



End of Term Letter

Headmaster

Dear students, parents and friends,

I am in a very good mood as I write this letter. The sun is shining, the air is warm, and the blossom is out in Beddington Park. RAG (Raising and Giving) week is well underway and I bumped into a giant pig and a gingerbread man in the playground yesterday, both students in fancy dress supporting the Childhood Eye Cancer Trust and Amnesty International, this year's school charities. We have had our annual staff survey back with metrics for job satisfaction far above the national average for schools and we are top in the borough for student progress from GCSE to A Level, the government's headline measure for Sixth Form performance. We have our first alumni charity lunch in London this Friday and development planning for 2025-26 is well under way. All in all, life is good.

That said, what has really made my term is an article published in The Times a couple of weeks ago analysing student happiness in schools. They scrutinised data from Ofsted Parent Power surveys that gauged how happy parents thought their children were in school. Only fourteen schools out of nearly 4,000 nationally received a 99% positive score (none got 100%) and we were one of them. Was I surprised? Of course not. Was I delighted? Absolutely. I decided to use our interviews for Captains of School to explore why students feel so happy here and was intrigued by the sheer range of answers I got back. Some mentioned the house system, saying it had allowed them to get to know older students who "really cared for you and got to know you". They spoke of how they felt a sense of "interconnectedness on a very personal level" with their peers because of the way house competitions involve students of all year groups. Others mentioned the strong sense of community where "everyone is supportive and helps one another". Another said that "everyone is approachable and I can go to anyone". Some mentioned how inclusive the school is through events such as cultural dress day, whilst others spoke of the huge range of extracurricular opportunities and the strength of school sport. Others spoke of the breadth of the curriculum and co-curriculum that helped students to be "versatile", including strong provision in subjects like music and art. Some referenced the high levels of challenge and the keen sense of ambition that permeate the school - one said "everyone has a goal and we all motivate each other to achieve them". Others of course mentioned our highly skilled teachers and advanced pedagogy, saying "the teachers really care about what you want to do in the future", "they help you problem solve", and teach "great lessons". One even said that "Mrs Owen puts a lot of effort into ensuring students are happy and content". Two summed it up perfectly though, one saying "this school is like a family" and the other explaining that "students feel they belong in a place that wants them". As you can imagine, by the end of the day I was bursting with pride hearing about the incredible environment and culture that our staff and students have cultivated in all corners of the school.



End of Term Letter

Headmaster

The PTFA have also had a sensational term with the purchase of a brand new mini bus for the school and the funding of a new queuing system for the WCCGS Cafe meaning it will be even more orderly after the Easter Holidays. We would ask all parents to note that we are migrating our School Fund payments from the school bank account to Just Giving at the end of March and I have sent out a video ([Migration of School Fund to Just Giving.mp4](#)) to explain the reasons for the change. As ever, thank you to all of you who are giving so generously to support our students.



We are saying one farewell this term - to Mrs Jennings who has been promoted to Deputy Head Teacher at The Worthgate School. Mrs Jennings joined the school as Head of Religious Studies and Philosophy in 2012 and later transitioned to becoming a Year leader in the Sixth Form. Mrs Jennings was promoted to Director of Sixth Form in 2021. Under her leadership, the school achieved record A level outcomes and our highest ever attendance statistics. We would like to thank her for all she has done to care for so many of our students in her time here.

Mr Croft will be replacing Mrs Jennings as Director of Sixth and Mr Barwick has also been appointed as an Assistant Head Teacher, overseeing KS4 (Y9-11) and the Co-curriculum. Mr Alison will be stepping up to lead Computer Science and Mr Avis will lead Physics.

All that remains is for me to wish you a happy Easter and to wish Year 11 and the Upper Sixth all the best in their preparations for their GCSE and A Level examinations that begin shortly .

All the best,
Jamie Bean
Headmaster

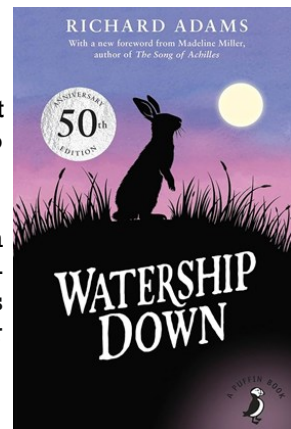


Department of English: Spring Reads 2025

Watership Down by Richard Adams

Fiver could sense danger. Something terrible was going to happen to the warren - he felt sure of it. So did his brother Hazel, for Fiver's sixth sense was never wrong. They had to leave the warren. And so a small band of rabbits began a long and perilous journey.

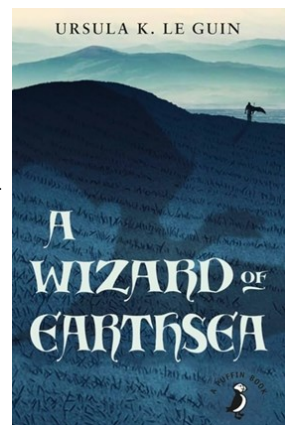
The School Librarian says: This is the best kind of children's novel, that never talks down to them and is every bit as enjoyable for adult readers. It's an absolutely classic adventure story, an epic hero's journey told from the point of view of tiny, almost defenceless rabbits. It's the Aeneid or the Odyssey with bunnies, and therefore perfect reading for Easter.



A Wizard of Earthsea by Ursula K. Le Guin

Ged enters wizard school to learn the rules of magic. Headstrong and naive, he accidentally unleashes a terrible shadow-creature into the world. To correct the balance, he must face and destroy the shadow, whatever the cost. Ged's quest takes him to the farthest corner of Earthsea - a land of fearsome dragons, jealous wizards, darkness and light - where he will meet his destiny.

The School Librarian says: A young boy goes to a school for wizards, where he meets an arrogant rival student and faces a terrible enemy who scars his face. Sound familiar? Ursula Le Guin was a genius, and this is the book - published 30 years before Potter - that J.K. Rowling got a lot of her ideas from.



Batman: The Long Halloween by Jeph Loeb and Tim Sale

Christmas. St. Patrick's Day. Easter. As the calendar's days stack up, so do the bodies littered in the streets of Gotham City. A murderer is loose, killing only on holidays. The only man that can stop this fiend? The Dark Knight.

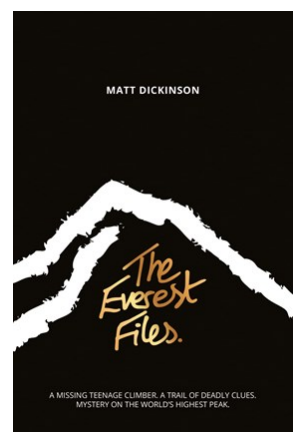
The School Librarian says: One of the greatest Batman stories ever told, and a huge influence on the *Dark Knight* movies. At this point in their careers, Jeph Loeb and Tim Sale could seemingly do no wrong, churning out other brilliant comics like *Superman For All Seasons*, but this is possibly the one held in the highest regard.



The Everest Files by Matt Dickinson

The story of an Everest expedition unlike any other. An expedition that ended with mysterious disappearances ... and death. This is the mystery that eighteen-year-old Ryan Hart sets out to solve. Ryan is on a gap year adventure, working for a medical charity in Nepal.

When a local girl begs him to investigate why her sixteen-year-old friend Kami never came back from Everest, Ryan cannot resist the challenge. A solo journey takes Ryan deep into the mountains where his detective work finally pays off. What emerges is a shocking tale of lies, betrayal and obsession. All played out on the lethal slopes of the highest mountain in the world. Little by little Ryan is falling under Everest's deadly spell.





Department of English: Spring Reads 2025 (Continue)

The Poet X by Elizabeth Acevedo

Xiomara has always kept her words to herself. In her Harlem neighbourhood, her fists and her fierceness do the talking.

But X has secrets. Her feelings for a boy in her bio class, the notebook full of poems that she keeps under her bed - and a slam poetry club that will pull those secrets into the spotlight.

Because in spite of a world that might not want to hear her, Xiomara refuses to stay silent.

Running on the Roof of the World by Jess Butterworth

I focus on my beating heart. I know Mum and Dad are still alive. My heart would feel different if they weren't. Wouldn't it...?

After twelve-year-old Tash's parents are seized by soldiers, she and her best friend Sam resolve to rescue them. But to do so, they must escape Tibet, cross the mountains and seek help from the Dalai Lama in India. And so an extraordinary journey begins...

Persepolis by Marjane Satrapi

The intelligent and outspoken child of radical Marxists, and the great-granddaughter of Iran's last emperor, Satrapi bears witness to a childhood uniquely entwined with the history of her country. *Persepolis* paints an unforgettable portrait of daily life in Iran and of the bewildering contradictions between home life and public life. This is a beautiful and intimate story full of tragedy and humour - raw, honest and incredibly illuminating.

The School Librarian says: Proof, if it were needed, that comics and graphic novels can stand toe-to-toe with "proper literature". It's a challenging and sometimes distressing read, but a deeply rewarding one.

Scott Pilgrim's Precious Little Life by Bryan Lee O'Malley

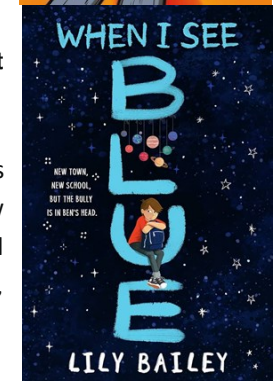
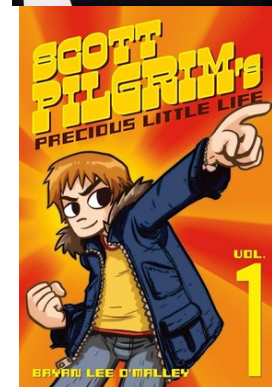
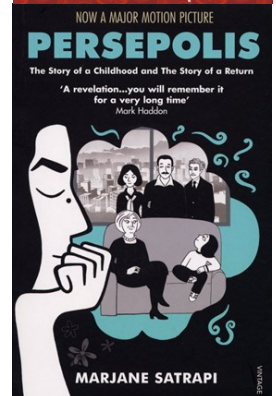
Scott Pilgrim's life is totally sweet. He's 23 years old, he's in a rock band, he's 'between jobs,' and he's dating a cute high school girl. Nothing could possibly go wrong, unless a seriously mind-blowing, dangerously fashionable, rollerblading delivery girl named Ramona Flowers starts cruising through his dreams and sailing by him at parties. Will Scott's awesome life get turned upside-down? Will he have to face Ramona's seven evil ex-boyfriends in battle? The short answer is yes.

The School Librarian says: *Scott Pilgrim* is wild, unpredictable and extremely funny, drawing from comics, anime and video games to make something completely unique.

When I See Blue by Lily Bailey

There are 4 things you should know about Ben: He's 12 years old. He's the new kid at school. His special number is 4. He has a bully in his brain.

Sometimes Ben's brain makes him count to 4 to stop bad things happening. Sometimes it tells him to avoid certain colours. Mostly it makes the smallest things feel impossible. And with a new school, a moody big brother, and a mum and dad who are falling apart, Ben feels more out of control than ever. Then he meets April, and Ben no longer feels alone. But when his new friend needs help, can Ben break his rules and be brave?





Department of English: A visit from Matt Dickinson

On 4th March, during the week of World Book Day, it was our very great pleasure to have Matt Dickinson, an award-winning author and Everest summiteer, visit WCGS. He goes to around 100 schools every year and is in high demand, so we were exceptionally lucky to be able to grab him that week of all weeks. He had come highly recommended, and as it turned out, deservedly so!

He started the day by giving a presentation about his mountaineering adventures to all of Years 7, 8 and 9. It was full of fascinating and often quite grisly detail; the students seemed to particularly enjoy the stories about rats getting into the food supply!



Once the presentation had concluded, he moved up to the library for a book signing. He provided 23 copies of his novel *The Everest Files*, and they had all been claimed within about 15 minutes. We had to order 45 more copies for all the students who wanted one! It feels safe to say that his presentation made a big impact, and goes to show what a difference it makes when an author visits a school to talk about their work in person.

He then set up camp in the library for the rest of the day, where he hosted a series of creative writing workshops for the students. The results were very creative and very funny; I was extremely impressed by the quality of the work being produced and by the talent for public speaking that the boys displayed.

I thought it was a great day, and I think (hope!) the boys all agreed. Hopefully this will be the first of many author visits to come!

By Mr Emlyn Roberts-Harry
Library Manager





Department of English:

Mr Rhodes-Brandon, Mr Roberts-Harry and the school would like to thank you and your children for your tremendous generosity; below is an image of the incredible amount of books you have donated to the very worthy cause of the Children's Book Project.

A reminder that all of these books will be put in the hands of children who are not quite so fortunate to have some of their own, and do not often have the capacity or means at home to buy books. It is an excellent example of the generosity of our community that we have so many previously loved and read books ready to be handed onto those less fortunate.

Thank you so much once again.

By Mr N Rhodes-Brandon



Three poems from our Poet Laureate, Minwook Suh (L6RA):

7:00

It's 7:00, the sirens sung,
The sky split open,
Sour taste on my tongue,

At 7:00, the ground is fire,
The air is dust, the world expires.
A mothers hand, a father's call,
A child who barely breathes at all.

Past 7:00, they stood in line,
A broken life on borrowed time,
The clock moved on,
The world forgot.

**This poem is about refugees and the western perception of disaster, written for the Humanitarian Society*

Confession to a Firefly

Upon the heath I lie in wait
for night to fall on the urban grey
and where I lie the Fireflies
will greet me like a newfound friend.

The land engulfed in golden hue,
A serenade of royal light,
And on my outstretched hand i feel,
the warm embrace of Fireflies.

Confession of the Wind

"Forgive me father, for my sins"
Whispered in my ear the wind.
"The songs I've heard and stories spun,
leave demons chanting in my mind;
Accursed Fiend, Accursed Fiend."



Talk theTalk - The Interview Skills Workshop

A few weeks ago, a group of students and I had the incredible opportunity to take part in a communications workshop by TalktheTalk, an organisation dedicated to providing 'confident communication for life'.

Throughout the day we interviewed each other, applying the handy tips the speaker provided. The one that stuck with me was the '5S's':

Stance
Smile
Stride
Speak loudly
Sight



These small changes in how you present yourself really do have an impact. I could see this through interviewing other students for a made-up role, as those that stood out introduced themselves with a firm handshake and open body language, immediately creating a positive impression. Following interviewing, we had to give feedback and decide who to 'hire'. What made the student I chose stand out? Their ability to express their skills in detail and answer questions fluidly.

From this experience I learnt that when you walk into an interview, they already have what's on paper - they're looking for what's not. Thank you to the speaker, Emma Clark, for providing such an insightful day!

by Mariana Smythe, 12MA.





Geography Department: Year 11 Geography Fieldwork

This term, Year 11 Geographers took part in two days of fieldwork as part of the content we need for our GCSE Paper 3 Exam. Our first day was spent in Stratford investigating the change brought around by the 2012 Olympic Investment. We started the day by meeting representatives from the FSC and throughout the day we conducted surveys and a questionnaire with the locals. We were able to collect some amazing data and link classroom learning and theory with the real world. Our second day was spent at the River Tillingbourne. We spent the morning at Juniper Hall field centre, where we learnt more about the investigation we were conducting. We then went to three different sites to view human interaction with the physical environment and how the river changed as we went downstream. As part of our work, we got to learn how to use new apparatus in our efforts to measure river velocity which was very exciting. Through it was chilly, we were not deterred from our data collection and I think it's safe to say that not only was it a successful investigation but one we were able to gain a lot from.

By Aariz Ahmed





Drama Department:

Blood Brothers Theatre Trip Year 10 and Year 11

Year 10 and Year 11 Drama students had the opportunity to go to see *Blood Brothers* at The New Wimbledon Theatre. When tickets were advertised last summer, the Drama department were already securing tickets. The Year 11 Drama students will be writing about how they would perform these characters in their summer exam, we wish them all the best.



I had an amazing time on the school theatre trip to Wimbledon! It was such a valuable experience, and I want to extend a huge thank you to Mrs. Shears and Mrs. Tanner for all their hard work in organising and managing the trip. They really went above and beyond to make it a smooth and enjoyable experience for all of us. Not only did the trip offer a wonderful opportunity to see a live performance, but it also greatly helped me in preparing for my GCSE exams. The insights I gained from the play deepened my understanding of key topics, which will be incredibly beneficial for my studies. I'm truly grateful for everything they did to make this happen!

- Parth Patel Year 10



In review...

On the 5th of March, we attended a live performance of *Blood Brothers* at the New Wimbledon Theatre. The play tells the story of two twins, separated at birth—one raised by Mrs. Johnstone, a poor working-class single mother, and the other by Mrs. Lyons, a manipulative, wealthy woman. It was a captivating performance from start to finish. Right from the start, the actors' performances were compelling. Their emotional depth was conveyed through powerful body language and facial expressions, making each action purposeful and engaging. They immersed the audience fully in the drama, ensuring every moment contributed to the unfolding story. Although the understudy took over the role of Mickey, one of the main characters, his performance was exceptional. He brought energy and authenticity to the character, capturing Mickey's youthful innocence, creativity, and immaturity in Act One, when they were seven, making it hard to believe he wasn't the original actor.

In Act Two, more comedy was brought to contrast with the more heavy tone of the overall play, which created uproarious laughter from the audience at the more risqué jokes. Yet this didn't move the focus away from the message of the play, about class divide and how it has no place in modern society, with the use of the Narrator, a mysterious and omniscient character always on stage. The songs of the Narrator always brought us back to focus on the twins and how they live unaware of each other's identity and the consequences of this secret deal done in Act One.

As the play nears its tragic conclusion, Mickey's life spirals out of control. After losing his job and ending up in prison, he becomes unable to care for his wife and child, embodying the devastating effects of his circumstances. The actor here performed a stellar job in physically embodying the lifelessness of this character after being addicted to antidepressants, which blew me away with how lethargic and zombie-like his movements were, something I would have never imagined! The tragedy continues, after his wife (and childhood sweetheart) leaves him for his twin (and friend), culminating in Mickey drawing a gun on his brother after finding out they were twins and both of them dying as Mickey shoots his brother and the police in turn, shoot him. The play's heartbreaking conclusion arrives with a sudden bang, as the sound of gunshots rings out, sending a chill through the audience. A deep silence follows, with the Narrator standing between the two covered bodies of the blood brothers, posing a poignant question: was it superstition or the rigid class system that ultimately sealed their fate?

In conclusion, *Blood Brothers* was a thrilling experience, with the actors skillfully engaging the audience and creating a strong sense of connection. The play's abrupt and tragic ending left us yearning for more, leaving a lasting emotional impact.

- Toby Ou Yang, 11BR

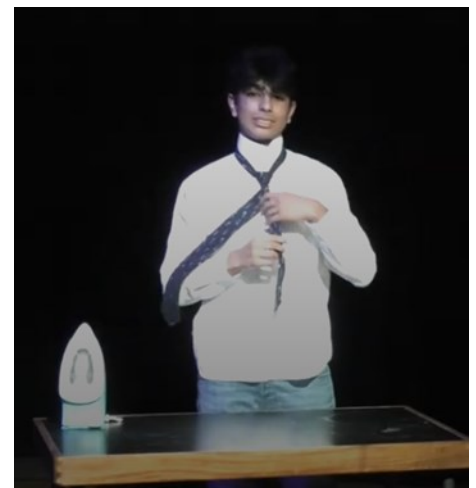


Drama Department:

A level performances: Pillowman and The Lying Kind

The A Level students worked exceptionally hard to bring the script of *The pillowman* to life for their recent performance exam. *The Pillowman* is an electrifying and savagely funny black comedy about a fiction writer (Thomas Phasey) in an unnamed totalitarian state who is interrogated when a number of bizarre incidents occurring in her town resemble the gruesome content of her short stories. Is this life imitating art or something more sinister?

When the writer's brother (Kyle Onyango) is also brought in for questioning by two officers (Barney Downer and Kajanan Sivananthan), the police procedural takes unforeseen twists and turns.



GCSE Drama performances

This year's GCSE Drama performances were a tremendous success, showcasing not only the talented performers but also the impressive work of costume design and lighting design candidates. The students had the opportunity to demonstrate their skills across a diverse range of texts, including the thought-provoking works of Harold Pinter, Peter Shaffer, and exciting new playwrights. The inclusion of design candidates added an extra layer of creativity and professionalism to the productions, with carefully crafted costumes and striking lighting helping to bring each piece to life. The students' dedication and hard work were evident in every aspect of the performances, from the compelling acting to the stunning technical design. We are incredibly proud of their efforts and the way they embraced the challenges, producing work that truly highlighted their talent, creativity, and commitment to their GCSE Drama.





Drama Department: Lord of the Flies

This year our school production was a play instead of a musical, this allowed a whole host of new performers to take to the stage. We were blown away by the incredible

Mrs Tanner and myself, decided we wanted to have a smaller cast this year, that idea didn't last long, auditions saw more than 100 students audition and it was an impossible task to choose only a few.

This year we decided to have 3 different casts. We imagined them to represent the degradation of innocence and fall into savagery.

Cast 1 held the stage for 15 minutes, our youngest cast members, consisting mostly of Year 7 and Year 8. We really wanted to give as many students as possible the experience of being on the main stage.



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Cast 2, Year 8 to 11, totally blew the audience away with their stylised entrance and power, as the boys set light to the island.

Cast 3, the decline of all moral and legal responsibility, murder, a good pint or two of film blood and some very powerful displays of conflict and rebellion.

To end, we returned to Cast 1, upon the arrival of the military, this stylised transition left the audience speechless, implying the cast were, in fact, little boys all along.

They also managed to clear the entire set, props and dressing in a record 16 mins. The hall left spotless, ready for the rugby awards evening!



Wow! What an amazing experience for us all, the best thing about the play was definitely the mixture between years. We had a range from Year 7 to 6 Form and we all bonded amazingly!

Joshua Wahab - Year 9 (Played Simon)

This was a brilliant opportunity to do something extra curricular and as I was new to the school I was made really welcome. I learnt so many new skills which have also helped my Drama lessons.

Seb Atkinson - Year 7 (Played Percival)



Drama Department:

Fourth Monkey Workshop



Fourth Monkey Theatre Company recently collaborated with the A-level Drama students as part of an exciting career opportunity, offering a dynamic and challenging workshop. The session pushed students beyond their comfort zones, encouraging them to explore physical theatre through the use of bamboo canes. This hands-on approach required them to engage both creatively and physically, developing their body awareness, balance, and teamwork skills. The workshop not only exposed

the students to the demands of physical performance but also introduced them to innovative techniques used in professional theatre. By the end of the session, students had gained valuable insights into the creative process and the importance of physicality in storytelling, leaving them inspired and motivated to further pursue careers in the arts.



Punch - Young Vic

A Level Drama students had the wonderful opportunity to go on a theatre trip to see **Punch**.

Jacob Dunne, a teenager from Nottingham, spends his Saturday nights seeking thrills with his friends. One fateful evening, an impulsive punch leads to fatal consequences. After serving prison time, Jacob finds himself lost and directionless.



<https://www.londontheatre.co.uk/reviews/punch-review-james-graham-young-vic>



**Drama Department:****Treasure Island - Live Theatre Evaluation Year 8****Treasure Island**

The digitally recorded performance of "Treasure Island" (adapted by Bryony Lavery) was first performed at the National Theatre on the 22nd January 2015, however I watched it in January 2025. "Treasure Island" had very successful moments and scenes which made the audience feel a number of different feelings and emotions, such as suspense and excitement. Polly Findlay's exceptional production used a number of different techniques and the drum revolve to perfectly execute the fictional story of Jim Hawkin's search for treasure in a manner that continuously reinforced the production aims of power, corruption, discovery and adventure as well as some brilliantly timed humour. I will be discussing two actors, Aidan Kelly (Billy Bones) and Arthur Darvill (Long John Silver) as their acting skills always impressed me.

The first actor that I will be discussing is Aidan Kelly, who plays Billy Bones. He used a fierce, deep and low-pitched voice to successfully portray Billy Bones. His snarling and demanding way of speaking really enforces the burly figure of Billy Bones. His line "rum, bacon and eggs is what I want" shows his pressing and harsh tone when speaking to other characters within the production. Kelly also uses facial expressions to showcase Billy Bones's personality. His gritted teeth and squinted eyes perfectly depict signs of anger and aggression and so fully embodies the pirate aspect of Billy Bones. Kelly also walked confidently in long strides, presenting his dominance over Jim Hawkins (Patsy Ferran), making himself look powerful and strong. However, despite this at some points Aidan Kelly walked a bit chaotically showing the audience Billy Bones' drunken and uncontrolled side that they might not have been expecting. Kelly does all this to show the audience all the different aspects of Billy Bones's personality which he does extremely well. Kelly's actions have really impressed simply because of the way he proved Billy Bones to the audience as being this tall, dominating and demanding pirate.

The second actor I will be discussing is Arthur Darvill ,who plays Long John Silver. Using a controlled, friendly and high-pitched voice, Darvill gives the audience a successful impression of the kindness of Long John Silver right from the very beginning. When in conversation with Jim Hawkins (Patsy Ferran), Darvill uses an advising, manner-of-fact and helpful tone to convince the audience and Jim that they are friends, whereas in reality, Long John Silver, is only being "friends" with Jim to get to the island. This mischievous act of friendship that Darvill brings to life so realistically is one of the many reasons why his acting impressed me.

by Theo Barnes

**Art Department:****Articulation Prize 2025 London Finals**

On 11th March Thivyan Paranthaman represented WCGS at the London Finals of the National Articulation Public Speaking Competition, after securing first place at his heat at Dulwich Picture Gallery. Articulation is one of the National Gallery's key learning programmes for young people nationwide, and is entered by WCGS each year. Adjudicators select one speaker to go through to the next stage, with the Prize culminating at the Grand final, which unites all regional finalists.

This year The V&A Museum hosted the London Finals, and Thivyan was up against some stiff competition, alongside some formidable entries from other skilled orators. Unfortunately, he was unsuccessful on this occasion, but received some outstanding feedback on his subject choice - Special Offer Inc, *Brat* by Charli XCX (album cover); a 'topic which challenged our notions of what makes a work of art'. Thivyan will now become a member of the Articulation Alumni Network. Well done to Thivyan!





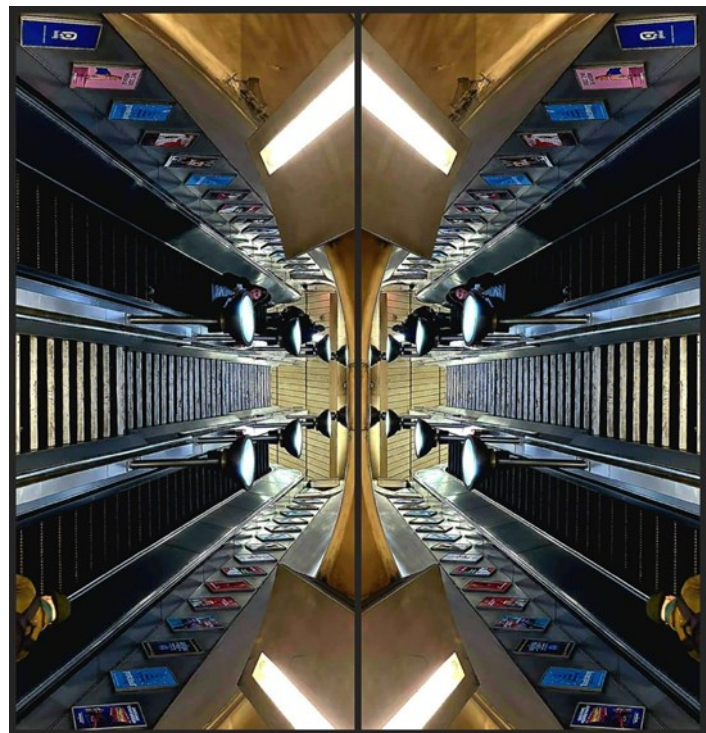
Art Department: House Photography

The Wrong Way Up! challenged students to defy gravity and flip their perspective, encouraging them to capture unexpected images that transformed the ordinary into the extraordinary. We had an amazing array of entries, and they were displayed digitally in our House Art Competition, for all to see.

Congratulations to this year's winners - Bridges House! Special mentions for their technical ability and response to the theme go to: **Thivyan Y13 Mandeville, Divij Dhingra & Vivienne Lim Y12 Woodcote, Thomas Burke Y12 Carew, Franklyn Corrigan Y9 Carew, Fletcher Y7 Carew and Christian Udegbunam Y13 Radcliffe.**



Theo Gabriel 7BR



Heli Patel L6BR



Artist of the Month

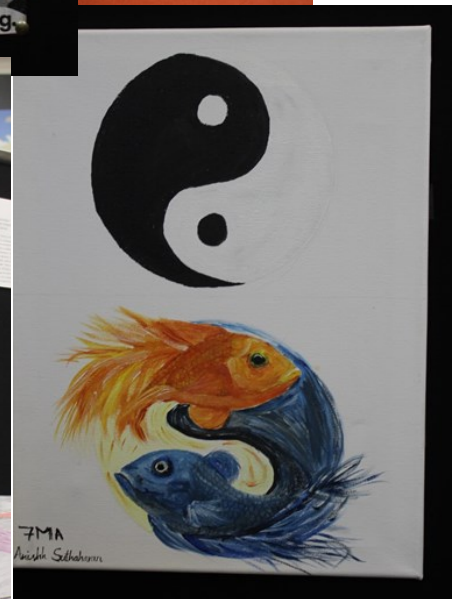
Congratulations to Year 13 students [Toby Wicksteed](#) and Yuen Kiu ..., both of whom completed accomplished self portraits and have featured on the Artist of the Month display this term.



Art Department: House Art 2025

The students put in a tremendous effort this year, showcasing an impressive variety of work, including sculptures, origami, paintings, and drawings. We were lucky enough to secure guest judges, owners and curators of Vellum Mill Gallery, who were particularly impressed by the quality and creativity of the work on display!

Many congratulations to Radcliffe House, who won this year's competition, and were presented with a certificate to acknowledge their achievements.



Photography by [Vicky Jalagadugu](#)Y8



Art Department:

Year 8 Art Masterclass

We have embarked on an exciting weekly workshop with Mrs Paliotta for a few extremely focused and dedicated artists from Year 8 on Thursday lunchtimes. This will be an opportunity for younger pupils to explore a range of new techniques and different equipment, and will offer the chance to create a variety of pieces using more complex resources usually only available to GCSE Art students.

Week one has kicked off with dry point etching, and students have been using etching needles onto plexiglass to create printing plates, which will hopefully go on to produce some beautiful and effective prints using our large metal printing presses.

Any Year 8 student interested in joining this group should speak with Mrs Paliotta.





Art Department: Year 8 Entry to Royal Academy of Arts Competition

Now in its seventh year, the Young Artists' Summer Show is a free, open submission exhibition. Students can work in any materials and any size. Artworks are judged by a panel of artists and arts professionals, with selected artworks displayed both online and in person at the Royal Academy of Arts.

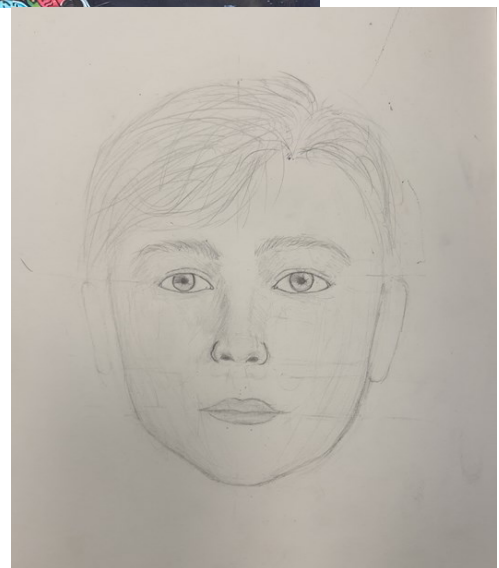
We are proud to say that four of our dedicated Year 8 artists have submitted a thoughtful group entry to the Young Artists' Summer Show. This competition was open to all students aged 4–18 studying in the UK and the theme of this year's exhibition was "Dreams".

We wish Kianne, Theo B., Nikola and Conor G. very good luck, and look forward to finding out if their brilliant submission was successful!



Year 7 Self Portraits

Year 7 have been working on self portraits this term in different formats, alongside exploring the work of Frida Kahlo and other artists. They were asked to produce a tonal drawing from the study of their own face in a mirror, and have spent some time really refining and perfecting their work. We were hugely impressed by the overall standard and quality of these pieces - well done everyone!



By Jayen Patel Y7BR



We hope all students have a well-deserved break and come back refreshed for the Summer Term. We recommend taking a trip to an art gallery over the holidays and using any free time to make some artwork. As always, we would love to see some new pieces when students return to school!



E Safety Briefing For Parents - Wearable Tech

More and more children are being given technology that can be worn, e.g. smartwatches and whilst there can be benefits the risks aren't always apparent. This article from Internet Matters explores wearable technology for children and gives advice on:

- The different types of wearable tech, e.g. smart watches, glasses, VR headsets and fitness trackers.
- Whether wearable technology is safe and what some of the concerns are, e.g. privacy and data collection, impact on body image.
- How wearable tech can support wellbeing.
- And more.

You can find the article [HERE](#).

Pupil Premium Update

It's been great to receive requests this term for resources and equipment to support our Pupil Premium Students - I have a range of revision resources and textbooks available for long-term loan/keep and for some time, they sat unused. Recently there has been a flurry of interest and lots of students benefiting from the Pupil Premium Resource Library. Please remember that if your child has Pupil Premium status or receives Free School Meals I can support with the following:

- Resources for study
- Stationery
- Pre-Loved Uniform (PTFA Store)
- Support with paying for trips

Pride and Allies 2025 Relaunch ... and we're back!

It has been an exciting term since re-launching our Pride and Allies Society - we are busy planning our Diversity and Pride Week at the moment with help from our charity representative from [Free2B](#).

Here is a little snapshot of some of our activities so far...



By Ms K Adams



International Women's Week -
The Anti-Sexism and Equality Taskforce

On Thursday, the 6th of March 2025, members from the Sutton Women's Centre (SWC) came to our school to give a talk in light of International Women's Day (IWD). Staff and students were able to learn about Domestic Violence and how it is a prevalent issue affecting Sutton, but also about the work of the SWC in the local community and all the workshops and training they run. We also organised the first ever International Women's Week at WCGS, an exciting experience that members of the taskforce got to take part in planning. We had the chance to deliver presentations about IWD to Year 7 forms and celebrate the achievements of female figures underrepresented within the school curriculum, hold a bake sale and movie screening too. Over the week, we were able to raise over £250, with all donations going to the SWC!



Looking ahead, some members from the AST will be attending Tender's Healthy Relationship ambassador training to be able to support students at our school and to be trained to recognise signs of domestic violence. Special mentions must go to Aariz Ahmed, Daniel Luck, Toby Ou Yang, Ridhwaan Ali, Jaami Sheikh, Mustafa Risvi, Ameen Wolly, Ali Hadid and Luwa Akintunde Albrow for delivering presentations to Year 7 forms and Saksham Wadhwa for organising the bake sale. Organising and planning this event was an amazing experience, and we look forward to bringing back International Women's Week next year!

By Aariz Ahmed





Introducing Pride & Allies – A New Venture at Our School

We are delighted to announce the launch of **Pride & Allies**, a new group dedicated to fostering an inclusive and supportive environment for LGBTQ+ students and their allies. This initiative aims to provide a safe space for students to share experiences, build friendships, and celebrate diversity within our school community.

Meeting Details:

- ◆ **When: Every Friday during lunch**
- ◆ **Where: AR2**

To enrich our discussions and provide additional support, we are collaborating with **Free2B Alliance**, a London-based community organization that supports LGBTQ+ young people and their parents. We are fortunate to have **JC**, a representative from Free2B, joining us every other week to offer insights and guidance on various topics relevant to our community.

About Free2B Alliance:

Free2B Alliance is committed to improving LGBTQ+ lives by providing responsive well-being support, safe spaces, and proactive education. Their services include:

- **Support: Personalized mentoring for LGBTQ+ youth to explore their situations and develop coping strategies.**
- **Youth Groups: Safe, social spaces for LGBTQ+ youth, including trans and non-binary individuals.**
- **Training: LGBTQ+ awareness training for schools and organizations to promote inclusivity.**

We are also planning a variety of events to promote awareness, support, and community engagement. Keep an eye out for updates on upcoming activities, and feel free to get involved in shaping the future of Pride & Allies at our school.

We encourage all students—whether you are a member of the LGBTQ+ community or an ally—to join us and be part of this important initiative. Your presence and support can make a difference in creating a more inclusive school environment for everyone.

We look forward to seeing you on Fridays in AR2!

By Saksham Wadhwa

Female Forum: GIRLS LUNCHESES

Attending an all boys school doesn't mean missing out on girl meetups! Every other Thursday of the month during A Week, we have a girls' lunch hangout called Female Forum, where all 6th form girls are welcomed to come and relax amongst others. We were very lucky to receive visits from recent Alumni such as Susan and Amrit, where we talked about school life, uni advice and past experiences. By speaking with them and others, this really helped me connect with not only the girls in my year, but also U6th too, making it feel like a family. I believe it's important to have these monthly sessions, as it's really just a social time to come together and help build our confidence as girls in this school. We currently have a few ideas in mind on a fun girls' trip coming up, and we can really put these ideas forward if more of us come together and discuss them! I really recommend these catch ups especially those who love biscuits, but also is an amazing opportunity to get to know more of the female cohort in WCGS.

By Vivienne Lim, L6WO



MFL Department:



Viva Barcelona!

I was looking forward to the Barcelona trip; staying in another country with no parents to watch over me was an exciting prospect and this trip did not disappoint me. We explored the beautiful city of Barcelona, seeing all the famous tourist destinations there, from the magnificent views of Parc Guell, to La Sagrada Familia, whose size you could only properly appreciate if you saw it in person. We went to restaurants every night, where we ate delicious foods including pizza, pasta, all you can eat buffets and even a tapas bar, where we got to appreciate the delicious food associated with a country so rich in culinary culture. We got to visit the school of our pen pals, La Farga, where we could experience a typical school day of a Spanish student and we even played a football game against them! We had Spanish lessons from Kingsbrook language school, with teachers who were both fun and engaging, helping us develop an even deeper understanding of the Spanish language. But, best of all, I got to do all this with my friends, sleeping in the same room as them and having fun every day. If I were given the opportunity to go on this trip again, I would accept it without a second thought.

by Pawel Goras



MFL Department:

Viva Barcelona! (Continue)

Very early on the 10th of March, 40 students and 4 teachers bravely made their way to Heathrow. After a change of plane, we finally took to the skies, and after a rough ride, reminiscent of the Colossus, we landed in sunny Barcelona.

Despite the delay, the 8 teams were able to discover Barcelona through a quest leading them from Plaza de Calalonia to the monument to Christophe Columbus. By 7pm, it was time to find our first restaurant, then head back to the hostel.

Refreshed from a long first day, Tuesday was the eagerly awaited visit to our partner school La Farga where students met their pen pals and took part in activities until lunch time. After lunch, the visitors fought bravely against the home team, but lost to a well-oiled squad of Barca hopefuls. Daniel J was man of the match, having marked a goal which saved the tourists' honour. It was then time to say our goodbyes and make our way to Parc Guëll for a late afternoon visit of one of the most iconic parts of Barcelona. The steep hill climb to the park was yet another test students' fitness but the reward was the magnificent views of the city.



On Wednesday, the students had the first of their 3 sessions at Kingsbrook school. After lunch, we took our favourite H8 bus to Camp Nou, still in the middle of renovations. Nevertheless, students were able to learn about Barca, from its modest origins, the war to its current pinnacle.

Although Camp Nou was a popular item on our schedule, Thursday was possibly the highlight of the week, with a visit of the Sagrada Familia and time afterwards for a trip to the souvenir shops. In the afternoon, after Spanish lessons, we were treated to a guided visit of the Gothic Quarter with two of the Kingsbrook's teachers. They conducted the whole tour in Spanish but made it accessible to all the students and uncovered amazing parts of the town's history. We finished the day with Tapas at Nervion's restaurant where the staff were attentive to our needs and added some extra dishes for our hungry cohort.



MFL Department:
Viva Barcelona! (Continue)

The winners of the city quest “los Padres” got their reward in churros and chocolate upon our return to the hostel. At 4pm, a coach took us back to the airport and this time, the return journey was smooth. It was time to get home anyway, as the weather had turned to rain, and we were proud to have achieved everything we had set out to do.

Despite a few restless boys in the early hours, no doubt fuelled by overconsumption of sweets, students were really well behaved and courteous in public places. The school and the flight attendants commented on their superb behaviour.

There was something for everybody on this trip, some loved Camp Nou, others valued the visit to the school, whilst the artists and aspiring architects were awed by la Sagrada Familia.



This trip would not have been possible without the support of Mrs Gabriele, Mrs Campello and Mr Mehta. Thank you all for another wonderful Spanish trip.

By Ms C Mortreuil





MFL Department:

Exploring Italy's Language and Culture: Italian Club and Enrichment Highlights

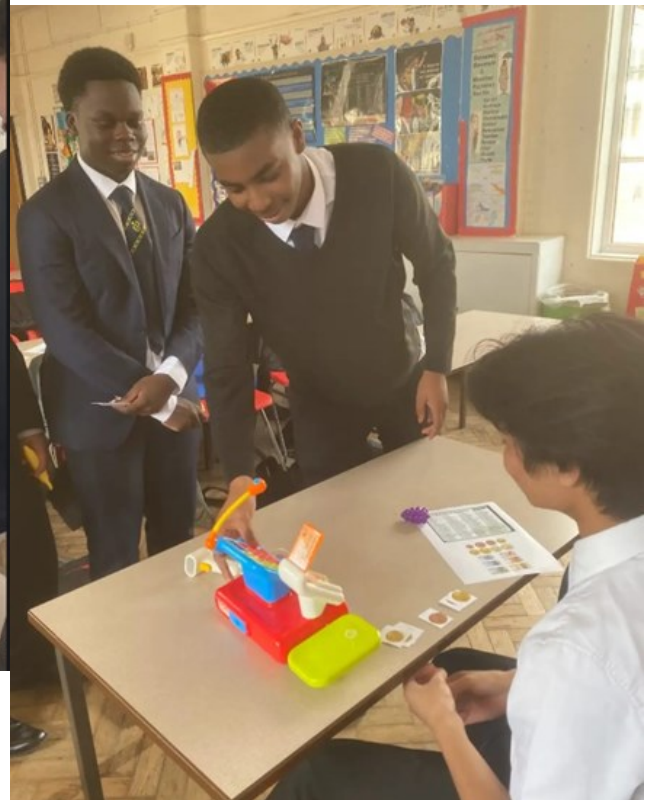
I am very proud of the students in both the Monday Italian Club and the Wednesday 6th Form Enrichment Italian Club, as they have shown incredible engagement over the past few weeks and months, despite some initial reluctance, especially among the older students. From learning basic greetings, likes and dislikes, and common verbs to delving into Italian culture, the clubs have become a fun space for both language learning and cultural exploration.

We have discussed inspiring Italian figures such as Leonardo Da Vinci and rising tennis star Jannik Sinner, while also learning about the famous Sanremo Festival and the tradition of la Befana. One of the highlights was teaching the students how to order food and buy groceries in Italian using toy props, helping them feel more comfortable with everyday conversations.

Adding to the fun, I introduced Italian card games like Scopa and Rubamazzetto using traditional Neapolitan cards, which were a hit! To bring Italian culture to life, we watched Italian award-winning films such as *La Vita è Bella* (= Life is Beautiful) and *Io non ho paura* (= I Am Not Scared), sparking some fantastic discussions. We also held an exciting Blooket competition, where students tested their knowledge of Italian vocabulary and culture in a fun, interactive way.

Particular praise goes to Noah Ghirlando, Theo Barnes, and Max Bowen for their enthusiasm and dedication. Last term, Pietro Montagano also stood out for his passion and commitment. Sam, Aishver, Daniel, Carl, Micah, Arron, Thomas, Kieran and Sreevanth are among the most regular and enthusiastic 6th formers. I look forward to seeing more students continue to thrive as we explore Italy's rich language and culture together.

by Mrs Gabriele





MFL Department: 6th Form Students Shine at the SCOOP Journalism Event



On 5th March 2025, our MFL students (French and Spanish) had the incredible opportunity to attend the prestigious SCOOP event at Kingston Grammar School. Organised by Mrs Gabriele, this unique experience allowed us to connect with students from across the country, strengthening our language skills and sharing our experiences.

The day began with an insightful introduction to the importance of languages in the journalism industry and the benefits of multilingualism in the modern world. Working collaboratively with students from various schools, we were divided into teams of 5-6, each assigned different roles. Our challenge was to create a newspaper front page, an advert, a poster, and an overall presentation. A special thanks to Miss Paradis and Mrs. Gabriele, who accompanied us throughout the event and provided great support.

Throughout the event, we had access to around 20 different news stories to include in our newsletter, along with professional guidance from international companies such as Zara and Santander. Personally, I found these tasks quite challenging, as they required a thorough understanding of global news articles and strong time management skills. However, this made the experience all the more exciting and rewarding.

After enjoying a delicious lunch of sandwiches and snacks, we returned to present our work to an international panel of judges, who asked insightful questions about our newspapers. Despite some technical issues, our teams successfully improvised and showcased their posters and adverts in creative ways.

In the end, one of our teams, consisting of Medasan, Amina, Stephen, and Carl, secured an impressive third place in the competition, demonstrating outstanding innovation and creativity. Their efforts were rewarded with a £5 gift voucher and a certificate. Additionally, William Frost was publicly praised and received a chocolate prize for his excellent pronunciation, wide range of vocabulary, leadership skills, and enthusiasm.

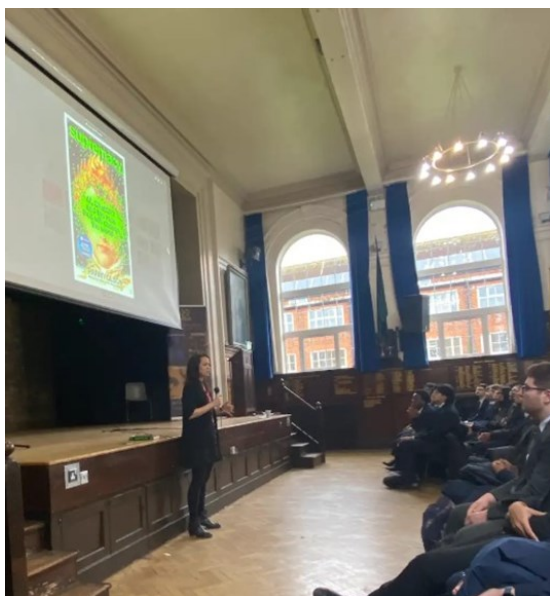
We concluded the day with a relaxing stroll along Kingston High Street and the River Thames, admiring the beautiful scenery and sunset—a perfect way to end an inspiring and enriching experience!

by Vivienne Lim





MFL Department: Exploring AI and Humanity: A Presentation by Parmy Olson by Kyan Louis Navaja



Parmy Olson's presentation offered a thought-provoking blend of caution and hope for future generations, addressing both the growing power of AI and the importance of maintaining humanity amidst these changes.

Ms. Gabriele introduced me, Oke, Prajjwal, and our fellow interviewer Minwook to a unique opportunity with Parmy Olson, author of *Supremacy* and *We Are Anonymous*. We were given the chance to participate in a live audience interview with Olson, delving into her book, which we had read in preparation. The event took place on Wednesday, 12th February 2025, during enrichment, in the main hall.

I highly recommend reading *Supremacy*—it's a challenging yet crucial exploration of the darker side of AI. Olson highlights how well-meaning humanitarian AI projects can sometimes serve the interests of "Big Tech," raising important questions about how individuals may inadvertently contribute to this trend. The book also offers fascinating insights into

the early stages of AI, with events dating back to when I was in primary school. It also explores the philosophical foundations of AI, including concepts like effective altruism and the philosophy of mind.

Currently, three signed copies of the book are available in the library, though they are in high demand and currently checked out. Personally, I believe it's worth purchasing—it has a striking cover that stands out on any bookshelf. They say not to judge a book by its cover, but in this case, it's certainly a keeper.

I'll always remember Olson's response to my question, "Should we emphasize the liberal and cultural arts in the future?" She strongly agreed, explaining that while job markets will undoubtedly change, humans will always be valued for their creativity, empathy, and other unique qualities. I also recall Oke's insightful question about the 'Dead Internet Theory,' in which AI might eventually enhance bots to the point where even Turing's Test becomes meaningless.



In conclusion, Olson's message was clear: While AI can be an incredible tool to enhance our education and knowledge, we must always use it responsibly. AI has the potential to be what the Internet should have been all along—an intuitive access point to information. But, above all, as Olson stated and wrote in the school copies before signing them: **"We must remember to stay human."**





MFL Department:

Exploring the Future of Tech: A Visit from Author Parmy Olson by Okeroghene Ekperuoh

On 12th February, WCGS was honoured to welcome renowned author Parmy Olson, known for her acclaimed works *We Are Anonymous* and her most recent book, *Supremacy*.

This event was part of a wider careers seminar focused on the tech sector and tech journalism. In preparation, three of us—Kyan, Prajwal, and I—who demonstrated a strong interest in Olson's work were given the opportunity to read one of the three copies of *Supremacy* first purchased by the school, under the supervision of the Head of the Languages Department, Mrs. Antonella Gabriele.

Over two months, we engaged in in-depth discussions about the book, both within school and in the wider community. Our analysis and reflections led to final preparations for an extraordinary opportunity: a live Q&A session with the author, accompanied by a presentation on *Supremacy*, the role of journalism in the tech industry, and the future of technology.

In the days leading up to the event, we held final discussions and carefully prepared thought-provoking questions based on our reading. Our enthusiasm and curiosity culminated in an engaging session where we had the chance to gain firsthand insight into Olson's perspectives and writing process. The main hall buzzed with excitement as students gathered to explore this fascinating profession, with even those outside the original reading group offering their own viewpoints.

Among the most compelling questions were those posed by Kyan Louis Navaja, whose background in philosophy led to deep reflections on the ethics of AI. Meanwhile, some lighter questions touched on internet culture, including the phenomenon of "Shrimp Jesus" and its connection to the idea of a "dying internet."

The event proved to be an inspiring and unforgettable experience, marked by the intellectual curiosity and enthusiasm of students eager to understand the ever-evolving world of technology and journalism.

by Okeroghene Ekperuoh

Physics Department:

We are thrilled to announce that George Bailey has achieved an extraordinary feat, earning a place at the British Physics Olympiad selection and training camp at Jesus College, Oxford this Easter. This highly competitive, week-long program aims to select the UK's representatives for the International Physics Olympiad.

George's invitation comes as a result of his outstanding performance in the Astronomy Round 2 Olympiad, where he achieved a Gold Award, placing him among the top 14 students in the country. To add to his impressive accomplishments, he also secured a Gold Award in the Round 2 Physics Olympiad.

This achievement makes George only the second student in WCGS history to progress to Round 2, and the only one to achieve Gold Awards in both disciplines.

Furthermore, we'd like to celebrate the success of other students in the Round 1 Physics Olympiad held in November:

Silver Awards: Bharat Haria, Omar Qamar, and Harry Young
Bronze Awards: Jokisan Sivasakthivel and Christopher Finch

Congratulations to all our students for their hard work and remarkable achievements in these challenging competitions. We wish George the very best of luck at the training camp in Oxford.





Music Department: Play the Organ 2025

This February, St Mary's church Beddington opened up a fantastic opportunity for a local student to win an organ scholarship and have free organ lessons for the year, when Mrs martin sent me the advert for it I immediately jumped at the opportunity, as playing the organ has always been an ambition for me, however until now an unachievable one as I am not from a religious background and had never really been to church. After a few meetings with the church organist and now my fantastic teacher David Moore, they decided to award me this scholarship. The organ is an incredible instrument, each one different, and with the building built around it. Something that surprised me very much was that not only do you play the 3 manuals(keyboards) with your 2 hands, but there is an entire keyboard played with your feet also! It is extremely inspiring to watch David as a complete expert in multitasking all the required actions of playing the organ perfectly while having a conversation with me also.

By Ms J Martin, Head of Music



Me sitting at the organ console

Overall, it has been an incredible experience, learning and practicing the organ, and I am incredibly grateful for St Mary's Beddington for accepting me as a scholar even without a background. I have also joined in with other church music such as choirs etc when I am not playing.

Special thanks goes to my teacher David, the choir director Pam, and the rector Andrew for all helping me along on my musical journey.

By [Elliott Little](#), Year 10



*From everyone at WCGS,
we wish you a very
wonderful Easter term
break and look forward
to seeing you again
in late April 2025.*