one of our rooms for relaxing reading (no computers or other screens to be used) and serving large quantities of biscuits to attendees. This event was well-received, and we are now planning to run Unplugged sessions regularly in the future!

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GB has the fifth highest number of people signed up so far, we are not far away from catching up to France and Portugal!



## Supportive community bulletin board

### BootstRaP study

Dame Alice Owens school has an ongoing partnership with the University of Hertfordshire on the BootStRaP study, a research project exploring mobile phone use and mental health among 12-16 year olds. The study takes a collaborative, preventative approach to promoting positive digital wellbeing.

Students who take part will trial a four-week programme, with follow-up over three and a half months, designed to encourage healthy online behaviours and support wellbeing.

Recruitment will close as we break for Easter, but there is still time for your Year 8 child to get involved. The project is being delivered across eight European countries, with eight schools participating in the UK.

In the UK, the study aims to recruit 400 students. So far, 191 students have received parental consent. Every additional participant helps ensure the research can reach its target and make a meaningful contribution to understanding young people's digital habits and mental health. **If you would like your child to take part, please use the QR code on this page to provide consent.** If you have any questions, please contact the research team [bootstrap@herts.ac.uk](mailto:bootstrap@herts.ac.uk)



For your child to take part, both you and your child must provide consent which can be provided via this [link](#) or via the QR code.



# Dates for your diary

*Note that exams take place throughout the summer term.  
The national GCSE and A Level exam period starts on 7 May.*

**Mon 13 Apr** Summer term begins

**Mon 13 Apr** OSA Committee meeting (AGM) – 7.30pm

**Mon 20 Apr** Parents' workshop (Emotional Regulation) – 6pm

**Mon 21 Apr** Interfaith trip

**Fri 24–Sun 26 Apr** Year 10 Silver D of E expedition

**Wed 29 Apr** Junior Maths Challenge – 9am

**Wed 29 Apr** Spring Concert – 6.30pm

**Thu 30 Apr** Year 12 Oxbridge evening – 7pm

**Mon 4 May** May bank holiday

**Wed 6 May** Brewers' Award celebration – 12.45pm

**Wed 6–Tue 12 May** Year 10/12 French exchange (DAOS in France)

**Thu 7–Sun 10 May** Year 10 Spanish trip to Malaga

**Mon 11 May** OSA Committee meeting – 7.30pm

**Wed 13 May** Year 7 History trip (GJST)

**Thu 14–Sun 17 May** BootStRap trip

**Mon 18–Fri 22 May** Walk to School Week

**Mon 18–Fri 22 May** Year 8 Music festival

**Tue 19–Fri 22 May** Year 12 Gold D of E expedition

**Thu 21–Sat 23 May** Year 9 trip to the Somme

**Mon 25–Fri 29 May** Summer half term



**enjoy the Easter break!**