

Wallingford School Newsletter

Summer Edition - July 2025



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Headteacher's Message

It's been a busy year in the life of Wallingford School – but then it is always a busy year. As a school community we thrive on the energy and the buzz, the participation and the competition, the hard work and the creativity, the new learning and the knowledge gained – it all adds to the exciting, stimulating mix that is life in a busy secondary school.

Everyone will have their memories from 2024/25. It might be a great test score or a piece of coursework or a project; it might be a part in a production or concert or a try or a goal in a fixture; it might be a trip or visit – and there have been plenty of those; or it might be a House event, scoring points, having fun and being part of something.

We have of course had some difficult times as a school community this year and we have stuck together and supported each other, remembering well and never forgetting and all of that has been important and moving.

And on some hot, dusty days in July we come to the end of the cycle of another academic year with the announcement of the final House standings in the whole school assembly, we wave the buses off and we all go away for a well-deserved break. Have a great summer holiday Wallingford School.

- Mr Marston, Headteacher





Looking Forward with

After delivering nerve-wracking hustings speeches in front of our year group, we were incredibly honoured to have been elected as this year's Head Students. Thank you to everyone who supported us with their votes.

We had a tense wait before the results were announced, but we kicked off our new roles with a speech at our annual Founder's Evening. It was amazing to see all of our Year 11 and Year 13 students being recognised for their hard work and dedication after such a long and hot exam season. We felt truly privileged to speak on behalf of the student body for the first time, introducing ourselves and sharing our ideas in front of so many faces.

Now, we're both looking forward with excitement. One of our first events will be attending the Merchant Taylors' Company Doctors' Dinner in December, and we're already looking forward to representing the school on more occasions like this.

Before we set out our goals, we want to recognise and thank the fantastic student leadership team of 2024-25. Organising events like the Year 7 Freshers' Fair, supporting our school's net zero target, and launching the student newsletter has made a real impact. Their efforts helped build a stronger sense of community and ensured more students felt included in school life. We're really grateful for all that they've done and excited to continue their legacy in our own way.

As Head Students, not only is our role to represent Wallingford School at events, but also help shape a more positive and inclusive learning environment by listening to students and working closely with staff. Together with the wider student leadership team, we've chosen three key focus areas this year: safety, community, and the environment.



th Excitement...

Safety means making sure every student feels physically and mentally secure, in and out of school. One key project we're hoping to introduce is regular first aid education during PSHE lessons. These are practical, life-saving skills that every student should have the chance to learn.

Community is about making sure everyone feels they belong. We'd love to see more inclusive events, better recognition of student achievements beyond the academic, and even something like a Wallingford students supercurriculars showcase. We also hope to continue the success of the Freshers' Fair and are looking into a student feedback platform where ideas and concerns can be shared to help all students feel heard and valued.

The environment is something we all have a responsibility to protect. We're starting small with a renewed focus on recycling, clear bin signage, and waste education. Looking ahead, we'd love to explore ideas like book swaps, zero-waste competitions, or even creating more green spaces around the school.

Our aim is to help Wallingford School become an even better place to learn - a school where students feel supported and involved in the greatest capacity possible. We know we can't solve everything, but we're determined to make meaningful changes wherever we can with honesty, collaboration, and an earnest drive to make a difference.

- Wilfrid Venners and Orlagh Markey, Head Students

Spotlight Dance Show Shines Bright!



The energy was electric, the audience was full, and the talent on display was unforgettable—this year's Spotlight Dance Show 2025 was a true celebration of creativity, dedication, and performance excellence.

Over 55 students from across the school took to the stage to showcase a wide variety of dance styles and pieces, highlighting both individual talent and the power of teamwork. From our youngest dancers to our GCSE performers and 6th formers, each and every student brought something special to the show.



The Junior Dance Club delighted the crowd with two vibrant routines— “Texas Hold ‘Em” and a moving performance of “Defying Gravity”, both bursting with energy and charm. The Senior Dance Club delivered a stunning piece to “Forever Young”, capturing the audience with their grace and maturity.

GCSE Dance students impressed with a diverse range of performances. They presented their set study, as well as a powerful and emotive contact-based piece inspired by ‘Within Her Eyes’, developed during a professional workshop earlier this term. Their



solo choreography projects demonstrated originality, technical skill, and deep personal expression.

What truly made the evening special was the overwhelming support from the school community. With a full house and a vibrant atmosphere, it was clear that Spotlight 2025 was not just a show, but a celebration of hard work and artistic achievement.

Mrs Clarke, who directed and coordinated the show, shared her pride:

“I’m incredibly proud of all the students involved. Their commitment, creativity, and courage on stage were inspirational. The many hours of rehearsal and preparation truly paid off, and it was wonderful to see the joy and confidence dancing brought to each performer.”

Thank you to everyone who came out to support the dancers, and huge congratulations to all the performers who made this year’s Spotlight Show one to remember!





WS Alumni: A Launchpad to Success

My name is Max, and I am a former Wallingford School student. I enjoyed five years at the school from 2012-17 and have many fond and funny memories of my time there. It's wild to think of the nearly eight years it's been since I bid farewell to the school that gave me such a strong foundation in my life and career. In this, I will tell you a little about what I've been up to in the intervening years - the path I've taken since leaving, and how I ended up in a job I never anticipated: working for a Reading-based homelessness charity, Launchpad.

After finishing my GCSEs in 2017, I was sad to leave Wallingford School but headed to Henley College due to the broader range of courses available. There, I studied Politics, English, and Religious Studies. Two years later I found myself accepted into the University of Bristol to study Social Policy.

In 2020, I began my studies and found that, despite the obstacles that COVID presented to university life, I loved life in Bristol and enjoyed the course I was studying. Bristol is an amazing city full of interesting people, brilliant art, and a great music scene - I felt excited and lucky to get to live there. During my course, I explored a wide range of topics, from the causes of poverty and inequality, to theories and strategies for building affordable, sustainable cities, to evaluating the cost and effectiveness of different



Max with Mr Ford



Max performing in Hairspray, December 2016

healthcare systems and social safety nets. It sparked a real passion for helping people and finding practical ways to improve lives.

After graduating, I had a few frustrating months of job hunting before landing an interview at Launchpad, a brilliant Reading-based charity working to prevent homelessness. When I got the offer, I jumped at the chance to put what I'd learned into action and make a difference locally.

I've now been there just under a year and, while the cost-of-living crisis has made things tougher - more demand for our services, but fewer donations - it's been a rewarding and energising role. I've loved getting stuck into events, working with businesses, and connecting with community groups and schools...which led me to reaching out Wallingford School for the first time since leaving, and to writing this piece.

I am grateful to Wallingford School and its teachers for giving me a great education, lots of good memories, and the confidence to go into the workplace and succeed.

- Max Godwin-Suttie, Class of 2017



Max with Miss Lovett

From Fun Band to Bigg Band...



When I first moved to the area (2000), I remember popping along to the carnival with my children, and I heard music coming from the Town Hall. I sat and listened to the School Band (called Fun Band at the time) and I was so impressed with how many students played instruments and how amazing they sounded. Little did I know 11 years later I'd be leading my first Carnival performance of Fun Band!

Nowadays we are on a stage in the Kinecroft and we open the Carnival, with Bigg Band being very much part of the Wallingford Carnival.

Being involved in the community is very important to Wallingford School, and the Music department are hugely involved

through the year. We have had students performing on the 'Newbie' stages at Bunkfest and we have lots of ex-students and current students delivering the sound production for various stages of Bunkfest.



We have opened the Car Rally for last 8 years and we have performed at other historical events, such as the Jubilee Celebrations in the Castle Gardens (in 2012 and 2022) and D-Day celebrations in the town centre (in 2024).

We have had donations to Bigg Band from many of these events and from the Town Council and the Municipal Charities Trust in Wallingford. This has helped us buy music, t-shirts and hoodies for the Bigg Band Members.

Rehearsing Bigg Band every Wednesday is a highlight of my week; making music together is so important and I am very fortunate to have such fabulous students who enjoy it as much as me!



- Ms Hammond, Head of Music

Sponsored Walk in Pictures...







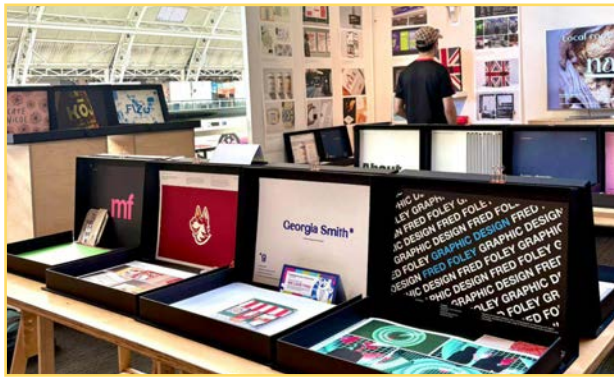
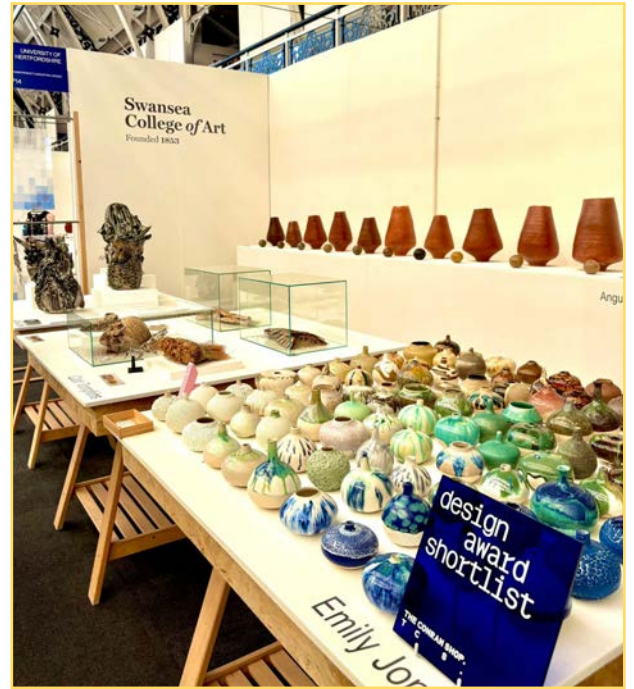
Celebrating Talent at the New Designers Exhibition

Last week, we visited the New Designers Exhibition with our Year 12 Product Designers. Oliver Baskeyfield and Daisy Coleman have written about their experiences:

“The New Designers Exhibition is an annual showcase that celebrates emerging talent from the UK’s top design courses, providing a place for recent graduates to present their work to industry professionals and the public. Held in London, the exhibition includes a range of work such as product design, fashion, illustration, textiles, and digital design, highlighting innovation and creativity. As a product design and textile student, the exhibition was really beneficial for me as I was able to explore possible university courses such as those available at Liverpool University, see the work they had created, as well as gain possible ideas for my project and how to present my work. I am currently looking at Graphic Design courses so it was great to see what I could produce in the future.” - **Daisy**

“I found this event to be inspiring and it showed me a lot of options I didn’t know existed. I spent the majority of my time looking into mixed media options that showcased a lot of hands-on work. The technical drawings and other arts interested me the most. Nottingham Trent University had more to do with this as there was also a lot of computer design and AI. I did find the other graphical and product design areas in the main part of the building to still be useful, as it opened me up to other options I could still consider. Eventually I would like to apply for an art course at university.” - **Oli**

- Miss Robinson, Teacher of Design Technology





Shooting for Gold!



The 60th Anniversary of The Diana Shoot at Harlequins Archery Club

The Diana shoot held at Harlequins Archery Club this year was a highly successful and inspiring event, showcasing the exceptional talent and dedication of our archers. The competition provided a valuable platform for participants to demonstrate their precision, focus, and sportsmanship.

We are proud to highlight the outstanding achievements of three of our students: Joel, Jack, and Joseph. All three competitors performed remarkably well, each earning a gold medal in their respective categories. Joel and Jack, both in Year 8, demonstrated impressive skill and consistency, while Joseph, in Year 9, showcased advanced technique and determination.

Their success at this event not only reflects their individual commitment to excellence but also highlights the strength of our training program at school and their respective archery clubs. Their accomplishments serve as an inspiration to all members and aspiring archers within the community.

Overall, the 60th Anniversary Diana shoot was a memorable occasion that fostered camaraderie, competitive spirit, and a celebration of archery excellence.

Wallingford School Archery Team Excels at the School Archery Championships



The Wallingford School Archery Team participated enthusiastically in the School Archery Championships held on Wednesday, 9th July 2025. The event was a fantastic showcase of skill, teamwork, and sportsmanship, with our students demonstrating their dedication and passion for the sport.

Throughout the competition, the team exemplified outstanding team spirit, supporting one another and fostering a positive environment that emphasised

enjoyment and camaraderie. The event also provided an excellent opportunity for students to make new friends and connect with fellow archers from other schools.

Our archers achieved remarkable success, securing a total of 4 gold medals, 3 silver medals, 2 bronze medals and a team silver. These impressive results highlight the talent, hard work, and determination of our students, as well as the high standards of training provided by our coaching staff.

The team's performance at the Championships has been a source of pride for Wallingford School, inspiring continued enthusiasm for archery and demonstrating the potential of our young athletes. We congratulate all participants on their efforts and achievements.

Join Wallingford School Archery Club!

Discover the exciting world of archery with our dedicated and highly qualified coach, PE Teacher Mr. Roberts. Open to all students from Year 7 to Sixth Form, our club offers a fantastic opportunity to develop your skills, build confidence, and have fun!

Training Details:

When: Wednesdays after school

Time: 3:05 PM to 4:30 PM

Where: School Sports Hall / Archery Range



All equipment is provided, so you can start shooting right away. Students are also welcome to bring their own gear if they prefer.

Whether you're a beginner or an experienced archer, our supportive environment and expert coaching will help you improve and enjoy the sport.

Come along and aim for success!

For more information, please contact the PE department or speak directly with Mr. Roberts.



Maths Challenge

367 Wallingford school students took part in UK Maths Trust (UKMT) maths challenges this year, with plenty of success. The challenges are designed to make students think and use mathematical reasoning in challenging questions. Across the Junior, Intermediate and Senior Mathematical Challenges, our students were awarded 46 gold certificates, 64 silver certificates and 139 bronze certificates, which is a fantastic achievement.

Junior

For Year 7 and some of Year 8, this was their first experience of UKMT maths challenges and they certainly rose to the challenge achieving 19 gold, 25 silver and 54 bronze certificates. Henry Young, Maria Plochocka, Eloise Wager, Lisa Delabie, Connor Knight, Sam Baker, Ben Capo-Bianco, Lizzie Sandland, Alex Dudley, Aidan Lai and Jack Quedley all got through to the Junior Kangaroo. For the first time this year, the Kangaroo participants were awarded bronze, silver and gold certificates with our students achieving 3 bronze, 5 silver and 1 gold certificate on the harder second round.

Intermediate

No INSET day in January allowed more of our Year 9, 10 and 11 students to take part in the Intermediate challenge. They achieved 18 gold, 25 silver and 61 bronze certificates. Daniele Massera, Keizo Somarakis, Caleb Ng, Joseph Rhodes, Raihan Horvat, Annabel Flynn, Joshua Skeels, Jessie Clayton, Grace Smyth, Douglas Blake and Sophia Bishop qualified for the Pink and Grey Kangaroos, achieving 2 bronze, 5 silver and 1 gold certificate. Callum Reynolds qualified for the Olympiad and received a merit. Jessie Clayton has been invited to the UKMT Summer School due to her high score in the Intermediate challenge. We hope she has an amazing time!



Senior

Whilst year 12 stepped up to senior, year 13 reached the end of their UKMT journey with many having sat a challenge every year for 7 years. They achieved 9 gold, 14 silver and 24 bronze certificates. Celyn Marriott, Charles Mortimer, Cedric Wong, Rohan Clark, Matthew Hindle, Douglas Watt, Genevieve Bispham, Jacob McGeehin and Charlie Herriot made it through to the Senior Kangaroo, with 2 merits being awarded.

Mathematical Olympiad for Girls

Seven Year 13s took part in the Mathematical Olympiad for Girls – a difficult 2.5 hour challenge. They were very successful with 7 certificates of merit.

There is a change to the format next year with the addition of the Mathematical Challenge for Girls, which will allow Year 12 students to take part.

Team

Four students from Years 8 and 9 went to Queen Anne's School to participate in the Team Maths Challenge. This consists of 4 rounds of mathematical challenges against other schools. The team did very well and, against stiff competition, came 5th out of 20 schools. Well done to Danica Serino, Daniele Massera, Ben Capo-Bianco and Hannah Wilcox who put in lots of effort to prepare and represented Wallingford School brilliantly on the day. We look forward to participating again next year.

Well done to all of those who took part in UKMT challenges this year and good luck to those participating next year!

- Miss Pratt, Teacher of Maths

Kew Gardens in Pictures...







A Look Back at Drama...



'Agatha Christie's Murder Mystery Weekend' – Drama Department

Early in the academic year, 21 Wallingford School students took to the stage at The Corn Exchange as part of Wallingford's Agatha Christie's Murder Mystery Weekend and performed two short murder mystery plays by Agatha Christie - 'Afternoon at the Seaside' and 'The Patient'. After performing many leads in the school musicals, Beatrice Marshall (Year 13 leaver) went behind the scenes to make her debut as a director.

Our students had the opportunity to perform in a professional theatre and were supported by our incredibly talented back stage crew - Cam Cole (Year 13 leaver), Edward Wilcox (Year 10) and Arthur Carlucci (Wallingford School leaver) - who took on the creative role of designing and executing the lighting, set and sound. The two contrasting Agatha Christie plays worked perfectly alongside each other offering moments of comedy genius, with the hen-pecked husband in 'Afternoon at the Seaside' to the more serious and darker storyline of 'The Patient', where a paralysed woman is given an ingenious device to communicate lifesaving information. Wallingford School is very proud of each and every student who contributed to the performance in what will be a memorable moment for all.



KS3 Drama Club Year 8 and Year 9 performance

The Drama department are thrilled to celebrate our Year 8 and 9 Drama club performance debut in our very own Drama studio. In June 2025, 8 students took to the stage and performed the National Theatre Connections play 'Kiss, Marry, Push off a Cliff' by Josh Azous, led by Miss Lovett.

Kiss, Marry, Push Off a Cliff is a sharp, funny and moving story about a group of teenagers on a camping trip to celebrate finishing school. But the trip takes an unexpected turn when long-buried tensions erupt and one friend is suddenly cast out. Over the course of one night and one storm, relationships are tested, truths are revealed, and nothing will ever be quite the same again.

This play challenged our students to explore complex themes of friendship, identity, and forgiveness. We'd like to extend a huge thank you to all students involved in this production who really rose to the occasion with their commitment and creativity. From the first rehearsal to the final performance, their hard work, imagination, and bravery made this play something truly special. We are so proud of you all.



- Ms Crossingham, Head of Drama



Performing with Lamda

Lamda exams give students the opportunity to develop their performing skills, through learning a speech by heart and performing it to an examiner. But preparing for Lamda exams can also work with other personal skills, such as building confidence and resilience. Students choose a speech and develop their interpretation of the character and situation through rehearsals and discussion, and they often develop positive relationships with other students in their Lamda classes, boosting team-building and other social skills.

Students enjoy working in smaller groups on largely practical activities. They often watch each other and give constructive feedback on other students' performances. The day of the Lamda exam can be a little nerve-wracking, but the examiners have always been very supportive and enthusiastic, and their comments in their exam reports are always very helpful.

- Jo, Lamda Teacher

"I found Lamda really fun. Lamda helps you feel more confident in speaking in large crowds. I love Jo as my Lamda teacher. She makes you feel comfortable and she gives you loads of tips while doing Lamda. I am definitely doing Lamda next year. You can also make loads of new and amazing friends." - **Emelia, Year 7**

"In my journey through Lamda I have learnt so much and met new people. Lamda has really helped me boost my confidence. It has made me passionate for acting and made me realise what I am capable of." - **Kate, Year 7**

"Lamda has really helped me increase my confidence in lessons. My Lamda teacher, Jo, has really helped me learn my lines and prepare me for my Lamda exam as much as she could. I have met really nice people from Lamda and I think they will be my friends for a long time." - **Maddie, Year 7**



"For the last 2 years I have really enjoyed Lamda and I think it is a great way to show how far you've progressed in drama. Going forward I think I will be a lot more confident and have better strategies for learning my lines and performing them. Thank you so much, Lamda team." - **Ivy, Year 8**

"Lamda has given me the opportunity to meet people in the school I would have otherwise never crossed paths with. Without it I would have never realised how much I love drama - and I definitely wouldn't have been choosing it for GCSE!" - **Eilidh, Year 9**

"I find Lamda fun because we do games and we get to express our personality. Lamda has helped me gain so much more confidence." - **Amelie, Year 9**

"I've only been doing Lamda for just under a year and I'm already 200% more confident than I was before!" - **Harry, Year 9**

"Lamda improves your memory for your brain. Before Lamda, I couldn't learn my lines for my life." - **Michael, Year 9**

"Lamda is always an unforgettable experience." - **Aiden, Year 9**

"Lamda is the gift that keeps on giving - from Year 7 I have participated in Lamda and I have gained confidence, and had a bucket load of fun! It's prepared me for learning lines next year in Drama and to make many new friends." - **Ava, Year 9**

"Lamda is a great experience to have and it's a safe place where all stress leaves the room or your head. It's also an amazing way to train your brain and learn lots more. The people are really friendly and overall it's an incredible environment which challenges and develops the brain." - **Sophie, Year 9**

An Unforgettable Evening at the Musicals



Our final concert of the year – *A Night of Stage and Screen* – was a spectacular celebration of all things theatrical, marking a triumphant end to another phenomenal year of music-making at Wallingford School.

Having already been wowed by the magic of the Christmas Concert and dazzled by a diverse programme at our Spring Concert, not to mention our full-scale school musical, the bar was high. But the Summer Concert rose to the occasion and then some, delivering a joyful, high-energy, and moving evening of music from the stage and screen.



From the golden age of musicals to modern-day blockbusters, the set list took us on a journey through time. Audiences were treated to nostalgic classics such as *Grease* and *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, before soaring into the contemporary worlds of *Legally Blonde* and *Beauty and the Beast*. A particularly memorable moment came courtesy of George and George, who bravely tackled the only school-appropriate song we could find from *The Book of Mormon* – a performance that had the audience both laughing and applauding in equal measure!



This concert was made even more special by its charitable focus. Proceeds from the evening went towards the school's sponsored walk charities, raising money for causes close to the school and wider community's hearts.

As ever, the concert was a true team effort: from our amazing student performers and backstage tech crews, to the staff who supported us with rehearsals, lighting, sound and logistics. It was a joy to see the musical talent and commitment of our students on full display.

- Miss Lovett, Teacher of Music

Grand Finale of Poetry by Heart



Earlier in the year we ran the Poetry by Heart competition, where every member of Key Stage 3 had to learn and recite a poem in front of their class. Winners from each class were selected for the year group finals and then a Key Stage final. We then submitted three entries to the national round of the competition. Jacob Reynolds and Hannah Wilcox were both highly commended for their entries and the judges commented on their fabulous deliveries. Lizzie Sandland was selected as a finalist – the judges were so impressed with her engaging performances!



We wanted to support Lizzie at the finale and so the winners of the Poetry by Heart in-house competition and the Performing Shakespeare competition were able to go to The Globe Theatre in London to watch the Grand Finale!

Lizzie and other students have written about their experiences:

Performing at The Globe is an experience I'll never forget. It was a privilege to be able to perform on such a historic stage in front of so many people. It has given me a lot of confidence and experience in public speaking that I'll be able to draw upon and use in later life. As well as this, it was a really fun day and it was wonderful to see so many young people and adults who loved the art of performing poetry. It was also so interesting to see the different interpretations and methods of performing poetry, especially when watching the Freestyle performances which were unique and showed me a whole different perspective towards performing poetry.

"The Globe was a great trip! To see how far poetry can go is amazing and the work they put into the poems is spectacular and a real treat to see live, especially seeing one of my own friends perform. The performances weren't just done by people in Key Stage 3, they had performances from people in Key Stages 2-5, freestyle performers, staff performers, and two special guests who told us a bit about themselves, then went on to perform some of their favourites and their own poems. This trip was full of funny, sad, serious, and spectacular poems which has taught me a lot about poems overall, as well as how to perform them."

- Emily Pool Year 8

"Going to The Globe Theatre for Poetry by Heart was honestly such a fun experience. I'd never been before, and it was so cool seeing it in real life. It was way bigger than I

expected and I wasn't expecting it to have an open roof but it made it look even more interesting. The people performing were super confident and dramatic, and it was fun seeing how into it they were. The whole day was amazing, and my favourite bit was watching the adults perform theirs, they were so funny and entertaining."

- Martha Ford Year 8

I found the trip very interesting, I really enjoyed seeing all the performances and that really motivated me into wanting to push myself for Shakespeare by Heart. Walking down the street to see that beautiful theatre really left me with an open mouth. It was super nice to have time to socialise with friends but also to see the beautiful structure of that old-fashioned theatre. It really brought Shakespeare to life and let me experience just for a few hours what it might have been like in those times.

- Isla DiMassa Year 8





Scholars Visit York



In March, our Year 8 Scholars spent three days in York visiting different sites to learn about the city's rich history, from its ancient heritage through to the 21st century. Highlights included a spooky night time ghost walk, a tour of York Minster, sitting in a Japanese bullet train at the Railway Museum, and strolling along a preserved Victorian museum (complete with replica sounds and smells!) at the York Castle Museum. The trip was also a great opportunity for the students to work as teams, as they were set various team challenges throughout the trip including trying to find 30 life-size cat statues hidden around the historic centre.

When they returned to school, they were tasked with working in small groups to produce posters answering tricky questions about history and how we study, preserve and understand it.

Special thanks to the staff who supported on the trip – Miss Elkington, Ms Blair-Gordon and Mrs Woodford.

- Ms Howorth-Walsh, Scholars Coordinator



Technology Good or Bad?

Hello! Today our group has created a poster to decide whether it is good or bad, our evidence? Straight from the National Railway Museum! Enjoy!

Technology is crucial to human progress, this is clearly seen in the National Railway Museum, there are countless technological advances and futuristic styles to show how far we have come, our transport has evolved so much recently it's hard to believe. Stephenson's Rocket was built in 1829; this train was able to reach a max speed of 30 mph. Now when we compare this to a newer technological advancement in trains, the mallard, built in 1938 hitting a recorded speed of around 126 mph! Now this is



progress!

Technology is not crucial to human progress, even though we have improved lots of equipment to make it easier to get around, however many people believe that non technological human achievements are far better and now I will explain why, I believe that technology has more problems than it's solving, one example of this is the unemployment rate going up, this is impacting the national railway museum as more parts of the trains are being designed by Technology such as AI and thus they are not as experimental and fun as before, they may reach the same speeds but you don't get the happiness from knowing people designed this for you to help our day to day lives.

In the National Railway Museum in York, we saw the Duchess is the tenth member of the Princess Coronation class. Built at Chesshire, England in 1938, Duchess joined her sisters as a se express passenger locomotives designed in the late 1930s. With streamlined body and metallic Art Deco stripes, this locomotive shaped to cut through air as sleekly as possible—reaching speeds of 110mph and above, while looking stylish and luxurious. This is clear evidence of key advancements in technology and how it has improved the lives of the common person not just the rich..



In conclusion we have decided that technology is pretty rad due to that: trains have improved so rapidly that any average joe can hop on and glide in supreme comfort at astounding speeds to their destination as easy as 123 when you can send whatever you want anywhere you want. If this is not crucial to living well, I don't know what is.

We think Technology Is Pretty Rad

Jack, Cian, Connor, Wil, Charlie, Kai

Scholar's poster by Ben C-B, Ewan B, Finn D and Hector T-F

"Much of what we know about history comes from records and artefacts about wealthy and powerful people. Why is this and why might it be an issue for historians?"

People could afford to have their lives documented and recorded. They were able to buy resources that lasted long enough for historians to look at and then learn about them. This is a problem as we then only know about the upper class and the poor and working classes.



For example: Rich Egyptians would often be buried with items that showed how they lead their life and what they did, often including hieroglyphics depicting activities and achievements. However, poor Egyptians were often buried with frugal items that don't tell us all that much about the lower classes.



Most stories we were told about during our stay in York tell us that the people back then were very superstitious. We do not know if these are completely true as the dead mentioned were often poor and therefore have little documentation or evidence of their existence at all. These "real" stories could be complete fiction and were made up to scare.



Prince William Hatfield, son of King Edward III and Isabella of York were both buried at York Minster. The lower classes would not have been able to be buried here since they didn't have the status. The aforementioned nobles are buried here because they were both rich and powerful. Historians know a large amount about them because they paid to have their lives documented and recorded.

However, the average person did not have enough money to have their lives recorded. This is a huge problem for historians because now we only know what the rich people's lives were like and not the average person's life.



Technology is crucial to human progress How far do you Agree?

one of the most crucial things made the transport, trade and the industrial revolution. It was the first time to anyone they which created machinery, which shows that the revolution is seen as the most important and also the



Batteries

The Battery was crucial to harness electricity and use it any time this led to the ability to power devices. The battery is used in phones, homes and storing electricity. The use of electricity and was used to make phones power trains, boats, and planes. Also this was paired with solar panels to make infinite renewable energy.



Conclusion

Technology is crucial to human progress without technological

Young Carers

Young Carers Champion Award

At the Founder's Day celebration evening, Ava was awarded with the Young Carers Champion Award. A young carer is a hidden superhero, who cares for others at home and often brings their worries to school with them. These incredible students work so hard to continue to achieve their potential, while fulfilling their caring roles at home. Ava is a proud young carer, who has taken on many personal challenges this year while sitting her GCSEs. She has spread awareness of the role of a young carer in her English speaking exam, and has shown enthusiasm in helping SEND students and other young carers in the future. Ava really is a young carers' champion who fully deserves this award!



Young Carers Picnic!

On Wednesday 9th July, young carers from Wallingford School, Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Primary and Crowmarsh Gifford Primary met for a picnic and some fun at the park. This “networking” is especially important for the young carers in Year 6 who will be joining Wallingford School in September.

Everyone had a lovely time in the sunshine playing, making friends and sharing cakes and sweets. Plans are under way for another get together in the Autumn term already!

Young Carers Round Table Event

Mrs Emmerson attended an event held by MP Olly Glover and representatives of Be Free Young Carers and MYTIME to better understand how to identify and support more young carers. The event was fantastic and has given Mrs Emmerson some ideas of how to help more wonderful young carers – watch this space!

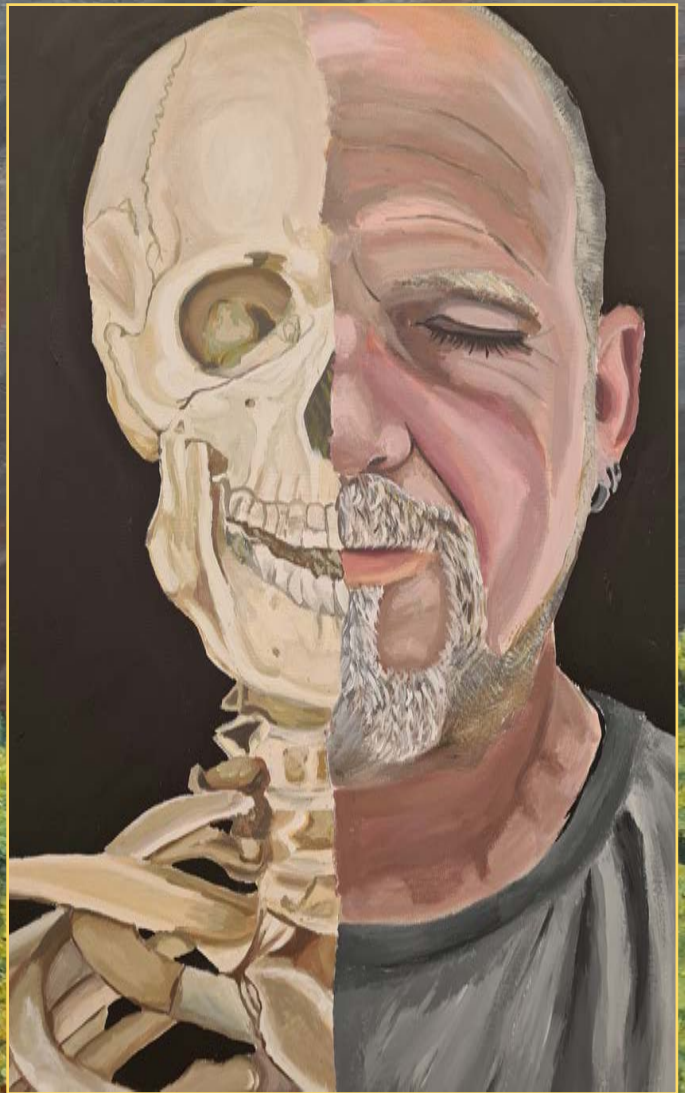
If you would like to find out more about support for young carers in Oxfordshire, head to the Be Free Young Carers website <https://befreeyc.org.uk/>

- Mrs Emmerson, Young Carers Lead

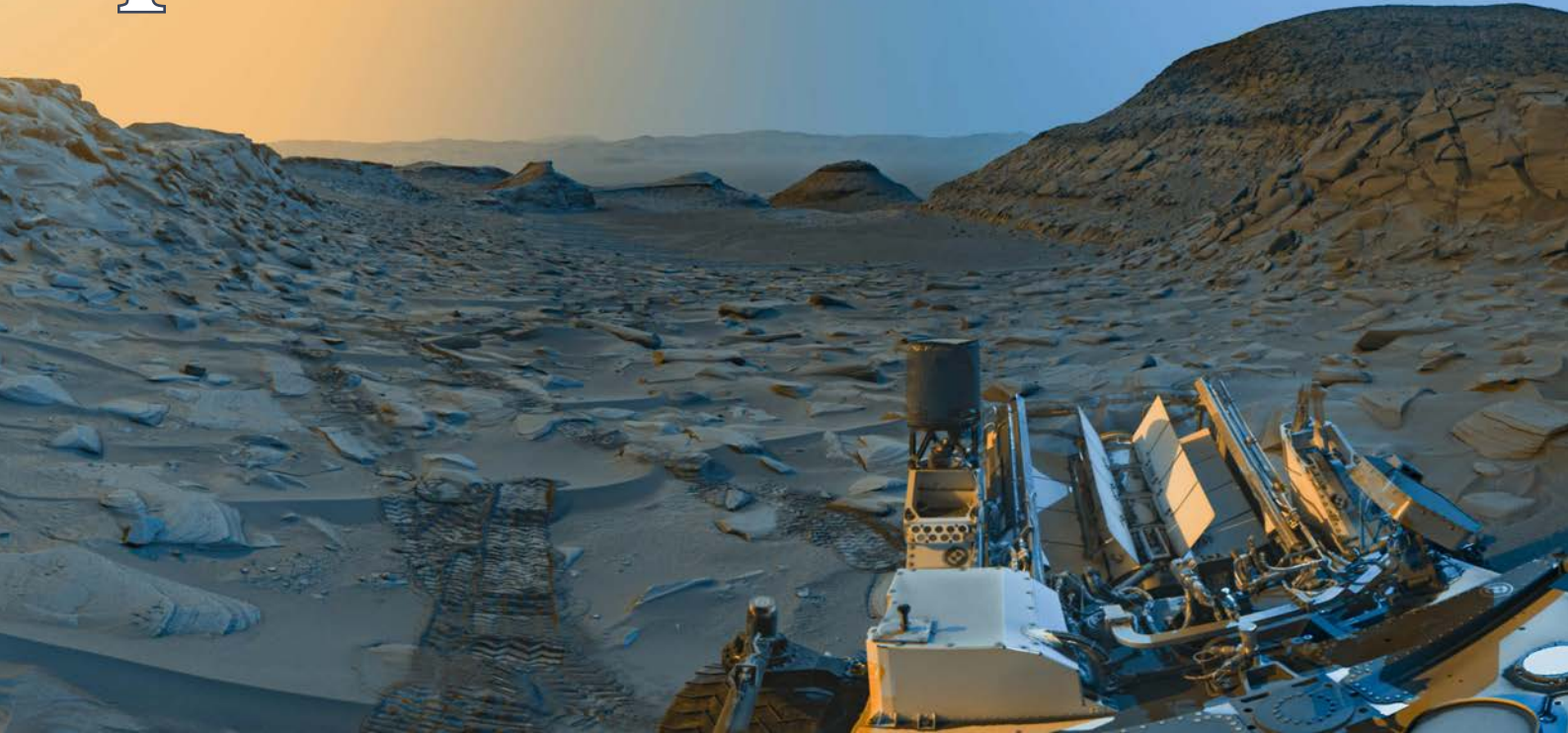


Art Exhibition in Pictures...





Year 7 Careers Talk: Space Store



On Friday 20th June, the Careers Department arranged a presentation from Steve at Space Store for our Year 7 students. Steve is a rocket scientist and has worked with companies from all around the world, including NASA. It was a very exciting and interactive event. Our students were informed about designing satellites and rockets and how these impact our day-to-day life. They asked many searching questions and also gave extremely intelligent replies in return. They were also given a list of careers relating to space, and Steve explained why some of the unexpected jobs on the list were relevant. Examples which students picked out were Event Planner, Psychologist, Social Media Expert, Civil Servant and Videographer.

The Space Store also offer Space Activity Days over the summer for 5-13 year olds. Anybody who is interested should look at www.spacestore.co/activitydays or email activitydays@spacestore.co.uk





Careers Advice and Online Information

Our Careers Adviser, Theresa Ward, is available throughout the academic year. She supports students one-to-one to discuss their ideas for the future. She has also helped students with applications for college or apprenticeships. She ensures that all students have information about School, College or Apprenticeship Open Events and vacancies. During the summer holidays, Mrs Ward will be available on Thursday 21st August and Friday 22nd August. To contact Mrs Ward please email her on wardt@wallingfordschool.com.

Online Careers information

Current Apprenticeship Vacancies - <https://www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk/>

A range of information for young people in Oxfordshire - <https://oxme.info/>

All students from Year 9 have access to an online careers platform. This can be accessed from any device, but only using the student's school email. There is information about careers and courses as well as personalised quizzes – <https://www.unifrog.org/sign-in>

- Mrs Ward, Careers Adviser

Summer in the Library: Murder, Mystery and More

With Wallingford's **Agatha Christie's Mystery Weekend** fast approaching September (12th-14th September), the library has embraced all things mysterious this term! Our summer display has featured a killer collection of chilling classics, cunning whodunnits, and blood-curdling thrillers – perfect reading for long summer days (and darker nights).

We've also launched our summer reading challenge, "**The Power of Six**". Pick up a challenge card from the library or find it on Satchel. There are plenty of rewards up for grabs in September, including house points, sweet treats and mystery prizes.

Happy reading—and keep your eyes peeled for clues...

Calling all young writers/artists

Wallingford Bookshop is running a **story-writing competition** to coincide with the weekend event. Entries can be either a short narrative or graphic novel/comic, but must fit on **one side of A4** with the creator's name, age and contact info on the back.

Mini mysteries – ages 5-7
Murderous middle-grade – ages 8-12
Teenage thrillers – ages 13-17

All submissions are due by 3pm on **14th September** and should be handed in directly to the bookshop. Winners will be announced in the bookshop's October newsletter – check their website for details and updates: www.wallingfordbookshop.co.uk



Transition Day: A Book to Begin With

3rd July was transition day for our Rising Year 7 students, and each of them received the gift of a book from our library and literacy team – a small token to kick-start their reading journey. Book boxes filled with exciting choices were available, and students had a chance to trade titles to find a perfect match. It was a fantastic way to connect, share recommendations, and build early bonds through reading. We hope it's the first of many books they'll enjoy at their new school!





Sporting Success!

Sensational Sevens: Sporting Success for our Year 7 Girls

We're kicking off our summer newsletter celebrating our amazing Year 7 girls' teams!

Starting with the theme of kicking, our Year 7 girls football team have been amazing all year! Ms Hedges took a 5-a-side group to Oxford City for the Football Festival. A host of strong teams were present at the tournament, with some excellent football being played throughout. Our Year 7s absolutely smashed it, not only winning the entire tournament but doing so without losing a single game! Ms Hedges dubbed the performances as, "one of the strongest Year 7 teams I've ever coached" – wow! Well done to everyone who took part!

Not only are our Year 7s handy at kicking footballs, they've also put in some superb performances in other sports. On the theme of hands, the Year 7 girls also managed an overall win in our Touch Rugby 7s tournament held at the Hithercroft Sports Park. They all played brilliantly, playing fantastic rugby and maintaining a positive attitude throughout the day.

Another highlight of their year came at the annual Tilsley Park Athletics Meet. Our Year 7 girls came third overall – only missing out on first by a mere 13 points! They achieved 6 individual podiums alongside this, making for another really successful day. We're already excited for next year to see what they can achieve then!

Well done to all of our Year 7 girls athletes – we're super proud of you all!



Top Performances at Tilsley Park

Now, this isn't all about our Year 7 girls' team – all of our talented students put on a display at the Tilsley Park Athletics Meet. We took 6 teams, comprising of 61 students from Years 7, 9 and 10! This included 32 individual event podiums and 5 team podiums – two 2nd places and three 3rd places. Some highlights included Anna's last-gasp victory in the 200m, Rocco's 1st and 2nd in the Discus and High Jump, Mika's double podium in the 300m and 800m, Jacob's dominant 1st in the Javelin, Nya's 1st and 2nd in the 200m and 100m, and George's 2nd in the 800m. Well done to everyone who came and took part – you did yourselves and the School proud!

Sports YAY

Our annual Sports Day took place this term. 4 houses going head-to-head, fighting to be crowned as Wallingford's finest. Matilda came into the competition brimming with confidence – could they retain their title?!

We kicked off the day with a debut event – Cross Country: 2 laps of the Bullcroft park, totalling 2000m. 348 students (yes, three hundred and forty eight) entered the inaugural event, aiming to become the first in their year group to be crowned champ. A massive well done to everyone who took part, and a huge congratulations to our new record holders – Hannah and Charlotte in our KS3 and KS4/5 girls categories, and Roman and Daniel in our KS3 and KS4/5 boys categories!



Our normal field events ran as smoothly as ever, with a huge amount of students getting stuck in! Another brand new event was Pickleball. 2 mixed pairs from each year group competed in an 8-team tournament, bidding to become the very first Wallingford School Pickleball champions. This event seemed to be a fan favourite, with Mr Dodson dubbing it “a massive success”. Blackstone stole the show here, winning in Years 8, 9 and 12! Well done to everyone who got involved!

At the end of the field events, it was Christie leading Matilda (our reigning champions) by just THREE points (and Blackstone, who have won it more than any other House, only another three behind them) – all to play for on the track!

We got off to a flying start with our 200m runners, and then followed that up with 800m and 400m. It was so great to see a whole range of students getting involved, securing those all important points for your Houses – and with 6 points separating 1st from 3rd, EVERY SINGLE POINT COUNTS. Our third and final new event was the 2x200m Mixed Relay. Teams could organise the order in whichever way they fancied, making the race super exciting! This was another event that Blackstone loved, winning the Year 8, 9, and 10 race. Matilda grabbed the victory in Year 7 and Year 12, leaving us hanging in the balance for the final standings.

Could Matilda come out as the champions again? Or would we see a different House claim victory this year?

After a brilliant day of sport and participation, the final standings were in...

4th place – Bigg
3rd place – Christie
2nd place – Blackstone
1st place – Matilda

Congratulations to everyone who took part, and a big well done to Matilda house for winning Sports Day once again!!

A highlight of the year here in PE, and we're already excited for next year!

Exam Congratulations

We'd also like to issue a HUGE congratulations to all our Year 11 and Year 13 students who have completed their GCSE and A-Level exams this term – well done and enjoy your summer off!

- Mr Ford, PE Technician



Residential in Pictures...





House Events



The House System has gone from strength to strength this year, with over 30 competitions held across a wide range of activities. While we've kept many of the student-favourite events, we also introduced four brand new challenges that truly made their mark.

Who could forget the Tiny Christmas Duck Search, where students scoured the school to find festive ducks and return them to our newly built house box? It sparked a buzz of excitement—so many students asked, “Have you seen a duck?” all week long! At Easter, the Fluffy Chick Search brought even more smiles. Students who returned three hidden chicks

earned a crème egg—and our sixth formers proved surprisingly skilled at this one!

We also teed off with our first-ever House Golf Competition at Hadden Hill. Sixty players took part in a Texas Scramble, showcasing incredible sportsmanship and some outstanding golf in a fantastic new addition to the calendar. More recently, the Staff Masked Singer brought the house down—literally! With singing unicorns and dancing gingerbread men performing to 500 students, the laughter and energy in the room captured the true spirit of the House System. The event also raised £320 for our bi-annual sponsored walk charity.





Sports Day remained a highlight, with its electric atmosphere and the exciting addition of a Pickleball tournament that proved to be a big hit. Congratulations once again to Matilda House for claiming the top spot—though it was a close call, as always! Special thanks to Harry and Luke for operating the drones and capturing the essence of our flagship event.

House points have been flying in all year, with a staggering 189,658 awarded so far. The final leaderboard standings—and whether Matilda can defend their title—will be revealed in the final assembly.

It's been a fantastic year of fun, friendly rivalry (Miss Robinson and Mrs Chamberlain) and not so friendly (Mr Bowen and Mr Hinchliffe), and community spirit. Thank you to everyone who took part, supported, and brought our House System to life!

- Mr Lyons, Head of House System

As you already know – AS YOU FULLY EXPECT – it has been another incredible six terms for BIGG.

The soldiers of BIGG have a common goal and that is to spread the MESSAGE of BIGG to all the unbelievers out there. We have our tendrils in many different communities. We are represented everywhere. From St George's Road to Wantage Road; Benson to Berinsfield; Cholsey to Crowmarsh. We speak many languages. We know many dances, taste many foods and can tell many stories. We understand many people because we are of all peoples. BIGG is everywhere. BIGG is like a mobile phone signal that won't let you down.



This has been a year of quizzing, remote control car racing, Valentine heart sending, pancake flipping, Remembrance displaying, Xmas tree decorating and the Masked Singer. It has been twelve months of the Big Draw, World Language learning, making sculpture from recycling, code breaking, tower toppling, Christmas door making and talent shows. And that's just what I can remember from the top of my head. Oh yeah, and making Pi Pies. How did I just remember that? Just how does the brain work?

We have won a lot of these events. However, I have been most impressed by how the Soldiers of Bigg have always just got involved in every way they can. We roll our sleeves up and GET INVOLVED. There are many heroes of BIGG and I'm really looking forward to celebrating them in our first assembly next term.

It's a shame that Blackstone have been cancelled. It's a shame that Crusty are still around. It's an even BIGGER shame that 'The Enemy' still echo in our thoughts too. By the time you read this, we'll know who has won the House competition for this academic year. We already know, don't we?

We ARE the way.

#BIGGISBEAUTIFUL #BIGGERISBETTER

- Mr Bowen, House Leader of Bigg

This has been a truly fantastic term for Blackstone. We have done marvellous things. I am particularly proud of our house for their astounding efforts throughout Sports Day. We saw some excellent competition and cheering – including a Mexican wave and lots of green decoration! We were very well acquainted with the glitter. I'm sure the cleaners love us! Our KS3 Bake-Off was also a success with some great participation.



Towards the end of our final week we have a paper plane flying competition, Weakest Link and Tug-of-War, so we are yet to know the scores, but it's exciting and nerve-wracking! We must overtake those yellows!

We have really come together this term. It has been a pleasure to watch and be a part of. What an exciting thing, to be head of this beautifully green house! Keep up the fantastic work team!!!!

Let's march into September with masses of pride after a well-earned break.

- Miss Robinson, House Leader of Blackstone

Christie House: A Year of Determination, Teamwork & Triumph

What a **phenomenal** year it's been for **Christie House**—a true testament to grit, creativity, and unstoppable spirit!

From the very start, our students set the tone for excellence. **Winning both Bake-Offs** was just the beginning—first with Ellen's unforgettable **animal-themed masterpiece**, which left everyone in awe, and then with Aoife and her team's brilliant **retro Pac-Man display** that had the whole school buzzing with nostalgia and admiration.



Our triumphs weren't just in the kitchen. Christie showed serious skill on the field too, taking **1st place in Golf**, thanks to precision, focus, and team effort. The talented students of **8CWR also powered their way to victory in the Interform Football**, showing real tenacity and teamwork.

Sports Day brought yet another moment of pride. **Christie came 3rd overall**, but the result only tells half the story. Every student gave their all, showing true grit, flair, and resilience in every event. And let's not forget the epic performance by our **Christie teachers, who absolutely smashed the staff relay**—a perfect example of Christie excellence across the board!

This term has been nothing short of extraordinary. With such determination, creativity, and camaraderie, **Christie House has made its mark**. And if this year is anything to go by...

Next year is going to be LEGENDARY.

Go Christie!

- Mrs Chamberlain, House Leader of Christie

MATILDA! There is nothing more for me to say than what another FANTASTIC year!

Since September you have been a hive of enthusiasm, hard work and willingness to throw yourselves into every opportunity presented to you! For the sport lovers among us, you took House Matches, Form Football and the Golf tournament by storm! For the creatives, Mascot Designing, The Big Draw and KS3 and 4 Bake-Offs saw you flourish. For those of you that don't fit either of those categories, there were plenty of other opportunities for a whole lot more FUN outside of the classroom.



There are too many competitions and opportunities to name all of them but you

have made them all heaps of fun! A particular highlight of this term for me was the Masked Singer, I'm still not sure who that unicorn was? Competition after competition you have put in the effort and made a real difference as a house whether in the Sleigh2Give donations at Christmas or the Sponsored Walk!

But again, when other houses had just a few entries we had MORE! Your house spirit and pride shining through so brightly! AND THEN THERE IS SPORTS DAY!! Winning TWO years in a row goes to show that when we pull together we can be champions! This message goes out to all of those students who took part in an event even if they weren't confident they could win, for those who simply tried their hardest, YOU are what being in Matilda is all about. It's not about winning, it's about trying and aiming for your best!

Have a brilliant Summer Break and I look forward to welcoming you all back in September!

- Mr Hinchliffe, House Leader of Matilda

Top Point Scoring Students Term Six

Year 7	Lana Ballard	115
Year 8	Isla Dimassa	130
Year 9	Rosie Newton	57
Year 10	Callum Reynolds	87
Year 12	Wilfrid Venners	70

Top Point Scoring Students 2024-2025

Year 7	Alex Grech	447
Year 8	Isla Dimassa	470
Year 9	Rosie Newton	320
Year 10	Joseph Rhodes	190
Year 11	Charlotte Hebbes	190
Year 12	Wilfred Venners	126
Year 13	Thea Mcsweeney	48

House Champions 2024-2025

1st place: Matilda	6775
2nd place: Christie	6755
3rd place: Bigg	6580
4th place: Blackstone	6030

As we head into the summer holiday, we thought we'd leave you with an illustration specially created for the Summer Newsletter by **Anya Smith, Year 9**. The butterfly is known to represent freedom and positivity, so fill the next six weeks with lots of fun and perhaps few new activities, and we'll look forward to welcoming you back in September with lots of stories to tell! Have a wonderful summer holiday!





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