

# Wallingford School Newsletter

Friday 8th April 2022

## Headteacher's Message

By Mr J Marston, Headteacher

Regular readers of the Headteacher's Message will know that I have written a great deal in recent weeks about the extra-curricular life of the school. As the evenings have got lighter and the clocks have changed, both the sheer range and variety of what we have on offer at Wallingford School and also how much they have been missed over the past two years have struck me time and time again.

We cannot change the latter but should celebrate the return of everything that we do beyond the classroom – school is about the joy of learning, great teaching and strong results but it is also about experiences and how they form and develop us. I will not list now everything which has been going on for fear of missing something out but it has been nothing short of tremendous and I would like to thank our staff for seeing the facilitation of such experiences as being an intrinsic part of what it means to work in a school and also to congratulate our students for embracing and thriving upon the opportunities on offer.

There will be much more to come in a busy summer term and I hope that the Easter holiday provides the opportunity for everyone to recharge their batteries and come back ready for many more fantastic experiences. This newsletter is a great depiction of the life of our school and the experiences on offer and I hope that you enjoy reading it.



Photo: Year 9 Duke Of Edinburgh Award - Bronze Practice Expedition (2nd/3rd April 2022)

# GCSE Science Live!

By Mr D Boddaert, Head of Science &  
Mrs S Bradford, Senior Science Technician

In February we took 60 year 10 students to attend the exciting GCSE Science Live programme of lectures at The New Theatre Oxford. They were delivered by five of Britain's top scientists, all working at the cutting edge of their specialisms:

Professor Alice Roberts, a clinical anatomist and presenter of a range of programmes on BBC2, including *The Incredible Human Journey*, *Origins of Us* and *Prehistoric Autopsy*. She delivered an engaging lecture explaining how she is able to use her knowledge as a medical doctor to diagnose "patients" even if they are only skeletal remains and extrapolate this information to imagine how they would have lived.



Photo: Our Lady's Abingdon School @OLAScienceDept

Professor Robert Winston, a distinguished scientist particularly in the area of human fertility and well-known TV presenter discussed the advances in technology in the field of imaging and showed amazing footage of human ovulation.

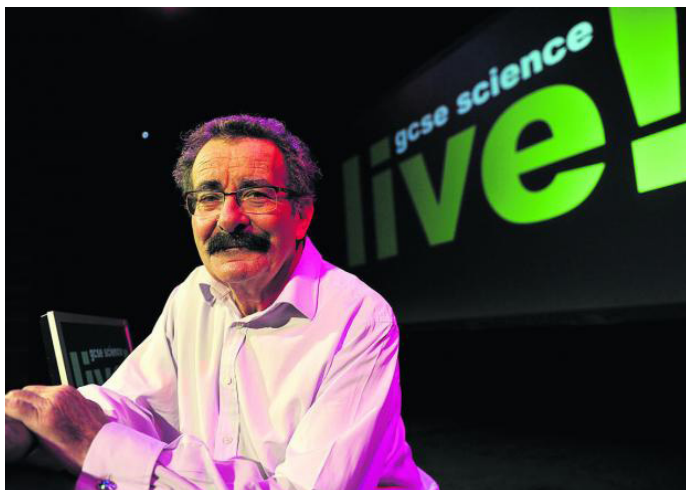


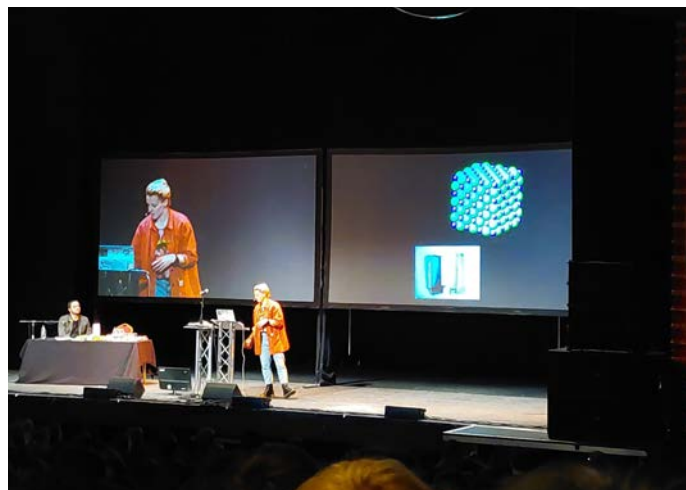
Photo: Oxford Mail

Dr Maggie Aderin-Pocock, a scientist and presenter of the BBC's iconic astronomy program *The Sky at Night* shared her enthusiasm for space exploration and Very Large Telescopes (despite their unimaginative names!). She also looked at the differences between the Hubble and James Webb telescopes and is looking forward to the first images from the James Webb telescope very soon.



Photo: Our Lady's Abingdon School @OLAScienceDept

Dr Anna Ploszajski, a fascinating material scientist, spoke beautifully about the science behind her adventures swimming across the channel and explained why the best cross-channel swimming snacks are Battenberg cakes and chocolate mini rolls (they float).



Photos: Our Lady's Abingdon School @OLAScienceDept

Finally, Professor Jim Al-Khalili, a professor of physics who has his own Radio 4 series and has made countless documentaries including *Order and Disorder* and *Everything and Nothing*, discussed the possibilities of time travel. He explained that while time travel to the future is a theoretical possibility, time travel to the past is far more problematic. He also argued that *Interstellar* is a far more accurate sci-fi movie than *Avengers End Game*!

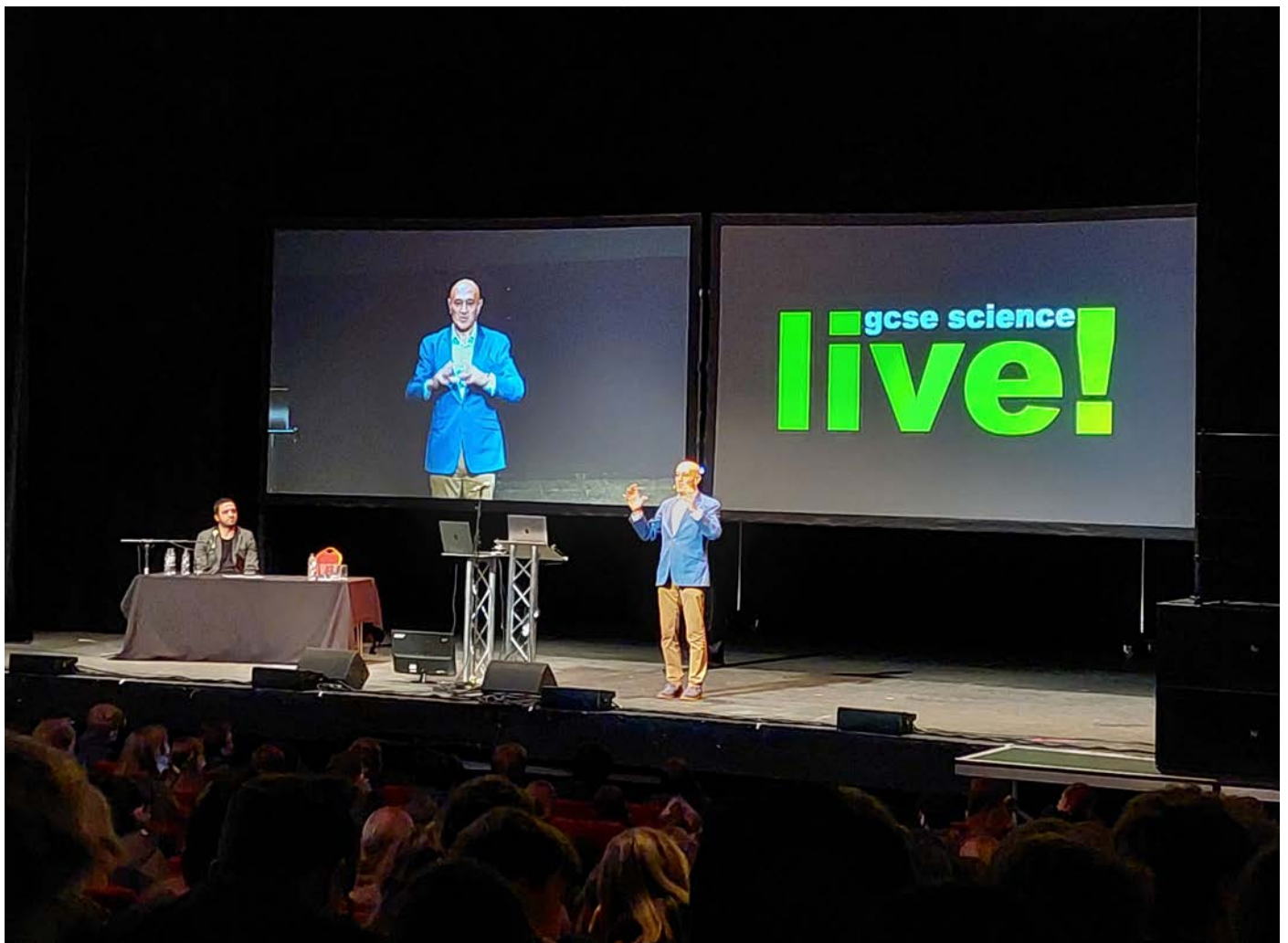


Photo: Our Lady's Abingdon School @OLAScienceDept

"It was the first time in a while that anyone had gone on a trip, so as you'd expect we were all very excited to see such inspirational speakers (and miss a bit of school - shh!). For me personally, I was fascinated by the incredible theoretical possibilities of time travel that Jim Al-Khalili presented, but I also enjoyed all the scientists passionate presentations"

- Lilibelle, Year 10

"Professor Jim Al-Khalili was very interesting when he talked about time travel and how it is actually possible! Dr Maggie Aderin-Pocock was fascinating, she showed us photos of space and how telescopes worked."

- Toby, Year 10

"This experience was inspirational! My favourite lecturer was Professor Jim Al-Khalili, who talked about his advanced knowledge on time travel."

- Anon, Year 10

A big thank you to the Science Department for organising such a well-received trip!

# Private Peaceful at the Oxford Playhouse

By Ms S Hands, Teacher of English

Wallingford School English Department has been keen to get our students back out on school trips and back to experiencing some extra-curricular stimulus. Last week we took 142 Year 7 students to see a theatrical adaptation of Michael Morpurgo's "Private Peaceful" at the Oxford Playhouse. For many of our students, this was a first adventure out on a school trip in over two years and the excitement level was high! The play follows one young man's experience of growing up in pre-World War 1 England and took the audience on a brilliant journey through childhood with all the excitement of seeing your first aeroplane and all the horror of being caned by a teacher (how things have changed in one hundred years!). We then followed our hero into the terror of the war itself. I won't say anything about the ending in case any of you would like to read the book. Suffice to say, there were some wet eyes at the end.



A tight six-person cast took on all the characters and the play was set on a stage adorned with corrugated iron, moss and trees creating a backdrop for all the places on the way. The cast created scene after scene and as one of our students said, "There's only one set but it's been about fifteen different places. It's BRILLIANT!".

Our students were briefed on theatre etiquette before we went, just in case reminders were needed. They were "practically perfect in every way", and I have never been so proud of so many students saying "After you!", "Let me get that for you," and "We'll hang back and let you go first" as well as all the requisite pleases and thank-yous.

Thank you for supporting our extra-curricular activities at Wallingford School.

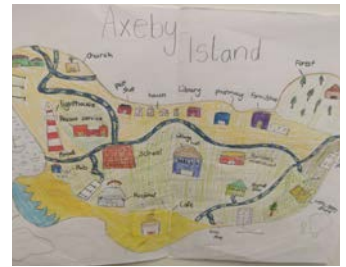
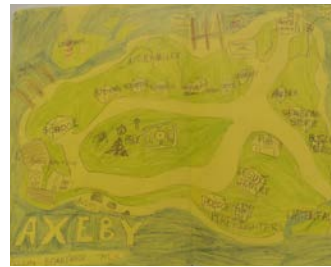
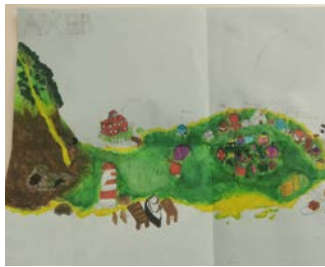


# Village Project

By Miss A Cheng, Teacher of English

This term all Year 7s started the Village Project, an iconic staple in Wallingford School. Every form becomes a village and a member of their village with jobs. Together they will name their village, hold Parish meetings, apply for jobs, create a map for their village and so much more!

The village of Axeby by 7TWR has created some wonderful maps.



Below is a piece from Jasmine Gibbin describing Axeby Island's infamous urban legend.

## **The Mermaid of Axeby Rock** ***An urban legend of Axeby Island***

“The night was cold and quiet and dark. The only sounds that could be heard were the crashing of the waves against the shore and the distant babble of drunken laughter coming from the boat far out in the water - the boat that was unknowingly drifting further and further out into the deep ocean, out into a gathering storm. Soon, all four sailors on the ship were lying unconscious on deck with empty glass bottles clutched to their swollen stomachs. Like a ball in a game of catch, the boat was being thrown between the treacherous waves, the wooden planks screaming and splintering, throwing the sailors across the deck and shaking them awake – they moaned and rubbed their drowsy eyes, stumbling to their feet before being knocked down again. Angrily the sky blushed a dark grey and sent a pack of snarling dogs across the water to batter the ship’s bow as it tried to run back to shore; but it was blown off course, and was being pushed towards the cliffs, towards the jagged rocks that jutted out of the murky water.

Gripping the sides of the boat, the sailors could do nothing but let nature play its game; however, as the rocks started to tear at the wooden planks of the boat, something rapidly rose from the depths of the water. It leapt in an arch through the air, spraying water over their awestruck faces; it landed on one of the sailors, knocking him into the hungry water, then left the rocks to do the rest of the work. What was it? No... it couldn't have been... could it? The body of a person, the tail of a silver fish. A mermaid! At least, that is what the sailors thought they saw. All that is left of the boat is the skeleton of the ship, beached on the cliffs, and one sailor, with one story to tell.”

“You! Were you that sailor Dad? Did you really see a mermaid? Are they real?”

“I was indeed, son. And yes, at the time I did see a mermaid; but we was young, and foolish to go out drunk and alone in the boat after dark, especially as we went further out than we were allowed. People go out in boats all the time, but those who go out further than the shallow waters don't usually return. And those who do not return are claimed by the mermaids.” The sailor sat back into his seat and chuckled quietly at his younger self and at his son's amazed expression. “So don't you ever do that, okay Tommo? Don't want to be drowned by the mermaid do you?”

“No! I will never go further than the shallows! I promise!” he squeaked.

The sailor stood up patted Tommo on the shoulder; “Good boy.”

# A Display of Talent

By Miss E Norman, Teacher of Music

The Music department have been extra busy this term! Our first Spring Concert since 2019 was a welcome return to live performance and it was fabulous to see so many students brave the stage to display their talents. From saxophone quartets to Decibels choir, we had it all! The new snack boxes from our brilliant canteen staff were a welcome addition and rounded off the evening perfectly. Although it was an exciting evening, it also brought some sadness as we saw our Year 13 students take to the stage for the final time – some of them have been performing in our Spring Concerts since Year 7 so they will be sorely missed!



As an extra special treat, we hosted our Windband-in-a-day workshop with Ms Atkins, where students from Year 7-13 learnt how to perform in a large ensemble (some for the very first time) and developed their sight-reading skills. The students involved did themselves proud and we are forever amazed by the amount of talent we have within the school. They went on to perform two pieces in Spring Concert – you wouldn't have known that they learnt it all in just over 3 hours!





As if that wasn't enough, we also took some of our talented Key Stage 3 musicians and Year 10 GCSE musicians to watch a world renowned orchestra play GCSE set works in the Royal Festival Hall in London. We were led through the pieces with Rachel Leach stopping the orchestra and explaining the music to students. Students heard music from all the Classical periods from Baroque music to film music of the 21st century. Instruments were highlighted and played individually so students could hear the different timbres. For a lot of students, it was the first time they've ever seen and heard a live orchestra and we were 5 rows from the front. It was the first classical concert Ms Hammond had been to in 3 years! Students were asked to join in a quiz and Ms Hammond was delighted that students knew the key words and recognised the musical periods and key features.



Along with our special events, it would be wrong not to mention all of the hard work that goes on every single day – the corridor is often filled with the sounds of students having their weekly instrument and singing lessons! Having our ensembles back this year has been a real delight, with Decibels rehearsing every Tuesday lunchtime in K3 (Years 10+ welcome), Big Band every Wednesday afterschool (wind and brass instruments grade 3+), and our smaller flute and saxophone groups running on Tuesday and Wednesday lunchtimes respectively. It's always a pleasure to see new faces so why not come along to one of these ensembles? If none of these are quite right, make sure to keep an eye out for other groups that start up!



# Forgetting

By Ms R Miller, Deputy Headteacher

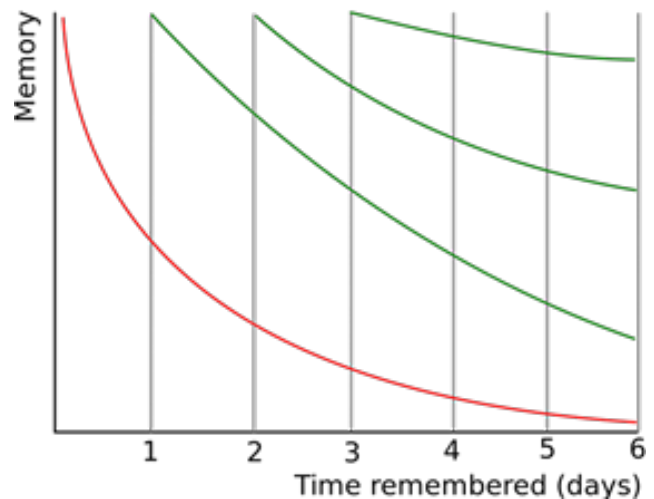
It has been a busy half term for our Key Stage 4 students. Both Year 10 and 11 have had a formal set of assessments since returning from their half term break. As ever, I have been extremely impressed by the maturity demonstrated by students in their approach to the assessments. Our external invigilators have also commented on the impeccable conduct shown by our students – well done!



We've been talking to students about the way in which they learn and in particular, the role that 'forgetting' plays in helping us embed information in our long term memory. We've shared the Ebbinghaus forgetting curve with students in assemblies and teachers have been referring to it in revision lessons too. The curve demonstrates that for most people we forget a chunk of new information fairly quickly after we first meet it. If we revisit this information a short while after first meeting it, then we retain a little bit more in our long term memory. The more we actively revisit the information, the better our chances of ensuring the information is firmly committed to memory and the easier the process of recalling that knowledge becomes.



## The Forgetting Curve



Our Year 10 and 11 students have been practising different revision techniques in tutor time and across their subject lessons. Popular revision strategies our students have been choosing are:

- Mind mapping
- Flash cards
- Say, cover, write
- Quizzing



Our Key Stage 4 tutors have been working hard with their tutees to support them in designing effective revision timetables. We've explained to students the benefits of drawing up a realistic revision timetable that includes time for relaxation and rest.

Do get in touch if your child is not sure what they should be doing or if we can help in any way at all.



# Digital Language Exchange

By Mrs T McGarrick, Curriculum Team Leader for Languages

Salut! Hallo!

This year we have set up a Digital Exchange with our partner schools in Grenoble, France and Bad Wurzach, Germany as an alternative to our very popular Year 10 French and German Exchanges. Ms Pennec and Ms Maly have given our students challenges to complete with their partners such as sharing a favourite recipe from your country. Our students have risen to the challenge of socialising digitally rather than in person and have been learning lots about each other's countries and cultures.

Student and parents might like to explore these websites to get a feel for our partner schools and towns:

Welcome - Grenoble France ([grenoble-tourisme.com](http://grenoble-tourisme.com))

Lycée les Eaux Claires ([auvergnerhonealpes.fr](http://auvergnerhonealpes.fr))

Stadt Bad Wurzach ([bad-wurzach.de](http://bad-wurzach.de))

Startseite ([salvatorkolleg.de](http://salvatorkolleg.de))



We look forward to relaunching our Exchanges with Year 10 and 12 next academic year!

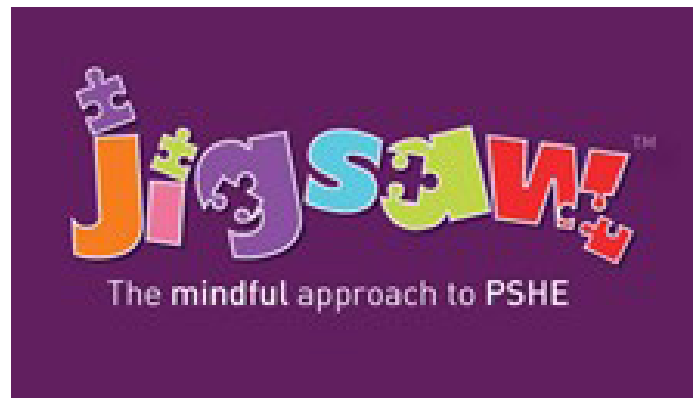
# Wallingford School PSHE

by Miss E Hedges, PSHE Co-ordinator

We are refreshing our current KS3 and KS4 PSHE offer by gradually introducing an established and nationally recognised scheme called Jigsaw.

Jigsaw combines PSHE, emotional literacy, mindfulness, social skills and spiritual development in order to support 11-16 year-olds with their personal growth.

Jigsaw is designed as a coherent whole school approach with all year groups working on the same unit (Puzzle) at the same time, but at an age-appropriate level. Over time, pupils will develop their knowledge of themselves and their understanding of how they relate to others in this ever-changing world.



From September 2022, Jigsaw will be rolled out across all year groups. PSHE will still be delivered on a Friday morning – a special time where the whole school is focused on personal development.

Further information on the Jigsaw programme can be found on the [school website](#) and [Jigsaw PSHE](#)

# Tate Britain

By Mr S Bowen, Head of Art & Design

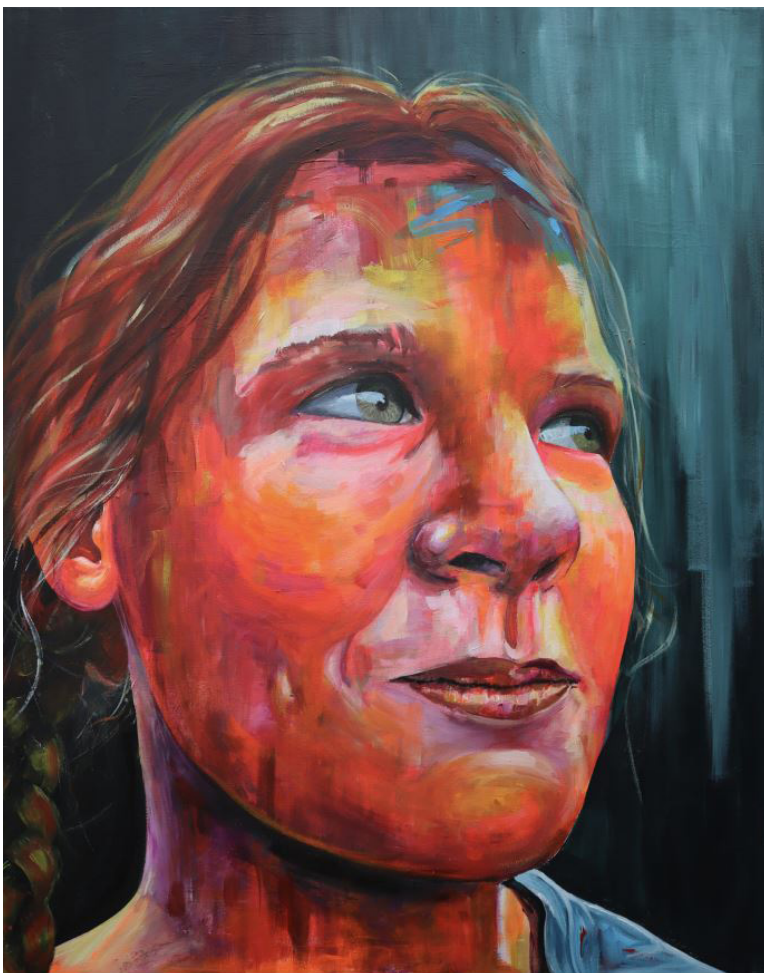


Year 10 and 12 pupils enjoyed this magnificent gallery in January looking at works by Hockney, Hogarth, Bacon, Nash, John, Rothko, Turner... you name them and the chances are we saw them on that Friday.

On the bus back, our minds were buzzing with painting, sculpture, photography, installation and video. Love you Tate.



## 'Looking' by Mia Annesen-Wood



Mia, from Year 13, had one of her paintings exhibited in Modern Art Oxford.

Yes, you read that right. Modern Art Oxford!

Working as part of the 'Young Creatives' project, Mia devised her painting 'Looking' at the end of 2021. If you think that the painting looks good in the photograph, you should see it in real life. Many members of the school did just that when it was exhibited there for the first few months of 2022. It's outstanding.

We are so proud of you for getting a painting into one of this country's leading galleries. Wow.

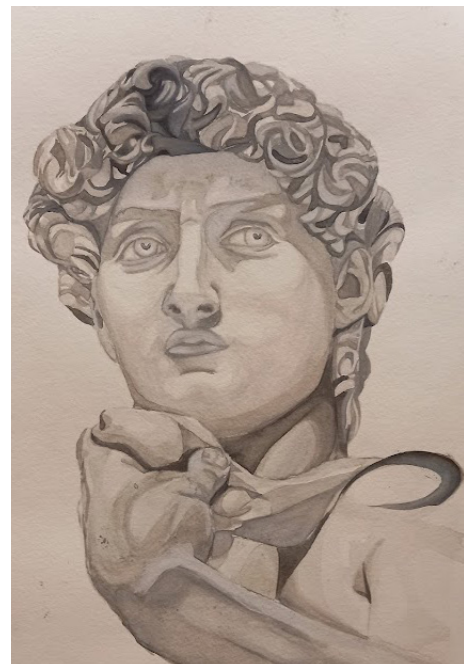
[Young Creatives inspire positive change and creativity for 2022](#)

"Reflecting on their year, the Young Creatives take inspiration from the archive and have selected a quote from the artist Yoko Ono..."  
- Modern Art Oxford

"We are all dreamers creating the next world, the next beautiful world for ourselves and for our children." - Yoko Ono

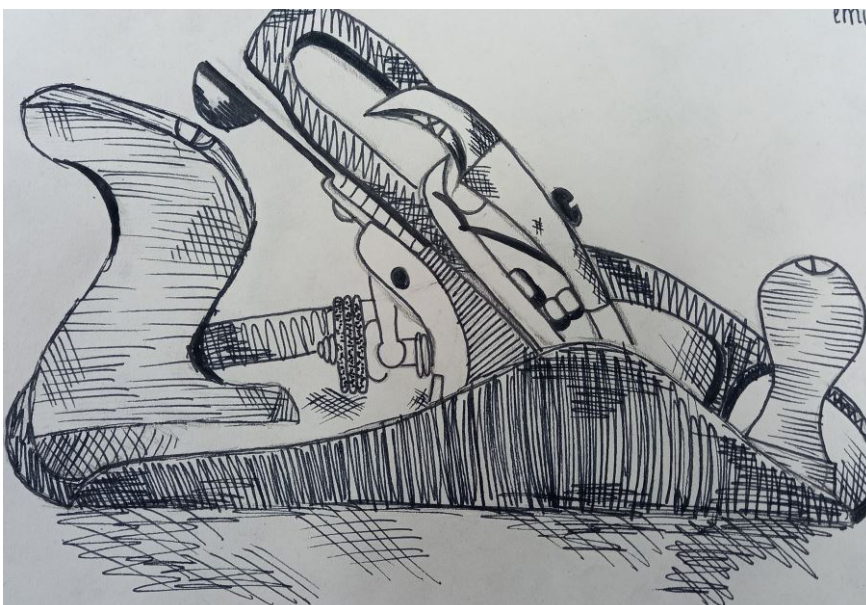
# Year 12 and 13 Artists

What do artists - Year 12 and 13 artists - do all day? They work hard, they experiment, they develop their ideas, they draw, they go big, they sculpt, they go small, they paint, they get frustrated, they try again, they get it right, they wonder if it's finished. Here is a small selection of some final pieces. Are they finished? I don't know. Ask Cadence, Mia, Daisy, Libby, Lucy, Freya, Becky and Bella. We are very excited to be some sensational sharing work from Esme, Annie, Hannah, Will, Katherine, Erinn, Millie, Zoe, Molly Amy, Tia, Josie, Fleur, Daniel, Harry, Libby, Josh, Fern and Talitha very, very soon!



# Year 10 Mock Exam

Year 10 artists worked extremely hard over two days to produce a series of small drawings, paintings and prints of still life objects. Colour, texture and line were at the forefront of these talented artists' minds. Beautiful.



# Scholars Residential Trips

Our Year 7s visited London for a tour around the many museums and St. Paul's Cathedral. Year 8 visited York, where they explored Viking life. Here are a few highlights:



# Year 8 Girls Visit to the University of Oxford's Marie 'Curious' Day

By Mr D Boddaert, Head of Science

On Thursday 31st March we took fifteen Year 8 girls to a STEM day, organised by the Material Science and Physics departments at the University of Oxford.



It was a fun packed day of activities. Students completed an activity on our cosmic address, looking at the size of the universe and how we can map it out. They looked at the emission spectra of different gases through diffraction gratings to identify the gases and learnt how these chemical fingerprints can be used to help map out stars and galaxies, leading onto a tour of the universe, passing millions of galaxies, containing billions of stars!

In another activity they used infra-red cameras to investigate thermal energy transfer and to see how the infra-red spectra can be used to investigate what planets are made of and their structure.



They also had time to make slime and investigate how the amount of borax mixed with PVA glue affects the viscosity, stretchability and bounce. A very messy but thoroughly exciting activity. They were also able to bring their slime home.

The day ended with an interactive lecture on particle accelerators and how they work. This included doing a Mexican wave with giant balloons as we all modelled electromagnetic waves accelerating protons. Seeing the effect of liquid nitrogen on rubber and daffodils, and then observing a superconductor actually levitating and moving around a ring of magnets was a real highlight.

"It was fun and interesting, all the students and researchers really explained things very well."

– Ursula

"I really enjoyed this trip because it was very interesting and the staff were very kind" – Daisy

"This was awesome! I would love to do it again." – Charlotte

"I really liked making the slime and the personality test. I really liked how nice the staff were and they made the experience really good."

– Beth

"I really enjoyed it and learned lots about the different types of science that there is. I would do it again." – Millie

"A fun-filled science experience." - Hannah

"This was very fun and interesting. I would do it again and there were some really cool staff!"

– Sophie B

# STEM Day

## 1st March 2022

By Mrs J McMillan, Teacher of Maths & STEM

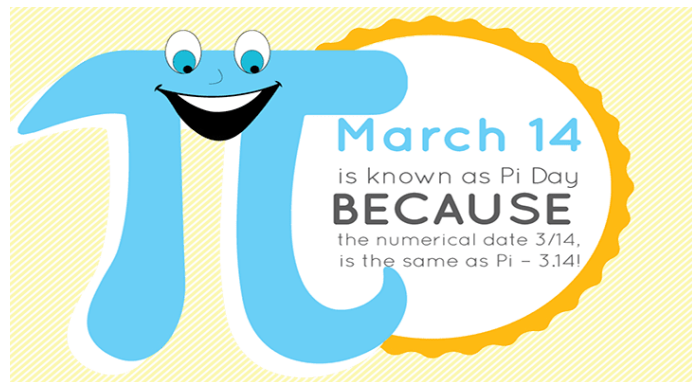
Some of our Year 8 and 9 students took part in a STEM day this term. The day was run by Smallpiece Trust, a charity that offers courses for students to give an insight into life beyond the classroom and get young people with similar interests working together on hands-on projects. We looked at practically exploring the physics of flight through concepts such as aerodynamics and forces. Students designed and constructed an aeroplane which could travel the furthest distance in the air. The planes were powered by a propeller mechanism and the fuselage was constructed out of balsa wood.



# Pi Day

## 14th March 2022

On the 14th March, Wallingford School celebrated Pi Day. We invited students to take part in our house competition by either reciting as many digits of pi as they could remember or by cooking or baking something that celebrated pi. We received some fantastic entries for both parts of the competition. On behalf of the Maths Department, thank you to all students and staff that participated in these activities and made the day so special!



### Pi Day Results:

#### Baking

Evie Potter - Hot Cross Buns  
Elliot Frost - Banoffee Pie  
Makee Makoka - Cup Cakes

#### Reciting Pi

Morgan Ratcliffe - 107  
Callum Reynolds - 80  
Evie Potter - 54



# Sixth Form News

By Ms A Mummery, Head of Sixth Form

## Year 12 Duke of Edinburgh Award

We were very impressed with our Year 12 Silver & Gold Duke of Edinburgh participants, who successfully completed their practice Silver & Gold Expeditions in March. After successfully planning and completing their routes, students braved the tempestuous winds to make it through the cold night. We are very much looking forward to the assessed expeditions in July. Well done all!



## Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)

Congratulations to our seventeen Year 13 students who completed their EPQ presentations on Tuesday and Wednesday of this week. The presentations proved to be fascinating and covered a broad range of topics, such as the future of nuclear power, motivation for runners, treatment for aggression, the history of the monocle and the potential of bitcoin. Students have been working hard on these projects since the end of Year 12. Very well done to all.





## European Youth Parliament Trip

A relaxing and soul-searching extra-curricular day out this was not! A day at the Oxford Union, heatedly debating suicide tourism, vaccine hesitancy and the effects of the fashion industry on the environment (amongst other topics) challenged our quick thinking, well-researched Year 12 team of Alex, Evie, Saoirse, Thomas, Romy and Sam.

Making clear and relevant points on each of the debates is vital in the competition, but showing skills of persuasion and addressing opposing views in our own topic (vaccine hesitancy) is essential. Our resolution was kick started by Evie's empowering opening proposition speech; quoting statistics, highlighting misinformation and urging support for the elements of the clauses, all with a touch of humour. Summaries and direct responses to challenges made by Thomas and Alex and a final heartstring-pulling, vote-winning speech by Alex, ensured our resolution was passed: 41 votes in favour, 26 votes against, 1 abstention.

In our second resolution, Saoirse delivered an emotive opposition speech arguing the inadequacy of the resolution addressing the fashion industry's effect on the environment. With the further points added in this debate, this resolution was successfully not passed: 28 votes in favour and 29 votes against.

It was a wonderful experience to be involved in this face to face debating competition, with Wallingford School holding their own against the other independent schools from across the southwest. Well done to the whole team.



## Year 13 Lakes Revision Week

Bleary eyed, having woken up extra early due to the clocks going forward, our Year 13 gathered at dawn on Mother's Day to head off up north, equipped with a gad of comfy clothes and a stack of books and folders. After a little nap, they were in good spirits and threw themselves into the intensive revision sessions – 5 sessions of 90 minutes every day, broken up by the odd fell walk, zip wire or raft building session.



# Blind Date with a Book

By Mrs C Saunders, School Librarian

February was a special month as we had the opportunity to have a “blind date with a book”. We had a large selection of books wrapped in brown paper and the students would pick a book without any information about the story, genre or author. They were also encouraged to write a book review and share their experiences. I was so pleased to see a Year 12 students eager to take part as well.

**Well done to all students for taking part in this unique event and the following will receive house points:**

Renee Chan (7TWR)  
Jessica Clayton (8ECL)  
Zoe Earl (8REC)  
Elliot Frost (8YFR)  
Jasmine Gibbin (7TWR)  
Lydia Gibson (8ECL)  
Emmeline Hallam (7EH)

Alice Hull (8ECL)  
Marta Jani (9JWR)  
Emmie Jennings (7JJC)  
Sam Jones (8LHR)  
Pheobe Knight (7EMC)  
Eliza Lombos (7THU)  
Charlotte Parkinson (7KPR)

Evie Potter (12YH)  
Lily Quantrell (7KPR)  
Alexander Simpson (7KPR)  
Hannah Underhill (8ECL)  
William Venn (8REC)  
Hannah Wood (7EH)  
Lillie Potter (9JWR)



**I've thoroughly enjoyed reading all the book reviews, the top 5 will receive a gold book token to be used in our school book machine:**

Jasmine Gibbin (7TWR)  
Marta Jani (9JWR)  
Charlotte Parkinson (7KPR)  
Lily Quantrell (7KPR)  
William Venn (8REC)

## The 1000 Year Old Boy by Ross Welford

Reviewed by Charlotte Parkinson 7KPR

I like books that are different and unique and this book was certainly that. Most books that deal with immortality seem to focus on people who want to live forever, however, the main character in this book wants to stop.

The front cover has many different tones of blue but there are occasional splashes of orange and reds, shown on the main character's top and a house on fire, which is really striking and catches your attention.

The book is about a boy called Alfie, who has lived for 1000 years, but wants to be able to grow up like a normal boy, instead of seeing his friends grow up around him, whilst he remains visibly 11 years old.

I really enjoyed this book and got excited to read it whenever I had the chance. It had many plot twists, which kept me interested, and it was often humorous but also a bit sad sometimes. It was written in first person, switching between two characters every few chapters, and each character had a different font.

I would recommend this book to people who like funny adventure books. If you enjoy it, I would also recommend another book by the same author, “Time Travelling with a Hamster.”



## Dreaming the Bear by Mimi Thebo

Reviewed by Jasmine Gibbin 7TWR

The main characters of this book are Darcy, a girl who suffers from pneumonia, and a wounded bear.

Darcy and her family live in snowy Yellowstone National Park – one day she goes climbing (though the doctors advised her not to get too tired or wet) and finds a cave. She does not know that inside the cave lives a bear, a big grizzly bear. But the bear doesn't hurt her; she actually sleeps alongside her. Darcy starts feeding the bear every day, without her family knowing. All the while, Darcy and the bear create a deep bond.

This is a brilliant book written from the perspective of Darcy – it is beautifully written with a sad and surprising ending. I think this is a great book for those who love animals and nature. I couldn't put the book down!

Reviewed by Lily Quantrell 7KPR

This book is about a girl who moved to the Yellowstone National Park for her dad's work. Shortly after, she got pneumonia. The doctor told her that she needed to take a walk every day. One day she stumbled across a cliff. Darcy decided to climb. She got to the top and saw a bear...!

I would recommend this book to someone who likes adventure because of its many dangerous and adventure-like moments.

I really liked this book and I learnt so many new words, such as how to spell "pneumonia".

## The Rise of Wolves by Kerr Thomson

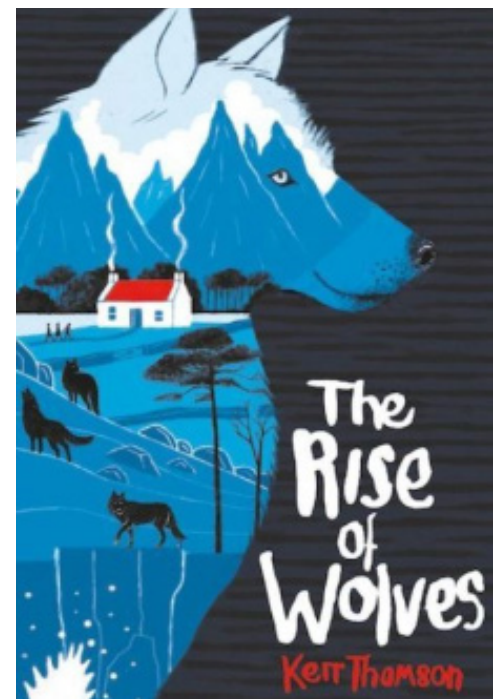
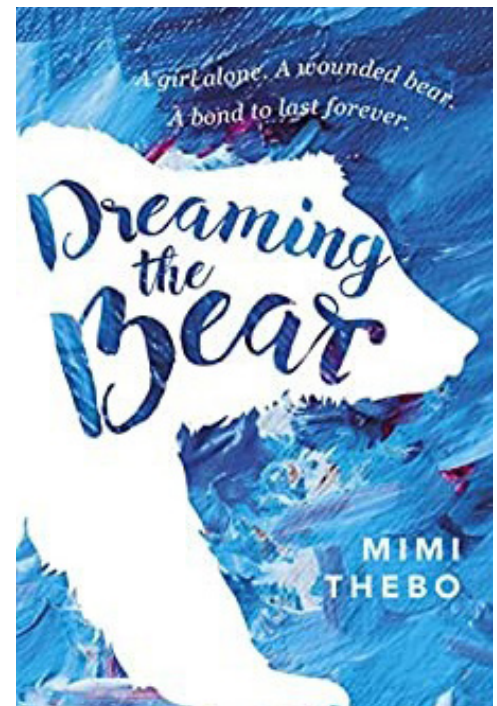
Reviewed by William Venn 8REC

"You have to get out of here." Why had he been told there were no wolves on the island when he keeps having countless encounters with them? Why was the mysterious animal sanctuary closing down and why are there machines being put on the barrens? There is only one way to figure this all out. A leap.

I loved this book! It is really moving and paints clear pictures in your head. It turns things that people fear into the most magical aspects of life on the isolated island of Nin. In the book, there is a distinct sense of mystery. Mysteries that are yet to be solved. Mysteries that still remain mysteries.

This book (if I hadn't had it as a mystery parcel) I would have probably skipped over in a bookshop/library, because the title would not appeal to me as much. When I started reading on day one I was not sure whether or not I would finish it. But by the end of day one I couldn't wait to continue! And by the end of day two I wanted more!

If anyone is looking for something to read over the holidays, I highly recommend this book. (I read it over the course of two days!)



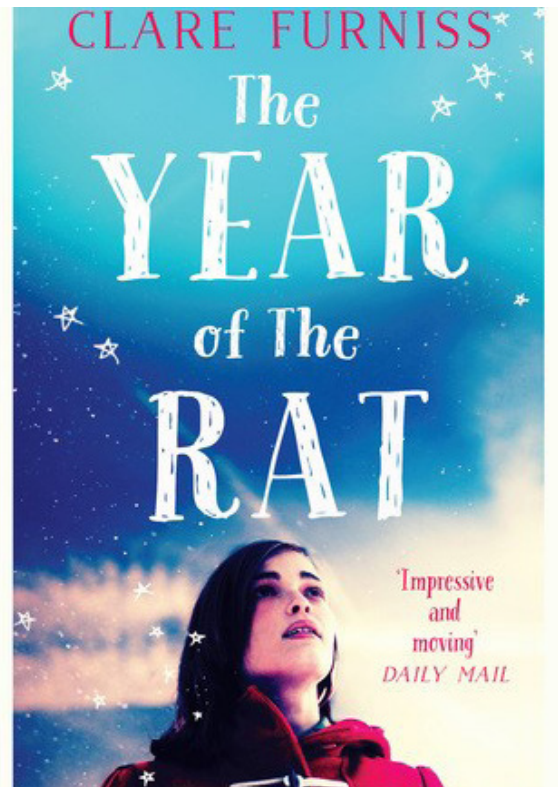
# The Year of the Rat by Clare Furniss

Reviewed by Marta Jani 9JWR

This book is about a girl called Pearl dealing with the death of her mother, and the issues that stem from this, such as the resentment she feels towards her baby sister and the breakdown of her relationship with her father and her best friend. Essentially, it's a novel about the complexity of grief and dealing with loss.

I really enjoyed this book, more than I expected to. Although Pearl is not very likeable, mainly due to the loss and depression she is experiencing, I felt very sympathetic towards her and her situation, and I felt all the characters were well written. The romance was well done as well; it didn't overpower the book, as I fell some romances do. I also loved the way it dealt with Pearl and her dad's relationship, especially as they are not biologically related.

For quite a short book, it has a lot of layers and deals with grief in a realistic and honest way. Overall, it's a great book.




We also asked members of staff to have a date with their favourite book, here are a couple of examples:

Ms Miller recommends *The Sparrow* "...an easy read that might challenge the way you think about things!"

Ms Hammond very much enjoyed a suggestion made on her Kindle with *A Man Called Ove*, she "...loved the character of the old man and the relationships he builds..."

## Blind Date with a Book

Blackstone Library - 7th-18th February 2022




**Ms Miller**  
+  
**The Sparrow**  
by  
**Mary Doria Russell**

I can't really remember how I discovered this book, but I remember first reading it when I was in Year 11. I was gripped from the beginning - the book focusses on the discovery of music in outer space and the decision to send a group from Earth to investigate who or what might be making the music. What unfolds is a tale of unlikely friendships, questions around faith and the consequences to other species.

One of the reasons I really love this book is that it is so far removed from what I usually read. Every time I read it I find it seems to resonate with political or current affairs in the world. I'd really recommend it as an easy read that might just challenge the way you think about things!

## Blind Date with a Book

Blackstone Library - 7th-18th February 2022



**Ms Hammond**  
+  
**A Man Called Ove**  
by  
**Fredrik Backman**

**How long have you loved this book?**  
I discovered it about 3 years ago. It popped up on my Kindle as a suggestion.

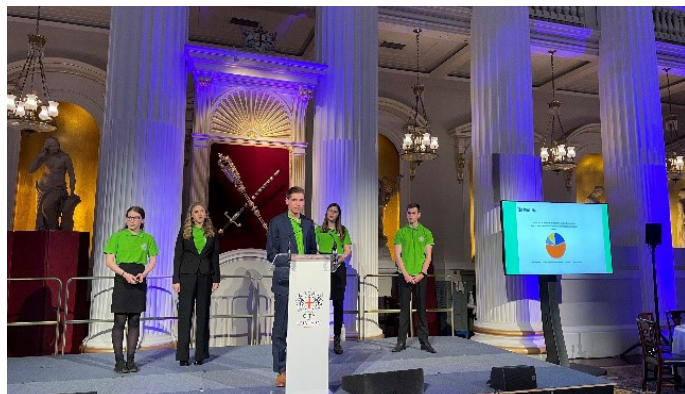
**What attracted you to it in the first place?**  
I think the title.

**What is it you love about this book?**  
I loved the character of the old man and the relationships he builds slowly. I loved it so much when I finished it I felt so bereft that I started it again. Reading it through the second time I could really concentrate on the characters rather than rushing through the story. (I'm terrible for reading too quickly just to get to the good bit in a story.)

# Competition Success

## Merchant Taylors' Livery Awards Final

Congratulations to the team who made it to the Livery Awards Final on 1st February at Mansion House, London, where we represented the Merchant Taylors' in a Dragon's Den-style environmental business idea competition. In the presence of the Lord Mayor of London and four judges, including *The Apprentice* judge Tim Campbell, the team absolutely nailed their presentation and wowed the audience with their carbon footprint counting app. Described as poised, funny and punchy, the team showed how well they worked together and how much their presentation skills had developed since the heats. We were sad to be one man down on the night due to the pesky pandemic, but this presented an opportunity to show real team work as notes and spreadsheets were speedily shared and explained. Bethany, Lorna, Saoirse, Alex, Robert and AJ should all be very proud of themselves – Wallingford School is truly proud of them.



## Year 12 Product Design Rotary Tournament

We are very proud of our Year 12 Product Design students who won the Rotary Technology Tournament. They emerged victorious out of 17 teams. Each team was given a design-and-make challenge to complete. The group worked really well as a team and were the best all round. They gained marks for their successful solution, but also for the way that they recorded their design process and their presentation skills. Very well done to Luke, Fraser, Oscar, Bethany & Rebecca.



## Merchant Taylors' Design Competition

Being a Merchant Taylor School has many advantages and we often report on the events and competitions which enriches the Sixth Form Provision. In March, Oscar was a finalist in the Design Competition and attended the event at the Merchant Taylors' Hall where he displayed and explained his design for a bus shelter. His work was awarded Highly Commended by the judges. Congratulations, Oscar. We look forward to seeing more of your work for your Product Design A Level.



## Crufts 2022

Congratulations to Rory, Year 13, for his success at Crufts, where he came 4th in the Dog Agility. We are very proud of him and his four legged friend, Sonic!



## England Boxing National Junior Championships

Sky, Year 10, competed at the England Boxing National Junior Championships last weekend, and we were really pleased to hear that she is now a 3x National Champion (female under 66kg) - this is fantastic news, a big congratulations Sky!



# House Events - Terms 3 & 4

Mr Lyons, Head of the House System

I am proud of the fact that, at the time of reading this, we will have sent out students on a big Easter egg hunt, which is our 27th House event this year! We knew that, with restrictions lifting and life getting back to some normality, we wanted to ensure students could have fun and express themselves again outside of the classroom.

In Term 3 there was a diverse range of activities for students to choose from:

- Year 7-9 Boys Cross Country each week in lessons
- Read or Write a Short Story Day
- Chinese New Year Scavenger Hunt
- "Blind Date with a Book" for Valentine's Day
- Year 7-8 Debate Club
- The very popular annual Ninja Warrior competition

The quality of storytelling in "Read or Write a Short Story Day" was outstanding, as was the creative writing. And it's always great to see students test their physical ability in front of so many spectators; this year's Ninja Warrior was no exception, with Amelie Brett (Year 10 - Christie) taking this year's title.



In Term 4 there was little let up either. The first week was packed with pancake races, World Book Day challenges and an International Women's Day information hunt. A very successful Pi Day included some incredible bakes and a 107-decimal recitation of  $\pi$  by Morgan Ratcliffe (Year 9 – Christie)!!

As the term comes to a close we have had a brilliant Science Week, with the theme "Growth", with loads taking part and learning more about the subject. We'll be finishing with our choctastic Easter Egg Hunt!

It has been a fantastic two terms, and I'm so delighted to see students going out of their comfort zones, expressing their own abilities and having smiles back on their faces. I am sure the sun being out has helped - long may it continue!

# Points and Prizes

This year the House points have really grown in currency. We have a House point ladder that shows how many points a student needs to obtain in order to achieve that award.

At the time of writing we have 247 students on their Bronze award, 407 on Silver, 232 achieving Gold and an incredible 59 students gaining over 150 points to achieve the Platinum award! These awards are given out virtually on their personal Satchel account and also a badge in person during assembly.

This term, the points are turned into raffle tickets in the last week, with a chance to win Easter egg prizes!

## Top Performing Students in Terms 3 & 4:

### Term 3

Year 7	Lily Quantrell (Matilda)	53
Year 8	Malakai Stow (Bigg)	82
Year 9	Adam O'Connor (Christie)	78
Year 10	Sophie Partis (Matilda)	48
Year 11	Robert Higham (Blackstone)	36

### Term 4

Year 7	Jasmine Gibbin (Matilda)	79
Year 8	Malee Makoka (Christie)	64
Year 9	Chiana Cleak (Christie)	53
Year 10	Freddie Wakefield (Matilda)	22
Year 11	Katie Garwood (Blackstone)	22



# BIGG

Miss J Ward, House Leader of Bigg

This term got off to a flying start, with pancake races, International Women's Day, Pi Day, and Science Week! While Bigg House isn't the top of the House Points leader board, we still have plenty of time to pull it back. Huge congratulations to Bigg House students who are currently on their Platinum award. They have achieved 150 house points so far this year!

They are: Joseph Rhodes, Grace Smyth, Ursula O'Brien, Edward Wilcox, Amber Mackenzie, Alyssa Rawson, Ellie Mae Cook, Evie Garner, and Joseph Sibley. Well done to the top scorers this term: Edward Wilcox (Y7), Amber Mackenzie and Sophie Eagling (Y8), Lillie Potter (Y9), Olly Hunt (Y10), Rachael Lidbetter (Y11), Finbar Wilson (Y12), and Cadence Moulton (Y13).

# BLACKSTONE

Miss C Sutton, House Leader of Blackstone

This term feels like we have properly got back in to the swing of all the extra-curricular activities, which are the parts of school students often remember the most. It's been nice to see so many students get involved with a variety of events, from World Book Day to Science Week. A highlight for me was watching students chaotically run up and down the tennis courts attempting to flip pancakes on a rather soggy day – very amusing for a Tuesday morning! Sadly, Blackstone were not victorious, however we have been making great achievements elsewhere. There are now five Blackstone students on their Platinum badge and at the start of March loads of Blackstone students were involved in the Maths Challenge. We also had three Blackstone students find all 18 items in the Science Week scavenger hunt. I very much enjoyed looking through their photos of all the science-y items! A massive well done to everyone who took part in a house event this term - I look forward to the events to come this summer.

# CHRISTIE

Miss J Persse, House Leader of Christie

Wow! What a fantastic term we've had, filled with a huge number of house events. I want to say an enormous well done to you all for your fantastic dedication and embracing the Christie house spirit!

From the fantastic flipping skills during the pancake race, brave students taking on the Ninja Warrior course, to making discoveries during Science Week and the Pi Day baking creations – not to mention Morgan's amazing ability to recite 107 digits of pi! – it has been brilliant to see so many of you getting involved with the huge variety of house events.

This term has really shown how fantastic every member of Christie House is. All your hard work during house events, lessons, extracurricular activities and your contribution to the wider community has been rewarded with a huge number of you achieving Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum house point badges.

I am very proud of every member of Christie and everything you have achieved over the last two terms. Keep up the amazing efforts. I wish you all a wonderful and restful Easter break and I look forward to seeing you all next term!

# MATILDA

Miss E Hearn, House Leader of Matilda

What a fantastic term we have had, currently in top place for house points showing that all your hard work is paying off. As I write this we have 14 students on Platinum which is over 150 house points!! 57 Gold, 107 on Silver and 54 on Bronze which is just brilliant! A special mention to Renee Chan and Jasmine Gibbin for being on 200+ house points.

We have also had several house events this term and it has been amazing to see so many of you get involved in the Pancake Day race, Science Week, Pi Day, and Ninja Warrior to name a few. Congratulations to Evie Potter on her success on Pi Day, creating some lovely pi hot cross buns and being able to recite 50 digits of pi. I would also like to say well done to Tegan Allum, Issy MacDougall, Ollie MacDougall, Eve Hannigan, Cara Peet and Alfie Gallagher for representing Matilda House in the final of Ninja Warrior.

I am super proud of each and every one of you, keep up the hard work into the summer term and that House Cup will be ours. Have a lovely and well deserved Easter break.

# 25th World Scout Jamboree in South Korea, 2023

We were really pleased to hear that five of our students have been selected to attend the 25th World Scout Jamboree in South Korea next summer! They are: Jess (Year 10), Abigail (Year 10), Suzanna (Year 9), Joey (Year 9), and Sid (Year 9).



They will help to raise £160,000 as a group over the next year and a half. This will cover the trip, training camps, and equipment, as well as contributing towards a solidarity fund which enables Scouts from developing countries to attend.

This is a huge achievement – only 36 scouts were selected out of over 170 applicants across the county.

We look forward to hearing more about their fundraising activities very soon!!

*"We are the scouts going to the World Scout Jamboree!"*

*Around a month ago we were selected to go to the World Scout Jamboree in South Korea for Oxfordshire. This a phenomenal experience and we are all incredibly excited to go in August 2023.*

*If we want to go we will need to raise four thousand pounds each. In order to reach this huge goal we've been fundraising at Cake sales and local pantomimes, and we've got more planned.*

*We're thrilled to get this once in a life time experience and we're incredibly grateful for the support we've got so far and we are so glad to have such a lovely community supporting us and we hope we can give back to it."*

- Sid Preston, Year 9



## Island Farm Donkey Sanctuary Easter Egg Trail



**Join us and all the donkeys on Good Friday and Easter Sunday**

1 Hunt between 11:00-12:30  
2 Hunts between 13:00-15:30  
Children must be accompanied by an adult

There are a limited number of spaces so pre-booking is advised, cost £3 per child per hunt with a chocolate prize and all proceeds go to the donkeys. Please contact Michelle on 01491 833938 or [mail@donkeyrescue.org.uk](mailto:mail@donkeyrescue.org.uk)







**Wallingford**  
Town Council



**Town Hall**

June 2nd, 3rd, & 4th Time: 10:30-15:00

70 Years of Wallingford

David Beasley's collection of photographs

**Corn Exchange**

Friday 3rd June 14:30-16:15 & 19:30-21:00

"Elizabeth A Portrait in Parts"

Tickets from the Corn Exchange or on-line

**Wallingford Sports Park**

Friday 3rd June check their website

"A Day of Sports"



## Queens Platinum Jubilee Events in Wallingford

Thursday 2nd June to Sunday 5th June 2022

**Castle Gardens**

Sunday 5th June 11:30—15:30

"Picnic in the Castle Gardens"

Bring your own picnic, blanket, seating and a big smile



Enjoy the live music, donkeys, and children's crafts

Children's Fancy Dress optional, let's have some fun together.....



**Riverside**

Sunday 5th June 21:00 with Fireworks at 22:00

Finale for the weekend at the Riverside

with a lighted flotilla & fireworks



**Look out**  
for the Queens Corgi's  
around Wallingford





**EASTER & SPRING FAYRE**  
16TH APRIL 2022  
10AM - 4PM

Adults £2 on the Door  
Children under 12 go free

**Easter Egg Hunt  
Bouncy Castles!  
Easter Olympics  
Games/ Races  
Popcorn, Candyfloss,  
REFRESHMENT STANDS  
STALLS TO BE  
ANNOUNCED SOON**



**CHILTON VILLAGE HALL**  
Didcot OX11 0SR

# Easter & Spring Fayre 2022

16th April 10AM - 4PM Chilton Village hall

We were contacted by [Oxfordshire Wildlife Rescue](#), who are running an Easter & Spring Fayre over the Easter weekend and would appreciate your support.

They are a young charity located in Blewbury, South Oxfordshire, and they're aiming to raise awareness of the issues facing UK wildlife as well as raising funds for the care of orphaned and injured wildlife.

*"This year, we are holding our own Easter fayre to raise money for our wildlife hospital."*

*Our aim is to provide a fun-filled day for both children and adults alike, hosting a whole range of fun activities, stalls and we have invited some top local functions to come along and join us.*

*If you wish to come and join us, tickets will be on sale at the doors £2 per adult and children under the age of 12 go free.*

*If you wish to get in touch regarding having a stall at the event. Please email us at [Oxfordshirewildliferescue@gmail.com](mailto:Oxfordshirewildliferescue@gmail.com) and we will send you an event application form."*

**Happy Easter - have a lovely break!**

## Safeguarding Information

Please be aware that, if you have a concern relating to a child, there are various methods of communicating that concern:

- In person with any member of staff at the school
- Through the Get Help button in the top right corner of the school website

If the concern is out of school hours then there are different agencies that we would also encourage you to use:

- Police non-emergency – 101
- Police/Fire/Ambulance emergency – 999
- Childline – 0800 1111
- MASH safeguarding team – 0345 050 7666

If there are any queries separate to this then please do not hesitate to contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead Mr Keeling on [keelingj@wallignfordschool.com](mailto:keelingj@wallignfordschool.com)