



@oakwood

December - 2022

# OPGS Winter Showcase

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

Welcome to a bumper edition of @Oakwood. There are in excess of 30 articles here detailing the wonderful achievements of our pupils, thanks in most part to the efforts of our staff. Congratulations to everyone and as ever, a big thank you to Mr Peacock, Miss Goodhew and Mr Solly who make up our Publicity Team and devote many hours to compiling and collating all the reports.

I hope you enjoy @Oakwood and a Happy Christmas and New Year to everyone.

Best wishes



Mr K.W. Moody - Headteacher

STRIVE

AND

SERVE

# Art Enrichment Day

For the Year 8 Creative Arts Enrichment Day - the Art department had 32 students take part in a soapstone carving workshop.

The day started with students exploring the work of Peter Randall-Page. They investigated his famous walnut drawings and saw how he developed these into sculptures. Students then selected a natural form and developed their own abstract sculpture. They did this by carefully drawing out their chosen natural object and then through a range of design drawings finalised a sculptural idea. From here students carefully carved a piece of soap stone using a range of tools and techniques. Students finished their sculptures by carefully sanding them and applying a special polish. The students engaged in the project maturely producing a range of lovely work, showing great skill and understanding of sculpture. The Art department will be displaying the work in school for all to enjoy and wish to congratulate Year 8 on their hard work during the day.



# Winter Showcase

A concoction of anticipation, exhilaration with hints of apprehension and trepidation sweeps through the hearts of the performers as the drummer begins the countdown to the opening act of the Oakwood Park Grammar School's Winter Showcase.

The day before, actors and musicians alike streamed into the first full cast rehearsal, with an unease lingering in the air. Despite months of practice and preparation, the daunting realisation of the event arriving strikes a slight concern in some. Despite this, the pupils quickly set to work readying costumes, arranging musical instruments, and calibrating lighting systems. The minor anxiousness felt before vanishes.

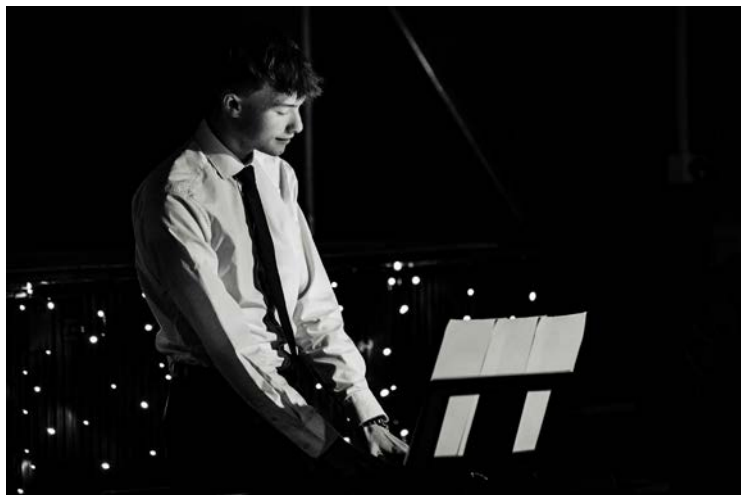
After a full day of rehearsal, preparation, and repetition, the students once again enter the School Hall on Thursday, with the show looming down their neck. However, by now, excitement has taken the place of any unrest one may have felt.



Once the show was once more practiced, that was it. The next time that anybody would perform their piece would be on stage, in front of a hall packed with people. Yet during this time, we were never thrown in the deep end by the teachers whose unrelenting dedication and devotion brought together 14 different acts into one final piece of entertainment.









And so, the drummer counts the song in, the guitarist readies his plectrum, the pianist sits, fingers on the first chord, the flutist poises his thin, silver stick by his lips, the violinist and her bow, ready to glide over strings and the singer holds his microphone and the Sixth-Form Band launches into the evening with “The Chain” by Fleetwood Mac.

For me, this night is much greater than just a performance; it is a celebration. A carnival of the plethora of talent this school contains. Being up on the stage in War Horse, the dry ice tickling my nostrils, the gunfire of war cutting through the air

and the audience captivated by the spectacle, there is truly nothing comparable. To have such an event to showcase all that we as performers love, I speak for both myself and my contemporaries when I say that we are truly grateful. Thank you.

**Ifan Bambury T10**





# Beyond the Frozen Horizon

Oakwood Park Grammar School, have once again been in partnership with The Reading Agency, to gift students the chance to read and review some topical texts straight from the publishers.

The Reading Agency have a vision for a world where everyone is reading their way to a better life. Every year they help 1.9 million people tackle life's big challenges through the proven power of reading. OPGS are able to take part in their project by working with a range of publishers to give our students first look at some exciting new literature. Students in Year 9 were given the opportunity to be the first to get their hands on Beyond the Frozen Horizon.

The students were able to join Rory, in this thrilling and thought-provoking ecological adventure, as she fights for the future of our precious world.

The earth is thriving – with wilderness status protecting land and wildlife, and scientific organisations researching new ways to support human life sustainably. Rory's mum is a geologist on one of these projects, and Rory is beyond excited to join her on a work trip to the Arctic. But the project isn't all that it seems, and Rory soon learns what's at stake for the people and animals that live there...

If you would like to broaden your own horizons, through the power of reading this winter, why not take up the Winter Reading Challenge? The Reading Agency teamed up with WWF UK to create the Wild World Heroes - exploring nature and action for the environment through reading. Join them as they embark on an Arctic adventure, to find out about the creatures that live there, and the environmental issues facing this remote place. The Winter Reading Challenge will run from Wednesday 1 December and finish on Sunday 16 January 2022.

To take part, students simply need to read three books or more - these can be any books of their choice. Every time they finish a book, they add it to their Challenge website profile and leave a short book review. Reaching their online reading goal will unlock a special virtual badge and a new Wild World Hero certificate to print off and keep! You will also be able to find fun activities, videos and reading recommendations, plus an exciting competition.

To find out more or to sign up to take part, please visit the link:

<https://summerreadingchallenge.org.uk/>



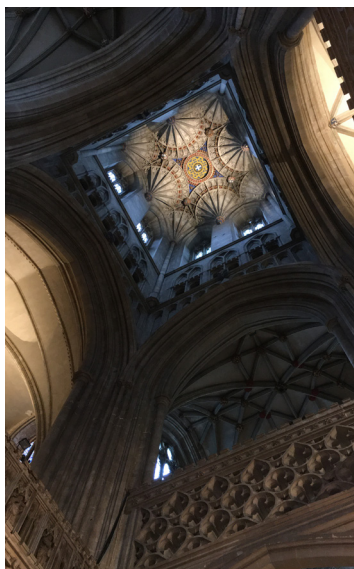
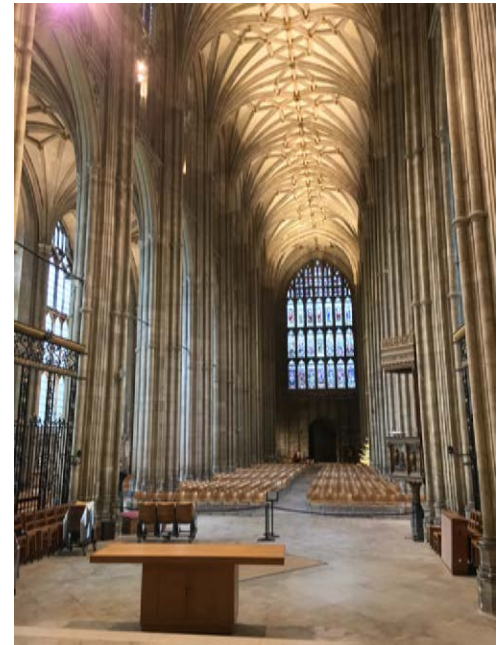
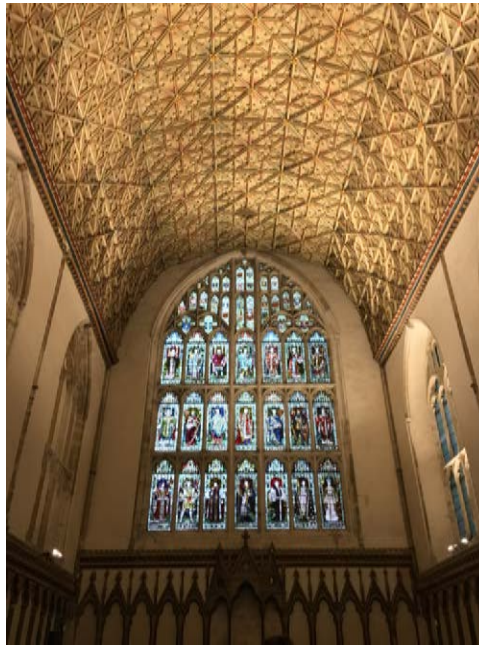


# Canterbury Cathedral Trip

On the Maths and History Enrichment Day to Canterbury Cathedral, Year 9 experienced a tour of this famous building and then carried out Maths activities including calculating the height of the tower and 'real world' questions on a short town trail.

On Thursday 1st December, Year 9 went on a Maths trip to Canterbury. The day started when we arrived in Canterbury by coach, making our way towards the cathedral we were welcomed by the Christ Church gate which was completed in 1520. It forms the main entrance to the cathedral grounds. Entering through the gate we were welcomed by the volunteers who would be showing us around the cathedral.

The year was split into multiple sections, and each designated an incredibly knowledgeable tour guide to show them around; starting down in the depths of the crypt where Thomas Beckett was originally laid to rest and making our way up to the Trinity Chapel which was built as an extension to the Cathedral. The trinity chapel was intended to be a shrine to Thomas Beckett, being built between 1179 and 1184. We also ate lunch in the cathedral before moving back outside to complete the maths problem of calculating the height of the Cathedral. The last part of the day was spent looking around the town before heading back to the coaches. The day was a very enjoyable one and will hopefully be enjoyed by the current Year 8s just as much, next year.



# Maidstone Food Bank Christmas Appeal

We are pleased to be supporting Maidstone Food Bank this year as part of our annual Christmas charity work. We have supported the charity in the past, however, Covid prevented food collections for two years and last year the charity requested money donations only due to ongoing restrictions. Year 12 and Year 11 Prefects are running the collection and will visit morning registration to collect donated items from students and staff across the school.

We are really aware that this is a difficult financial time for many families and your support, if you are able to give it, is really appreciated. The charity has reported a huge rise in people being referred to them for help by GPs, KCC, Citizens Advice Bureau and other support agencies. Last month the charity gave out over 300 food parcels out compared to 80 at the same time last year.

The Department of Health describes food poverty as “The inability to afford, or to have access to, food to make up a healthy diet.”

## So, what is the role of a food bank?

Food banks are charity or community organisations that can help people who struggle to afford to buy enough food to eat. The products available in food banks consist of basic items that people need to live. The Trussell Trust found that from April to September 2022, 1.3 million emergency food parcels were given to people in crisis. Indeed, the mainstream media have also recently reported the decision for national strike action by The Royal College

of Nursing (RCN)– the first in its 106-year history – on 15 and 20 December, is, in part, due to the fact many nurses are having to turn to food banks to cover the cost to feed themselves and their families.

## What can we do to help?

The charity have requested non-perishable donations and in particular are in need of:

- Super Noodles
- Microwave Rice
- Cup a Soups
- Tinned Goods
- Sugar
- Frey Bentos Pies
- Fruit Squash
- Tinned Fruit
- Tinned Custard
- Long Life Milk
- Instant Mash
- Toiletries – toothpaste, deoderant

Please remember that many of the donations will be going to families with children therefore non-perishable items or toiletries suitable for this age group would be welcomed. Thank you for the gift of giving this Christmas, especially at a time when everyone is enduring a cost of living crisis, every item donated can make a huge difference.



# UK Bebras Challenge

In November, 509 Computing students from across years 7-13 took part in the UK Bebras challenge competition.

Further information can be found here: <https://challenge.bebras.uk/>

The aim of the Bebras Challenge is to solve as many problems as you can in 40 minutes. The problems come in three levels of difficulty: A, B and C. The "A" problems are the easiest. "C" problems the hardest.

The difficulty of a problem determines how it will be scored. The scoring rules are as follows:

| Difficulty | Correct | Incorrect | Unanswered |
|------------|---------|-----------|------------|
| A          | +6      | 0         | 0          |
| B          | +9      | -2        | 0          |
| C          | +12     | -4        | 0          |

Year 7 students participated in the Junior category, Years 8 & 9 in the Intermediate category, Years 10 & 11 in the senior category and years 12 & 13 in the Elite category.

## Results

- 149 students participated in the Junior category and 38 were awarded a distinction with Lewis Silk from S7 being awarded best in school.
- 301 students participated in the Intermediate category and 77 were awarded a distinction with Flynn Hardy from T9 being awarded best in school.
- 42 students participated in the senior category and 12 were awarded a distinction with Arthur Mak from T10 being awarded best in school, achieving full marks and ranking number 1 nationally.
- 20 students participated in the Elite category, with 6 achieving distinction and Jacob Whittaker from year 12 being awarded best in school.

82 students from OPGS were placed in the top 10% nationally in the Bebras and were therefore invited to take part in the Oxford University

Computing Challenge.

This is a competition organised by the department of Computer Science at Oxford University. Further information can be found here: <https://www.bebras.uk/index.php?action=content&id=42>

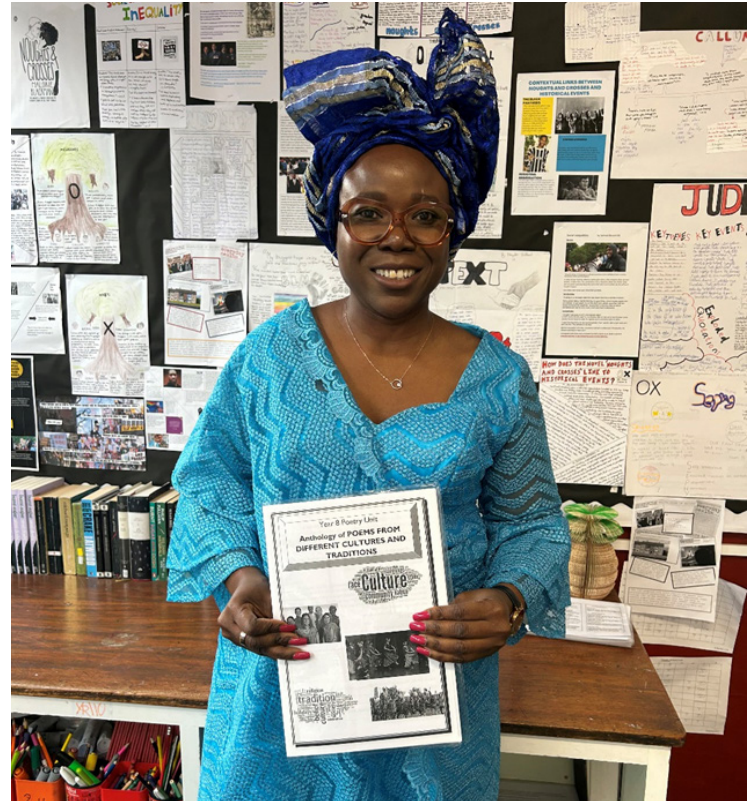
This will take place in the week commencing 16th January.

We hope to run these challenges again next year – if students would like to practice in preparation for this, some past challenges are available on the UK Bebras website.



During their English studies, Year 8 students had the opportunity to become familiar with and analyse a range of poems from different cultures and compare how themes such as identity are explored.

The students have found this to be an enriching unit of study, many of whom have seen their own cultures represented in lessons. Ms George (English Subject Leader), pictured above, showcased to students in lesson her cultural dress from Nigeria to support their learning when studying 'Presents from my Aunts in Pakistan' by Moniza Alvi. This poem is about representing culture, even if you are in a different country.



## Paper Birds Theatre Company



Year 8 have been working with The Paper Birds Theatre Co on a VERBATIM project incorporating Puppetry, Physical Theatre and Reconstruction.

The Paper Birds is a devising theatre company, with a social and political agenda. We are recognised as UK leaders in devised verbatim theatre. We're artists, investigators, entrepreneurs, educators. We pride ourselves on taking complex, multi-faceted subjects and making them accessible. We have an artistic programme and a creative learning programme and nurture both equally.

The Year 8 students really enjoyed their experience and produced some fantastic work.

# Design Museum Trip

by Erik Ogilvy

Term 2 of the A-level Year 12 and 13 Design and Technology courses at OPGS saw an exciting trip to the Design Museum located on Kensington High street.

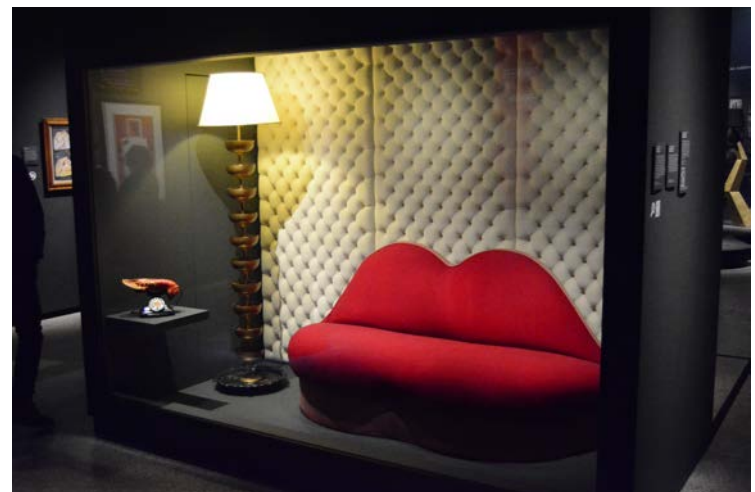
The day trip, though filled with a multitude of different experiences, was centred on sustainability of products and re-designing products to assign different uses from products with previous uses.

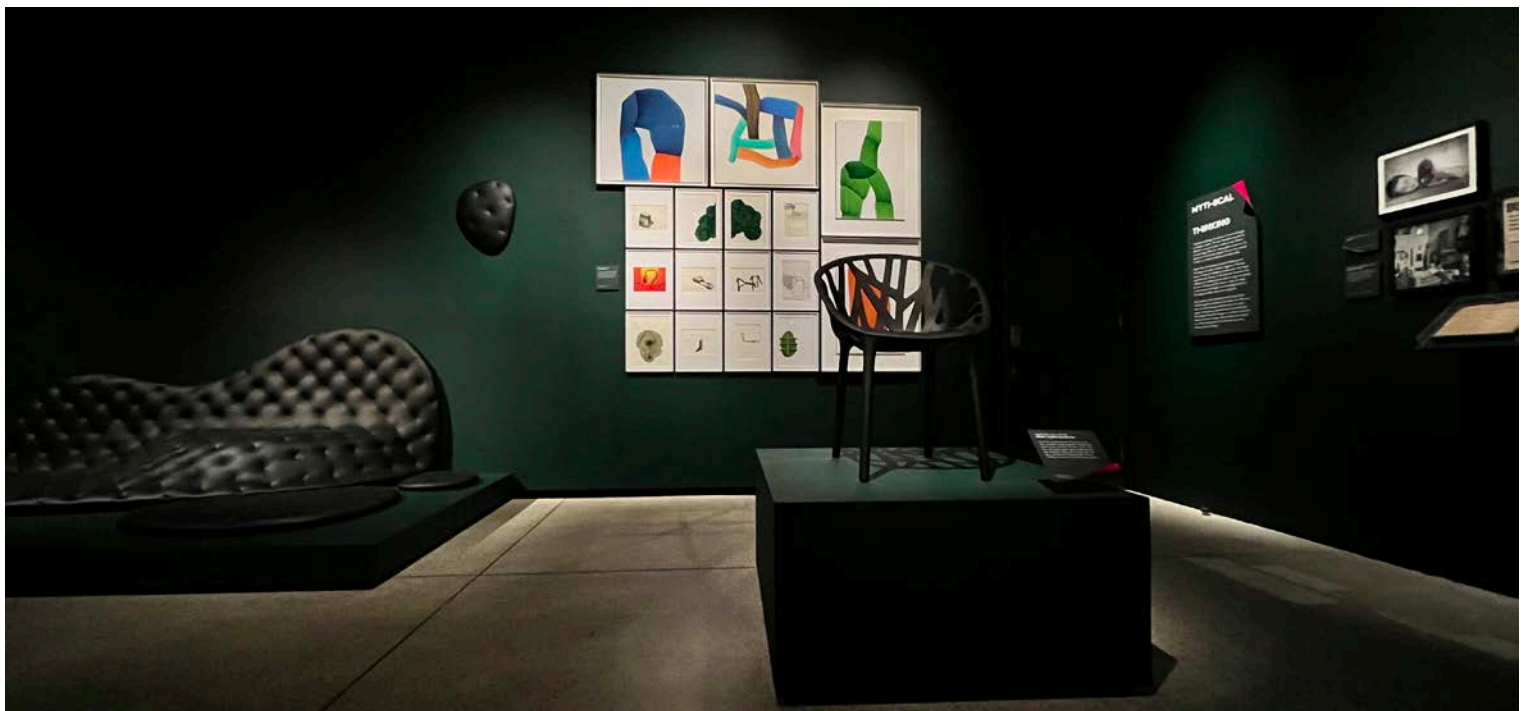
Despite the centred theme of the day being on sustainability, the tour of the Design Museum began with a delve into the world of ASMR with the exclusive exhibition: 'Weird Sensation Feels Good- The World of ASMR'. The title conveys both common emotions when commenting on ASMR, unfamiliarity for most and a odd sense of satisfaction from its content. In collaboration with ArkDes Sweden's national centre of architecture and design; the trip displayed a series of visual and auditory works designed to elicit physical or sensual feedback of a positive nature.

Following on, the students of D.T then went on to a conference and lecture focused on sustainability of products, most notably through recycling products and finding uses for products with previous uses. The lecture addresses challenges of the time, those being the call for sustainable development in aims to combat climate change head on and increase the health of the environment. Design Museum put themselves, as a strong and impressionable establishment, at the forefront of change by holding these lectures and displaying eco-friendly products and calling on those who participate to change.



Concluding the school outing, sights were set on an art exhibition titled: 'Objects of desire: Surrealism and Design 1942– Today'. Within this exhibition the students were given an insight into the relationship between surrealism and design, spanning from as early as 1942 to today. The display established a clear difference between the years whilst emphasising the significant shared values within all surreal pieces, a truly captivating and often unprecedented representation of surrealism.





# French Enrichment Day

Below are a few reviews from students of the French enrichment day.

To me, Enrichment Days are one of the most invigorating days of my scholastic calendar. A day of purely one subject, and for this term I was pleased to note that I was allocated French. Not only did I expand my knowledge of the language, but I got the opportunity to experience the rich culture. After tasting a French delicacy (a crispy baguette paired with the dark, bitter chocolate of the country), watching documentaries about French food, translating recipes, listening to French songs, watching cartoons in French and writing about the food we tried, I can thoroughly say I had “une bonne journée”!

## Ifan Bambury T10

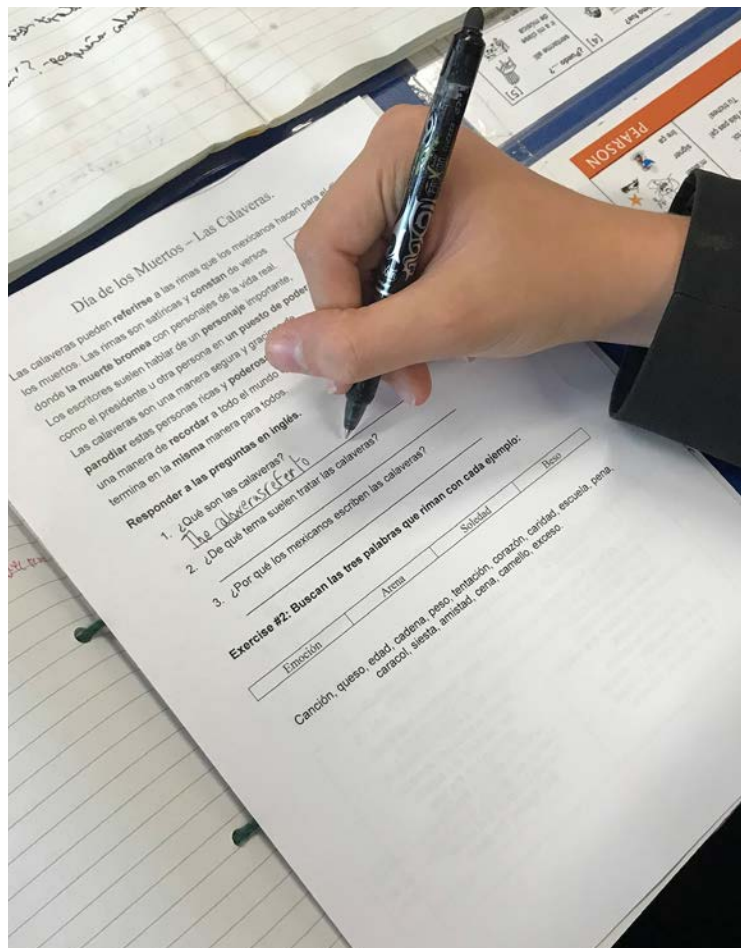
I really enjoyed the French Enrichment Day because it was very interesting to learn about different celebrations and cultures in different countries. It was also nice to be able to translate some traditional French recipes that I could potentially use at home as well as make a French snack. Being able to watch French cartoons was very fun and enabled you to test your French knowledge in a fun way. The documentary about Raymond Blanc was very interesting as it helped me understand some of the traditional dishes in France, as well as showing how much effort and time goes into making the meals. The GCSE written task was good because it gave me an idea of what questions I would be facing in my real GCSE exam and enabled me to practise and develop my skills. Overall, I really enjoyed the day, and it was enjoyable because it had a wide range of activities to complete.

## Lewis Best P10

At the start of the enrichment day, we listened to a song and filled in a worksheet about the lyrics of the song. The song was fascinating and was about a cancelled family picnic because they forgot to bring an umbrella and it rained badly! Then, we moved onto the part everyone liked: making some delicious French food! We put some butter into the French bread. After that, we added some dark chocolate bar which is the most

important component and makes it so delicious. If it could be softened or molten that would be ‘even more perfect’! Next, we translated some recipes. One of them was a chocolate cake and I am definitely going to try it for my next birthday! Then, we practised a GCSE style 90-word writing task. Remember to ‘eat’ your ‘croissant’! We then moved on to watch a documentary about a French chef having a business in the UK preparing a Lyon local dinner for some special guests. It included how he decided which dishes to prepare and how he created it under time pressure. All of the special guests thought it was excellent. After lunch, we learned about how people in France celebrate the 14th July. The 14th July is a bank holiday in France, and if it falls on Tuesday or Thursday, there will be an extra day of bank holiday to form a 4-day long weekend. People remember those who passed away by putting some special types of flowers on people’s graves. We also learned about its origin and its relationship with the Catholic Church as France is a Catholic country. I loved the Enrichment Day, I learned a lot more about France from it.

## Marcus Choi X10



# Duxford IWM Year 8:

## Miss Aldous:

On the 10th November, Year 8 students visited Duxford Imperial War Museum to learn about how aviation technology has affected warfare in the C20th. For many students this was their first experience of seeing military aircraft and vehicles up close and many were amazed by the size and scale of the exhibits. This knowledge will be returned to later in Year 8 History lessons on the First and Second World Wars.

## Tamas Kovacs S8:

The Duxford trip was amazing since we not only got to see many famous aircraft but we also learnt many interesting facts about them. I particularly enjoyed finding out about how aircrafts changed over the years. I looked at planes from WWII and compared them with modern day planes to see how astronomical the changes were. Some aircraft we saw were: Spitfires, B-24 Liberator, Hurricanes, and so much more. As well as this, I learnt about how Renato Niemis made a war memorial (Counting the Cost) depicting different types of planes to show how many and what types of planes were lost. In addition to this, we also saw the RAWM (Royal Anglian War Memorial) to commemorate the lost lives of British military personnel.

## George Goodyer S8:

The trip to Duxford can only be described in one word: spectacular. The artefacts and history stored in the hangars are worth millions of pounds. I don't think anyone actually realised how special and amazing the planes were. After all, they did help us win wars and help us progress to having one of the best armies in the world. Everyone was extremely respectful whilst we paid our respect for the soldiers at the memorial. Additionally, I had had no idea how strong our connection with America was, until I saw the collaborations together. One of the most interesting spaces was the map room; it had been untouched since the war. Just the thought of the machinery/resources there last being touched by war veterans was astounding. I have a strong feeling towards the Supermarine Spitfire, and I adored seeing them up close. I felt so privileged to see one take off and land.



## Kaylen Williams S8:

Very enjoyable, best enrichment day yet, the history there was very fascinating. We saw many planes and vehicles from the First and Second World War and also from the Cold War in the American Air Museum. There were many memorable events such as going onboard a Concorde and seeing all the instruments inside.





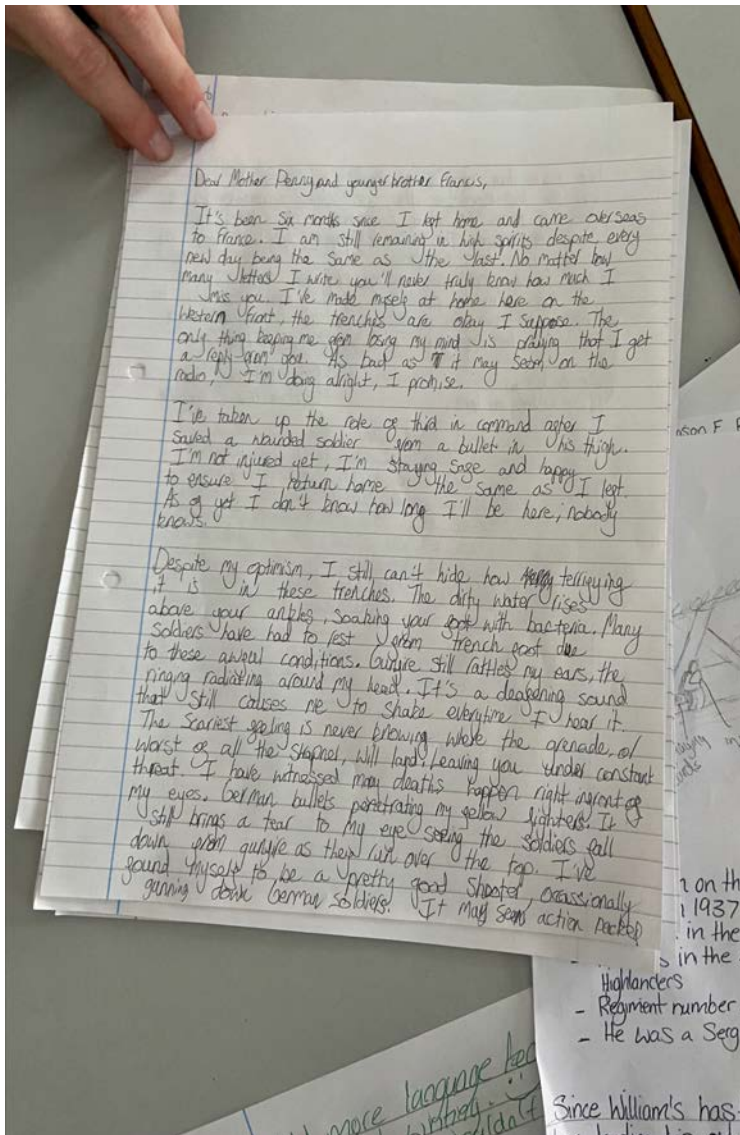


# Y9 Enrichment Day: Remembrance Day WW1 poetry and letters.

Today we looked at life inside of the trenches and letters from WW1 soldiers, we made mind maps on what the soldiers were feeling and the features of WW1.

We replicated the letters, analysed them, sketched what the scene would have been like and presented them to the class. After, we analysed a poem called In Flanders Field, then we wrote a poem inspired by the war using some techniques from the poem.

This made me feel more aware of what the soldiers had to go through, the poems show the sadness of the war and the letters show how much the soldiers regret enlisting and how bad the conditions were. I enjoyed writing the poems though, and I think it is important to try and see the war from a soldiers perspective.



# Year 7 Literacy Lesson

## Descriptive Writing

I am delighted to share with you some of the amazing work that our Year 7 have done this term!

They have been busy developing their use of language in their literacy lessons.

They have applied some of the vocabulary learnt for their spelling text in writing a description of 'A Sweet Shop'.

I hope you enjoy some of the excellent piece of descriptive writing.

**Ms George - English Subject Lead/  
Whole School Literacy Lead**

### The Sweet Shop

Amazingly, my eyes were dragged towards the illuminating window from all the vibrant colour-packed sweets. My nose was pressed against the glass steaming up my view of the goods on the inside.

Thinking and considering whether to go inside with my weekly pocket money, I stood just staring at the sign, 'Sugarman's World of Sweets'. The name for sure took my fancy.

The shop bell rung as the door swung open: wafts of sugary treats almost rocked my off my feet. Like Neil Armstrong, I took one great leap into the shop and already the sweets lit up in my eyes like a glistening star.

Clanking and clunking sounded from excited children as they impatiently twisted the spectacular gumball machines, almost blocking out the rustling and crunching of paper bags.

The sour tang of sour sweets slithered up my nose making my eyes tear up and sting. At the same time, the taste of strawberries danced at the back of my throat. Joy and happiness pulsed through my veins as the perfect sweet suddenly lit up in my widening eyes.

I slowly walked towards Haribo gummy bears. My excited and stunned hands twisted the machine and to my surprise out came a handful of gummy bears. Reacting immediately, I raced to the cashier; their face lit up to see such a delighted boy. I slumped the £1 on the counter and swiped the bag under my nose to smell such wonders in my very grasp.

Full of good spirit, I skipped and galloped out the door to go home; even as a I did, I could still smell the lingering odour of 'Sugarman's World of Sweets', creating a spectacular memory.

**Daniel Piper P7**

### The Labyrinth of Sugar

The pungent smell of fresh, tender fruit and sweet, golden honey ambled its way through the shops open window as it slithered through my dry throat, giving me the feeling of elation. The sweets seemed as if they had been chiselled straight from a rainbow as they glistened in the evening sun like diamonds.

The tangy scent of pineapple contorted through my tongue, as I could see hundreds upon hundreds of sweets that laid in there untouched, beckoning for my hands to reach in and save them from their drudgery.

The shop became a stampede, and more children surged their way through the doors like rapacious monsters awaiting their next victims. The bell at the door reiterated through my ears inviting me in. I couldn't resist any more, so I pushed my way through the queue and made my way inside. My hands wiggled around in excitement as I entered the maze of sweets that piled the shelves. Now that I was in the shop I wasn't coming out.

Rows of gumball machines and chocolate bar dispensers layered the walls like a fleet of troops ready for war. They were stuffed with sweets, each one uniquely different. I couldn't resist but take as

many as I could clench in my hands. The thought of eating them floated around in my head making me dizzy. When I had filled as many bags as possible, I rushed to the till.

Suddenly, the worst possible thing happened, I realized that I didn't have any money with me. I stared down at the bags I was barely clasping in my sticky hands. Was I dreaming or was it a reality? I looked around at all the children frolicking with joy as they skipped out of the shop with their bags of sweets in their hands. These sweets were my only hope and now they were gone.

## Archie Spreckley P7

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## Danny Dale's Super Sweet Shop

Birds whistled in the sky as I waited in the longest queue for the candy shop to open. I could already taste the succulent fresh confectionary mixing with my moisty saliva, pushing it past my wiggly uvula through my broad throat and into my stomach. I have been in the line for twenty minutes, but it felt more like twenty days.

Hallucination came across my mind as my lips

dried, my sight went blurry, and my taste buds were gradually fading away. I couldn't handle the hunger, so I snuck my way through the endless, straight line which was like a caterpillar.

Discreetly, I managed to get past the starving people, but one evil, malevolent toddler had the audacity to rat me out of pushing in the line, which got me furious. Innumerable people ambushed me to the back of the line. Tears drenched my pale face when I got to the back. The store officially opened.

As soon as the closed sign flipped over to an open sign, everyone dashed in, selecting all the candies and sweets the place offered. It was a dream come true to get here, and it was now time to make the most of my dreams coming true.

Collections and varieties of tasty delicacies were being cleared off the shelves fast, so I had to decide what I wanted swiftly.

In the meantime, my lips moistened, my sight went clear, and my taste buds went extreme. There was one more packed of limited edition Haribo, and it was all going to be mine. The sugary sweet with gooey and sticky insides, and a smooth shaped outside really gives your mouth a tangy burst of gelatine. I gave the cashier the money at the register. He scanned the packet; he gave me a receipt and I got the Haribo! I opened the packet, and I got a zingy smell, a zingy feeling and a zingy taste.

## Darren Orji X7

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**Lucas Older, Morgan Taylor and Cayden Lockheed (and others) are building 6 mud kitchens at school, in an after school DT club which they formed a few months ago.**

The project was instigated by Mr Richard Dalton the Head Teacher at St Nicholas Senior School in Canterbury, a special needs school.

Mr Peacock has encouraged the boys to use the school facility and has approved the design that

Lucas has produced.

The boys have designed, costed, negotiated, purchased materials, planned manufacture, estimated waste and kept it to a minimum, researched materials and organised logistics with the support of the school.

Lucas and potentially the others hope to visit St Nicholas School to see the mud kitchens in situ and to see the children playing with them.

## DT Club.

## Year 7 Football

The Year 7 football teams have continued to make progress and improve throughout the second term and despite not being able to have a sustained run in the Kent or ESFA cups they have gained valuable experience from playing against stronger schools. They have managed to top their Maidstone Schools FA group which will see them play against Wrotham and Cornwallis for a place in the semi-finals. As with most of the younger teams at Oakwood Park, it can take a little time adjusting to the playing style and ethos of the school. Both the A and B teams are already starting to be braver on the ball and looking to build their attacks from the back.

## Year 8 Football

The Year 8 footballers are continuing to develop and we are able to select two strong sides to compete in all competitions. Following early exits in the English Schools Cups the 'A' team have continued their success in the Kent Cup as current holders. A 2-1 win against local rivals Maidstone Grammar School, who had a strong side, put us through to the fourth round. This was followed by winning 2-1 against Fulston Mannor. This has been even more impressive during a time when illness has struck and players have been asked to play out of position at times. The team have coped well this season with the pressures that come with success and following the early defeats have regained their confidence and are now the first team to make the quarter finals of the Kent Cup.

The Year 8 'B' team are very strong again and follow up from last year's successes in both Maidstone, Kent and ESFA cups. A superb 7-0 win against Dover GS followed by another 4-0 win against Harvey GS in the quarter finals puts us through to the semi-finals of the Kent Cup against Hurstmere School. Having beaten Hurstmere last year we know they will provide a strong opposition and like us can be considered one of the strongest footballing schools in Kent. I look forward to reporting on this result soon. In the English Schools Cup another 6-0 win against Dover GS placed us in the last 32 against Buckswood

school near Hastings. The professional coaches that run their academy had their team playing some of the best football I have seen at this age group in school football. The patterns of play and individual talent was something to be admired and appreciated. However, we also have many talented players and with a resilient, battling performance managed to win 3-1. This puts the OPGS B team in the top 16 schools in the national competition. It also demonstrates to the boys that with teamwork, communication and determination you can achieve anything. We hope to repeat the feats of last year and reach the quarter finals. The players should take strength from the fact they will not play against many better teams as we continue to progress in the competition.

The achievements of both teams this season is a credit to all players in Year 8 and both Mr Devonald and Mr Smith are excited about the prospects of this year group as they progress through the school.

## Year 9 Football

Both the A and B teams in this age group have had excellent seasons to date, with the B team making the Semi Final of the Kent Cup. They had an excellent 2-1 win over Tunbridge Wells GS in the previous round but their run in the competition was ended by a strong Ravenswood team. The team have really been a credit to the school and it has given many more students a valuable experience playing in these types of competitions.

The A team were unfortunately knocked out of the ESFA cup in term one on penalties but have used this defeat as extra motivation to drive them on in both the KSFA and MSFA competitions. In the MSFA cup they safely navigated through the first rounds and then needed to gain 4 points out of a possible 6 to qualify for the semi-finals. They did so by beating Cornwallis 5-1 and then coming back from 3-0 down to earn a well-deserved point and a 3-3 draw with Wrotham.

In the Kent Cup they have beaten Westlands and St Johns (8-0) on their way to the round of 16 where they play Charles Darwin.

## Year 10 Football

The Year 10 football team have played incredibly well throughout all their competitions this season. They had an excellent run in the ESFA Cup, narrowly losing 2-0 to a strong Bonus Pastor team in round 4. They have bounced back with strong displays in the MSFA competition, and a 4-1-win vs Cornwallis sets the squad up to reach the MSFA Cup semi-finals next term.

## 1st XI Football

The 1st XI finally kick started their season with a convincing performance vs Borden GS at home. The team raced into a 3-0 lead with only a few minutes on the clock but somehow managed to make it seem a bit closer, conceding 2 goals. Nevertheless, it was a win and the team then made it two wins from two games with a 3-0-win vs Chatham & Clarendon. A bit like buses, the teams' third win of the season was in their very next match vs Dane Court where they hit the opposition for 6 in a brilliant 6-1 win at home. The final game of November was a trip to Dover and despite a valiant effort the streak ended with a 4-3 defeat. There is still a lot to play for, they host Harvey GS, who themselves need to win to give them a chance of being crowned champions and then there is the Kent Cup where they host

Langley Park in the round of 16.

## 2XI Football

The 2XI football team continue their unbeaten run this season in both league and cups under the guidance of Mr Devonald. The team are currently sitting second in the league on goal difference behind Simon Langton GS who are also unbeaten. Playing Simon Langton in a top of the table clash, both teams fought out a unbelievable 3-3 draw to maintain their unbeaten status in the league. A 2-1 win in the Kent Cup then meant the team played Simon Langton in the next round for a place in the quarter finals. Simon Langton started strongly and took a 3-0 lead into half-time. The showboating and overhead kicks by Simon Langton players seemed to motivate the OPGS side and following some tactical changes and a rousing half time team talk from Mr Devonald, the OPGS team scored early in the second half and then proceeded to score another three goals to win 4-3 to inflict Simon Langton's first defeat of the season. Our team is mainly a Year 11 side with a spine of more senior players. This blend has led to the players adapting and developing their play against boys who are at times two years older. Their confidence and belief have both increased and this is showing in performances this season. We hope that many will make the step into the first team next year.

# Year 8 Digital Literacy and Online Safety

Students in Year 8 had a session based around digital literacy and online safety. The workshop examined digital footprints and discussed ways to keep themselves safe and behave responsibly online.

For an overview of some of the session content you could watch this video: <https://youtu.be/OCo2z3TJ3Ws>

Parents who would like to know more about online safety might like to complete the FREE National Online Safety Course for Parents. The course covers parenting in a digital world, what young people are accessing online and common risks they may face. The course is tailored to the age of

your child and can be accessed via the following links:

- Annual Award in Online Safety for Parents & Carers of Children aged 11-14:

<https://nationalonlinesafety.com/hub/view/course/os-for-parents-carers-of-children-aged-11-14>

- Annual Award in Online Safety for Parents & Carers of Children aged 14-18:

<https://nationalonlinesafety.com/hub/view/course/os-for-parents-carers-of-children-aged-14-18>

# Graphics Enrichment Day

For the Year 8 Creative Arts Enrichment Day, 30 students took part in a Graphic Design workshop creating children's pop-up books.

The day started with students exploring their own ideas on the theme Animals & Dinosaurs and coming up with their own title, as well as a character to meet the brief requirements. From here the students then came up with design ideas for a front and back cover, as well as a double page spread inside. Students then developed their ideas with a range of materials and techniques, as well as learning several techniques of how to add a pop out and/or flap to their book. The students engaged in the project producing some creative prototypes of a childrens popup book, showing great skill and understanding of what is possible for a graphic design student. The Art department will be creating a display of the work in school and wish to congratulate Year 8 on their creative thinking and hard work during the day.



# November 2022- Hazlitt PE House Challenge

This month's house challenge involved students learning and performing their most ambitious hula hooping trick, which was judged by Hazlitt head of house, Miss Ghatauray, who chose the most well-practised and challenging trick.

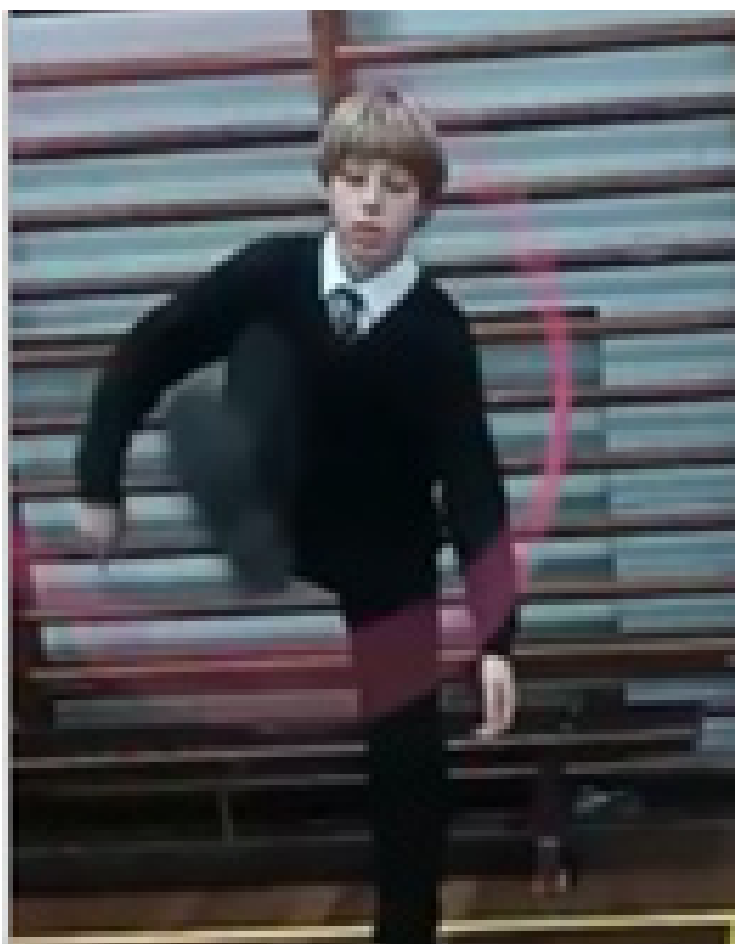
In order to help interested students with learning their tricks, there was a Year 7 hula hooping club run- encouraging students to learn new skills and enjoy a new hobby!

Some entries included: Ma'ad (Year 7) playing the trumpet while waist hooping, Adam (Year 9) doing a flip on a trampoline and kicking the hoop with his feet and also some videos of tricks learnt during the previously mentioned Year 7 hula hooping club on Monday lunchtimes.

After some difficult decisions by the competition's judge, the winners had to be chosen. In 3rd place, a tie between Ma'ad and Rohan D.. In 2nd place, George W.

Finally, in 1st place and the winner of the Hazlitt house challenge for November... Luke C!

Luke performed the 'escalator', which is a very difficult hula hooping trick which he learned and practiced at Monday's hula hooping club.





# History House Competition Winner Ifan Bambury T10

If by some currently undiscovered phenomenon, time could be reversed and a person could witness the events of the past,

I would choose to observe the sudden disappearance of all inhabitants of the colony, Roanoke. In one of the greatest mysteries in our history, a large group of people vanished during the time between the founder John White leaving for England, and returning three years later finding everybody had gone. Only minor evidence such as "CROATOAN" being carved into trees around the border of the settlement provide some explanation as to where they moved to. The nearby Croatoan Island may be where they were, but no real concrete explanation exists. Therefore, I would like to be able to have the answers by watching the event itself. However, I would not change anything as it is a baffling occurrence which puzzles even the sharpest historians.

The winner was Ifan Bambury T10 for his entry about solving a mystery concerning a missing group of people from 200 years ago.

Runners up were Matthew Ansell P7 and Jakub Druzkowski in 7T.



# Junior Rugby (Years 7&8)

Both the Year 7&8 rugby teams have enjoyed a successful second term with regular fixtures against other grammar schools. They also have the group stages of the annual Maidstone Schools Rugby Competition to look forward to in the final two weeks of this term. The year 8's will be defending the premiership trophy having beaten the Malling School in last year's competition. It will be the Year 7's first time in this competition giving them the chance to play against friends from other local Maidstone Schools.

The Year 7 rugby squad has come together well this term thanks to the work they have been doing during both PE lessons and training on Tuesday lunchtimes. Twenty five or more students have been attending this club throughout the term, giving the team an opportunity to develop and perform competitively in school fixtures. The team began this term with a tough fixture against Simon Langton School who had already played 5 matches in term 1. The boys showed great promise in this match, improving defensively as the game went on. Despite losing 45-10, the second half was tied 10-10 which showed the teams potential for future matches. Next came a home fixture vs. Chatham & Clarendon GS. OPGS started this game brilliantly, scoring three unanswered tries to lead by 15-0 at half time. Despite a strong second half comeback, the boys scored further tries to win by 30-15. The teams most recent fixture was against Norton Knatchbull GS. Without several key players the team struggled to repel the NKS forward play which eventually led to a 30-0 defeat. The team will play NKS again in term 3 giving them the opportunity to avenge this loss.

The Year 8 squad has grown considerably in term 2 with over twenty five students representing OPGS in competitive fixtures. The team have played against Simon Langton GS, Chatham & Clarendon GS and The Trinity School. The team took an early 10-0 lead in their first fixture against Simon Langton GS before missed tackles and some handling errors led to a battling 40-20 loss. This was still a strong performance given that Simon Langton had been doing rugby fixtures and curriculum PE since September. The boys then had a home fixture against Chatham & Clarendon GS in driving wind and rain! The team showed fantastic courage and determination to match the opposition physicality and prevail 20-0 winners thanks to tries from Ayman

Azeez and Will Minchin. This game was followed by an away fixture at Trinity School in Sevenoaks. 26 boys were selected for this fixture

## Year 9 & 10 Rugby

Unfortunately for the Year 9 squad, our season has been decimated by cancelled or postponed fixtures. We began the year with a warmup match v Gravesend Grammar School, our usual pre-season opponents. This match came a little early for us and we lost 12-27, but with plenty of promise from a squad who, if they trained regularly, would have a good season. We then drew Bullers Wood Boys' School in the area cup. A team we have not played before as they are a new school in the Bromley area. As a result, this would be a great challenge for these boys as Bromley based schools are traditionally well drilled. The match was played in great conditions for running rugby. Both teams had some key players who would dominate, with game plans played around them. It was a close game, but with players such as Oscar Hedges (running the game from scrum half with sniping runs and great defensive techniques) and Remi Scott-Boyle's (strong lines of running) gave us a great chance of winning the match.

Unfortunately, with 10 minutes left and after his third try, we lost Remi to injury and this disheartened the squad a little as we needed his go forward to galvanise the team. Bullers Wood School ran in a couple of late tries to take the match away from OPGS with the game ending in a 24-36 loss. Following on from this match, the season has not gone to plan. We have had a number of fixtures cancelled, or played in awful conditions which have not been conducive to fluent rugby.

I would like to encourage all involved to take the opportunities offered to them after Christmas. We have employed a coach to support Mr Keeling-Jones with the coaching and run training every Friday lunchtime alongside the Year 10 squad. Only a handful of students have been committed to this time, namely Harrison Munday, Alex Butler, Ben Dauncey, Joel Daulagala and Caine Wright. If we can improve commitment to training, then I would be confident to say that we can replicate the success of our current Under 15 squad in the Kent Shield next season.

# Juniors Sketch for Survival competition

Sophia Pelc in Year 12 was selected as one of the finalists from this year's Juniors Sketch for Survival competition for her beautiful painting of penguins.

Sketch for Survival is a global art initiative in aid of conservation run by Explorers Against Extinction. Sketch for Survival helps to raise awareness about species extinction and biodiversity loss while also raising funds for projects around the world.

100 finalists are selected from around the world

including entries from most countries in Europe, China, India, Philippines, Australia, Canada, USA and South Africa to name but a few. Finalists win a place on the round the world exhibition tour alongside artworks donated by professional artists. All of the donated artworks are sold with proceeds going to the project fund. In 2021 £90,000 was raised for conservation projects.

We congratulate Sophia on this amazing achievement and are looking forward to her future creative successes.



# Kent Shield Rugby Champions

The Under 15 Rugby squad are growing from strength to strength. The change in commitment and dedication to their development this season is currently reading as played 8 matches, won 6, lost 1 and drawn 1, having scored 141 points and had 89 against us. This is potentially one of the most successful Under 15 teams we have ever had in the school. Their passion and team spirit is amazing and one I would love to see replicated throughout all of our rugby squads.

The season started with a warm up match v Gravesend Grammar which was cancelled due to ground conditions. This was not ideal preparation for our round 1 match in the National Cup v Maidstone Grammar School. This said, we arrived at Maidstone ready to battle on the pitch. The game was a hard fought match, with no side really dominating. The tactical play from both sides was keeping everyone alert and both defences had to work hard to keep each other away from the try line. Maidstone were first to break the battle line, scoring a well worked try. However, this did not dishearten the squad but in fact galvanised them, and we responded with 2 unconverted tries taking the match to 10-7 with a few minutes left. Maidstone GS had the opportunity to win as they had a penalty 5 metres out, which they chose to kick for 3 points to draw the match, rather than keep the ball alive to win the match. Due to the competition regulations, this allowed us to progress to round 2 as the away team (and having scored more tries). A great start to the season which would see us face Skinner's School in round 2, a real tough challenge away from home.

Our next match was against Norton Knatchbull, traditionally a forward dominated team who we have found hard to cope with in years 8&9. However, this season saw a much-developed team and we dominated the match with our fast-paced game plan, clear strategies and routines of play, winning 39-15 in the first round of the Kent Shield.

Skinner's closely followed the success in the Kent Shield and we travelled with confidence to the away venue. Skinner's we knew would be a hard team to beat as they are traditionally a well drilled and organised school, and this proved to be the case. We started with good intent, playing our game plan and trying to break the defensive line. But Skinner's proved too organised for us and we

struggled to beat them on first phase ball. We did find that when we counter attacked and the game opened up a little they were prone to defensive weaknesses, but unfortunately OPGS failed to capitalise and execute effectively, eventually losing 51-10. The boys still came away from the match with a view to what they wanted to achieve, with something to strive for and they were determined to make those changes and ensure our season became more positive.

The focus now turned to the Kent Shield Competition, something we have never won at this age group at the school, and something we wanted to rectify. Our next opponents were Dover Grammar School, always a great game to play as the challenge and physicality is what is required in the sport. The game was a spectacle, both teams upping their performances, battling hard to gain ascendancy over the other team. Dover dominated a little as we warmed up into the game, both teams assessing each other to gauge what weaknesses could be exploited.

George Rhodes used his direct running lines to score the opening try of the match, but Dover responded quickly with two tries which took the game to 12-5 at half time, meaning we had work to do! Following a half time talk from Lee Evans, Mr Keeling-Jones and the boys themselves, minds were refocussed and quickly at the start of the second half Woody Hall ran in the second OPGS try which was converted by Ben Taylor to bring the scores level. Who would break first? Was this going to be a second draw of the season? Dover were that team, they scored a well worked try taking them one score away, meaning we had to score a converted try to win the match. In the last minute after some great phase play between forwards and backs Kester Jones scored, giving Ben the chance to win the match. Unfortunately, he missed the pressure kick meaning full time was upon us and the match was drawn at 17-17. A show of great sportsmanship by Martyn Beaumont, the Dover teacher, put the game back into the boy's hands. Whilst the rules stated they should go through on away tries scored he offered 5 minutes each way of extra time. The boys got up for this and having ended full time in the ascendancy, OPGS continued the same way and at 4 minutes 30 seconds, Woody Hall finally found the space he needed, running in his first try that was duly converted by

Ben Taylor. The second 5 minutes started and we felt that Dover were maybe flagging a little, so we maintained our pace and game plan with Woody scoring his second try to take the match away from Dover, with OPGS eventually winning 34-17. Without Dover's sportsmanship, we would not have reached the Final, so thank you, we would play the final for them as well!

With two games between the semi final and final, we felt it was a great opportunity to tighten up on a few things and prepare well for the final. Great plans they say, as both those matches were cancelled, instead we had two well focussed training sessions to prepare.

Final Night, floodlit at Gravesend RFC, the boys arrived and their first words were – 'wow look at that pitch'. We brought the boys back down and refocused on the match and explained that we would be preparing as normal, nothing changes. We got the boys ready and in their kit for the match:



New shirts as a special little treat, and we were now ready for battle v Bennett Memorial; on paper the challenge was set as they had had similar results to us through their season.

During the first 10 minutes Mr Evans and Mr Keeling-Jones felt the nerves as Bennett School were dominating and OPGS just were not closing down quickly enough or showing enough intensity at the break down. We could see us going behind, something ideally you never want to do in a final. However, something then clicked in the squad, the leadership shown by Ryan Ward, Logan Evans and George Rhodes in particular brought the team

together and suddenly the intensity was taken up to the level required.

The squad really raised their performance in all areas of the game and being honest, produced the best display of rugby we have seen them play. OPGS began to ruck the opposition off the ball, turning over possession and then counter attacking with purpose to execute the game plan. The team interplay was amazing, offloading in tackles where the ball was going to other players rather than the floor, students running lines and evasion skills creating space for others to exploit. This is not to take anything away from Bennett Memorial School, because without their understanding of the game and defence, we would not have raised our game the way we did. But every time we scored Bennett continued to pressure us to get themselves back in the game.

The evening was a fantastic event and was well supported by parents and staff as well as the 1st XV squad.

The final score was 43-0, which does demonstrate how well our boys played. Keeping Bennett from scoring was superb and something that is not an easy thing to do.

Well done to all the boys, they really showed how mature they were and approached the evening with determination and focus conducive to the event, something that could have seen them become overwhelmed and fall at the last hurdle.

Finally an Under 15 Kent Shield Trophy for rugby is held by the school



# This Term's Mathematical Triumphs

## Senior Kangaroo

Last you heard from the Oakwood Maths Department, we were celebrating the stellar results of our 60 Year 11, 12, and 13 students in the Senior Maths Challenge.

However, 8 of these students were invited to take part in the next round of the challenge!

7 students were specially invited to take part in the Senior Kangaroo, which only the top 10% of the country have the opportunity to do. Congratulations to Saull John, Ashwin Knight, Joseph Brown, Ben Madden, Luke Sutcliffe, Jacob Whittaker, and Krishna Sookun.

In this round, the questions were a lot harder, and were no longer multiple choice. Each question was 5 points, and no points for working – only final answer! So one silly mistake could cost you 5% of your whole points...

The top 40% of students across the country who

take part then receive a Certificate of Merit.

Congratulations to Joseph Brown, Ben Madden, Luke Sutcliffe, Jacob Whittaker, and Krishna Sookun for all achieving this, meaning they are in the top 4% of the country for their mathematical ability!

The questions were much harder than anything in the classroom, and required masterful problem solving.

The top 1000 students are invited to take part in the British Maths Olympiad Round 1, to which Tom Lenham earned a spot.

UKMT had a marking weekend with volunteers at the beginning of December, and we are awaiting to hear from them the results. Tom had 3 and a half hours to solve 6 problems. He enjoyed the problems, and even got some full solutions – which is extremely impressive.

We will be sure to update you on his achievement. Good luck, Tom.



## Invicta Teams Maths Challenge

Each year Invicta Grammar School invites local Kent schools to take part in a teams maths challenge, where schools as far as Gravesend, Canterbury, and Tonbridge all gather to take part. Each school picks their 4 brightest budding mathematicians from Year 10 and 11. The calibre of students and schools is intimidating, but the questions posed are extremely enjoyable and were a lot of fun for the students.

To make things even tougher, the winner and runner-up of previous competitions were present at this session: King's Canterbury, and Tonbridge School. So our boys really had to bring their A-game. They had been working for a couple of months during their lunch times for this competition, and even went off on their own to memorise summation formulae or the triangular numbers. So I would like to congratulate the students on all their hard work put into the competition.

A big well done to the fantastic attitudes of  
Austin Lam  
Hallee Lou  
Arthur Mak  
Marcus Choi

They had a fantastic time and had lots of fun and laughs whilst they solved hard maths problems. This was only the semi-finals, where the top 3 of the 8 schools would advance to the finals. All schools who attended could definitely have

taken these spots, given the strength of the mathematicians in the room.

There was one point between 2nd and 3rd, so it was a close battle.

3rd place: King's Canterbury 117/152

2nd place: Tonbridge School 118/152

1st place: Oakwood Park Grammar School 141/152 points

In the relay rounds, they were the only team to finish early both times, and the entire time they solved problems with a smile and laughter.

They have made their way to the finals, along with King's Canterbury, and Tonbridge school. The other semis will happen in January, and the finals will be in March. We are looking forward to taking part in another well-run event by Invicta, filled with brain-scratching conundrums, that the organiser came up with himself!

One of the hardest challenges, which I shall share with you, was:

Using the integers 1-100 inclusive, write a series of numbers such that each subsequent number is either a factor or a multiple of the number directly previous. You may not repeat a number.

Our boys got a chain of over 50! But apparently you can go beyond 70... How far can you go?

It was an amazing day that was done fantastically well. The students enjoyed working together as a team, and the atmosphere in the room of all the schools working hard really was special.

We look forward to another fun day in March,  
**The Maths Department.**



We are so pleased to be back in the school after nearly 2 years and to see so many OPGS students and parents again.

We started the year off by holding our annual Year 7 bbq which was a great evening and lovely to welcome new students and parents.

During Covid we also started selling pre-loved uniform from our Facebook page. This served many families and raised over £1200. This obviously needed to move back into school now restrictions have been lifted. We are pleased to say we will be at parents evening's selling uniform and have started doing this already. Also look out for other sales we will hold over the school year. The Facebook uniform page is now closed.

We have attended two parents evening and raised £1410 selling refreshments and pre-loved uniform in the last few weeks. We thank everyone for supporting us on these evenings.

We would like to put a fresh plea out for uniform donations. We will accept all Oakwood branded items, shirts, trousers, sports wear ie base layers and football boots. Please can we ask all items are clean when donated. We have a box in main reception for these donations and thank you for supporting this.

We are holding our next meeting at the Barming Bull on 5th January 7-15 pm for our committee



members and 8pm for our volunteers to join us. It would be great to see some new faces and get some ideas of fundraising we can do for OPGS. Every penny raised goes back to the school. Since September we have provided the science department with new goggles and outdoor seating which was spoken about with some of the students and decided was very much needed.

We really couldn't do this without our committee and volunteers so even if you can offer a few admin hours, raffle prize collecting, helping at one of our events we would really love to hear from you. You do not need to attend every meeting, whatever time you can spare we would be very grateful.

For any enquiries please contact us on

[chair@opgspa.org.uk](mailto:chair@opgspa.org.uk)

Thank you for your continued support and may we take this opportunity to wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

**OPGS PA**





# Remembrance Day & Poppy Appeal

Every year, OPGS, alongside many others commemorate the sacrifice of soldiers from the Commonwealth in our annual Remembrance Ceremony.

Traditionally, this is held on the eleventh hour, of the eleventh day, of the eleventh month because The Treaty of Versailles, which ended the First World War, was signed 11th November in 1918.

The Remembrance Ceremony traditionally features The Exhortation being recited:

They shall grow not old, as we that are left to grow old:

Age shall not weary the, nor the years condemn.

At the going down of the sun and in the morning  
We will remember them.

Then, the Last Post is sounded. The playing of The Last Post began in the 1790s as the traditional end of the day in a British military camp, that the final sentry post had been inspected and the camp was secure for the night. It is played by a bugle not a trumpet; it is a very difficult piece of music to play. The point of this is to signify that soldiers can now rest. After this, a two-minute silence is observed, allowing us to think about and reflect on the sacrifice of the soldiers. To signal the end of the two minutes silence, Reveille is sounded. Finally, the Kohima Epitaph is read:

When you go home, tell them of us and say,

For your tomorrow, we gave our today.

OPGS observed the Act of Remembrance on Friday 11th November this year and the national ceremony was observed by royalty, politicians, and leaders of the Armed Forces on Sunday 13th November.

In living memory, the symbol of the poppy has become synonymous with the act of remembrance. The Poppy Appeal is the Royal British Legion's biggest fundraising campaign, held every year in November, marked as a period of Remembrance, internationally.

Poppies are worn as a show of support for the Armed Forces community. The red poppy is a symbol of remembrance and hope, including hope for the future in a positive and peaceful world.

Overall, the RBL collected an amazing £12,447 just from the Maidstone Schools. We are very proud of your achievement, and would like to sincerely thank you for your enormous efforts for this very important and worthy cause.

Oakwood Park received a certificate for raising £127.33 – a contribution to help support the Armed Forces, past and present – every poppy counts.



# Year 6 Primary Links Event – Climate Crisis

Miss Hance co-ordinated a Primary Links event on Climate Change on Thursday 3rd November.

Students from Year 5 & 6 were invited to OPGS to partake in 4 different subject based sessions from English, Media Studies, Geography and Science. Each session was 20-minutes long, with the aspiring students rotating in a carousel in the hall, with the exception of Science who were busy doing experiments in the labs.

The students worked tirelessly to engage with enthusiasm and innovative ideas in each of the tasks. For example, in the Media Studies session, students analysed and compared a range of Greenpeace print adverts to Extinction Rebellion print adverts. We then discussed how the elements of images/ language/ layout and design combined create meaning in the media texts? After which, students were able to have a go at designing their own climate crisis print advert to get the audience to change their habits. Students were asked to think carefully about their design in order to effectively convey their message to the audience in a short space of time.

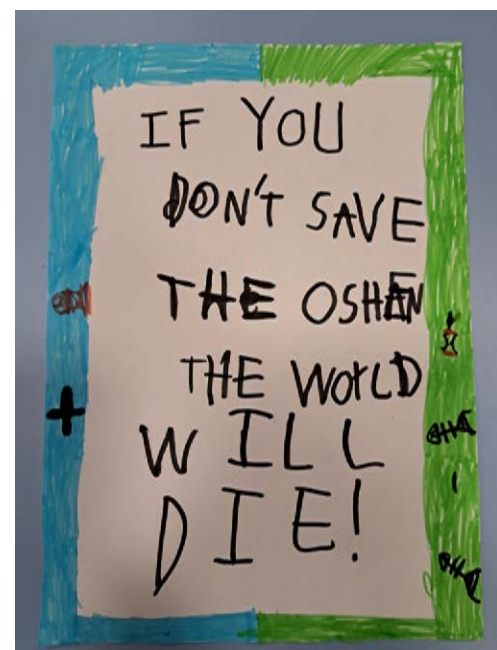
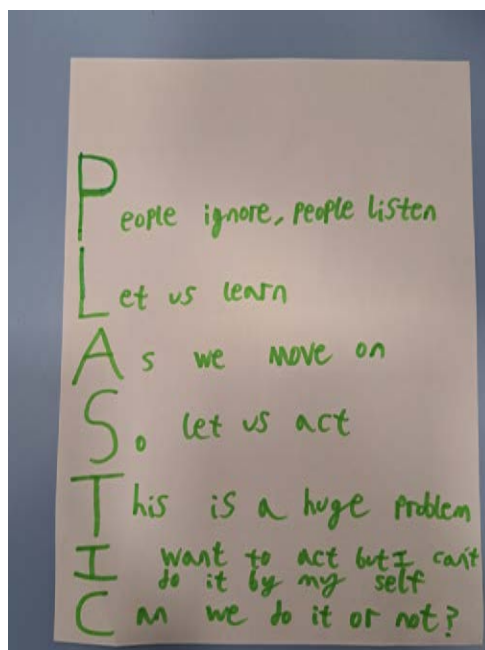
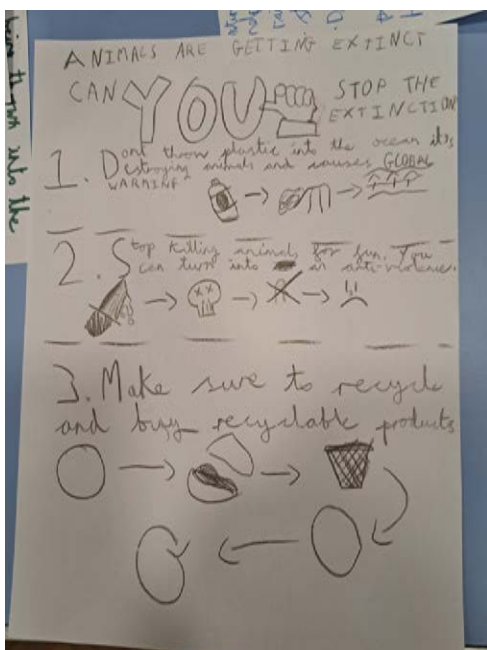
In the Science session, students looked at the damaging effects of acid rain using rocks and hydrochloric acid to measure if the acid had any corrosive effect on the rocks and to consider how acid rain then might affect our

ecosystem. Geography's session focused on our carbon footprint considering the ways in which we all have an impact and to measure up our own carbon footprint. English's session explored Greta Thunberg's climate speech and then students were tasked to write their own impassioned climate speech imagining that they were a Prime Minister or someone in a position of power who could invoke serious change.

Alongside this, our English Language A Level students helped out as mentors for the primary school students, as part of their child language acquisition module, they are looking at the way students communicate, so they assisted in the explanation of tasks and remained throughout, asking the students questions, to help with their learning.

Overall, it was a fantastic evening and great to see Primary School students grappling with this huge topic with such maturity and enthusiasm to promote change. It was also lovely to see the students experiencing new subject matter such as media studies, getting to use a lab and the lab equipment for the first time and to see them building on their prior knowledge of the climate crisis.

A huge thank you to all the staff and sixth form students who helped to make the evening a great success.



# Primary School Chess Club

This term saw the reintroduction of the school's Primary School Chess club. The school welcomes local primary school students from Year 4 onward to come to the school and play chess against one another.

This year, we have had a great uptake of students; it has been rewarding to see students' enthusiasm for chess and how quickly students are picking it up despite some having no prior chess experience.

This year, we have also seen many of our own students volunteering their time and expert knowledge to assist our primary school students as the arbiters and they have been around to support each game and help students learn the tricky rules of chess. Thank you to our students for representing our school so well and for their enthusiasm and expertise in helping to support our ever-growing chess community.



We are looking forward to our Christmas themed match on Wednesday 14th of December where students, both primary and secondary, have been asked to wear their Christmas jumper for a festive and jolly match full of Christmas spirit!

If you have any inquiries about our Primary School Chess club, then please do not hesitate to contact Miss Hance.

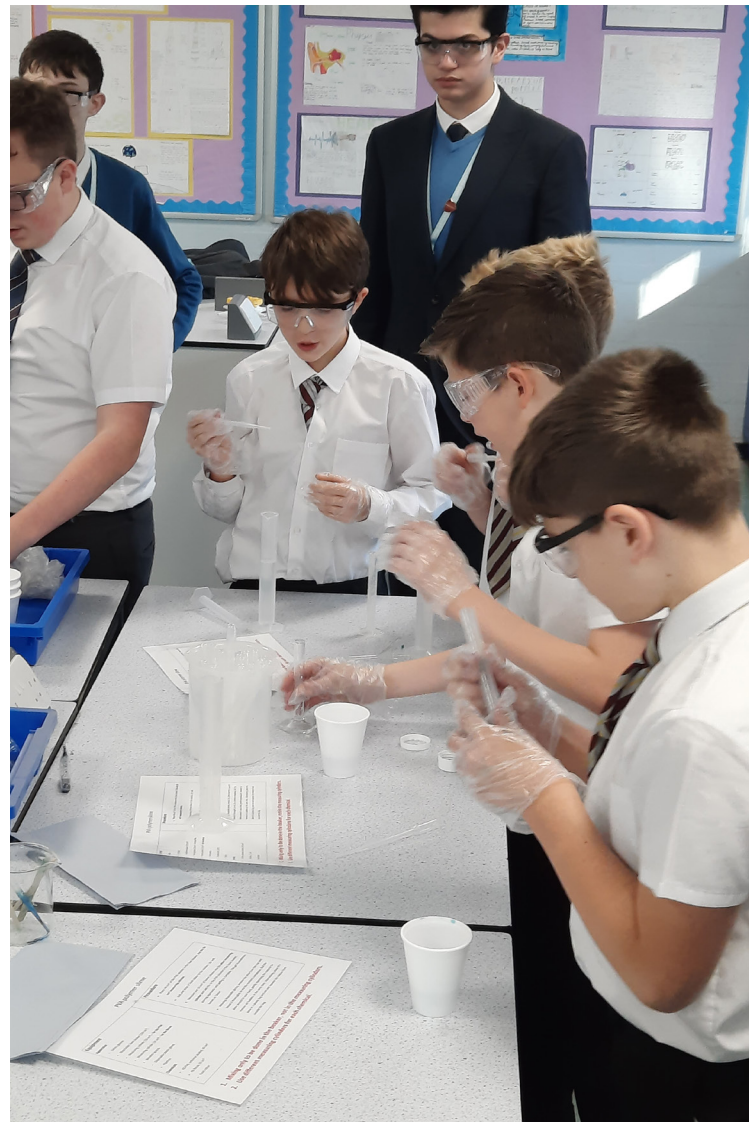
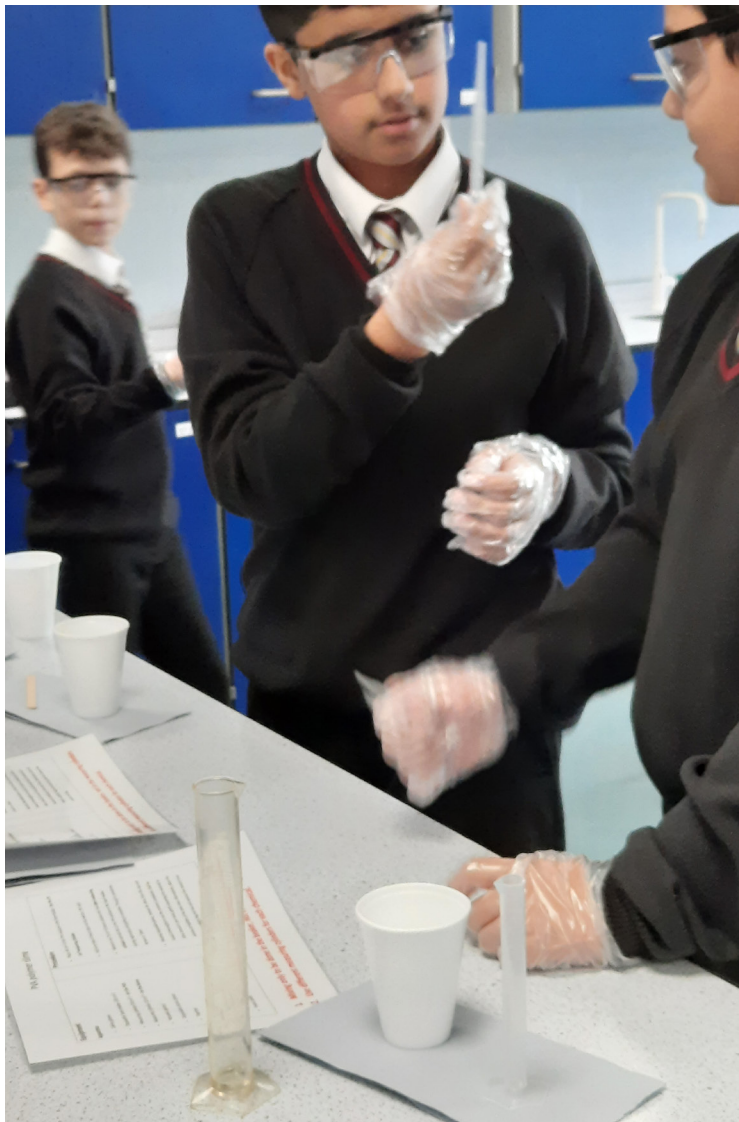
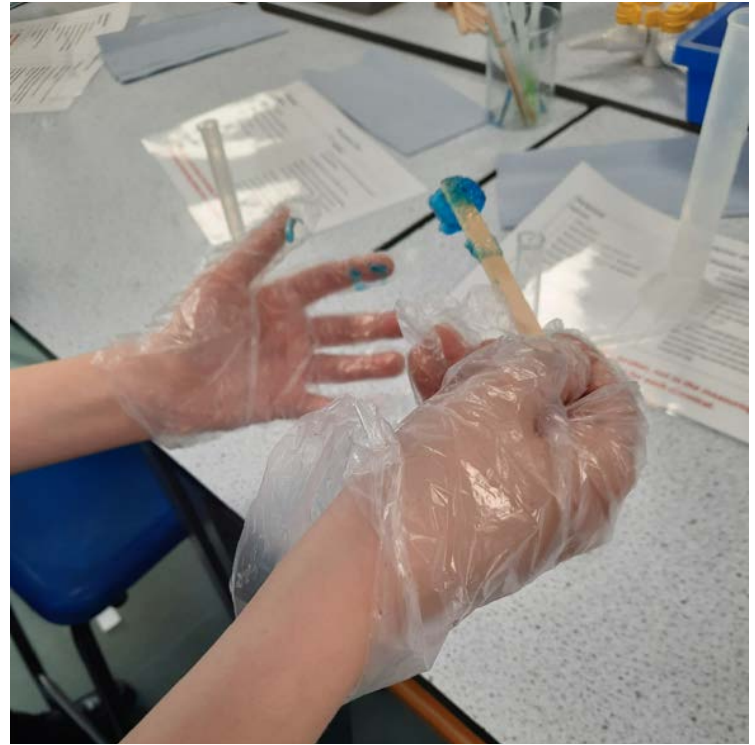


# Year 7 Science Club

Science Club runs for Year 7 every Wednesday lunchtime, 1.25pm, in room 57. Science Club is run by our 6th Form Science Prefect Team, supported by staff.

For our first session this Wednesday, we made slime. The students carefully measured out the ingredients and created colourful mixtures. Our second session will be making lava lamps. After the Christmas holiday, we will be discovering rainbow fizz, learning how to make sparklers and methane bubbles, and making peg pistols which can fire a small piece of wooden peg across the room.

Once that's all been done, we have a full programme planned for the rest of the term. If any Year 7 students would like to join, please just come along.



# Year 7 Space Camp Enrichment Day!

On Thursday December 1st, we had our Space Camp enrichment day. It was a fun experience, engaging all of the classes in multiple fun activities.

First we entered the astrodome where we learned about the solar system and the stars. We learned about the different constellations and how and when to find them.

Next we built our egg landers. We had hard boiled eggs and had to build a lander which would safely land and release the egg. We used a variety of materials including cardboard, string, bubble wrap and newspaper. Our goal was to make them light and efficient whilst still able to launch the egg. The funniest part was watching other groups fail and smash their eggs!

We made air rockets out of paper and tape. We got to decorate them and then placed them on air pumps to launch them. We had a competition to



see who could fire their rocket the highest. We learned about the best nose cone design and how rockets have to overcome the Earth's gravity in order to launch into space.

We also did a Space Quiz and watched videos of rocket launches.

Lastly, we did a practical on burning different fuels, including ethanol, methanol, butanol and pentanol. We learned how the number of carbon atoms affects the efficiency of the fuel.

Overall, we had a very exciting and educational day. We all had lots of fun and can't wait for the next Science enrichment day!

By Gabriel Haselup, Oliver Hogg and Isaac Moat C7

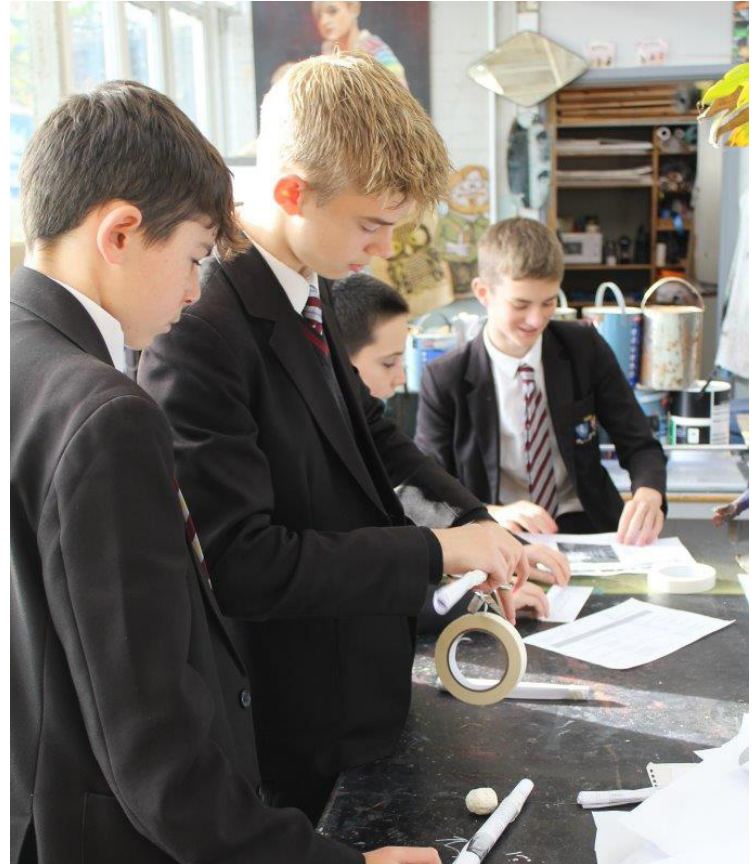


# Spanish Enrichment Day

Last week, the Spanish students had a Spanish enrichment day focused around el Día de los Muertos, or the Day of the Dead in English. This is a Mexican holiday celebrated on the 1st and 2nd of November each year.

On this day, families will visit the graves of their loved ones and have large picnics all night. They will leave lots of candles, flowers, food, and drinks on their graves as gifts to the deceased.

The tradition originated as an Aztec holiday, where the entire month was dedicated to celebrating the dead. This was then merged with elements of Christianity by the Spanish colonists in the Americas and evolved into the popular Mexican holiday. According to tradition, the gates to heaven will open on November 1st, and on this day, the spirits of children can come back and rejoin their families for 24 hours, then on November 2nd, the spirits of adults can do the same until the gates close at midnight. These days are treated as a festival, a time to have fun and act as if the deceased are still with us. As such, families will stay up all night eating and drinking around the grave of their passed family members, playing music, singing songs, and having fun. On the graves, they will leave the dead relative's favourite



foods and drinks as well as candles and flowers (traditionally marigolds) and sometimes toys for the children as offerings. They will pray to, and leave offerings at, 'ofrendas', small shrines with pictures of the deceased in their homes.



On the enrichment day, Spanish students were split into groups and went around a rotation with the different Spanish teachers. During this rotation we watched 'The Book of Life'. This popular animated film about the Day of the Dead is rich with Mexican culture and follows the story of a bull fighter named Manolo who is tricked into death on el Día de los Muertos and then ventures through the Land of the Dead with help from his deceased relatives in order to get back to the Land of the Living to save his town and marry his love, Maria. We later learned how to make churros, a traditional Mexican treat, by translating a recipe from Spanish to English with the help of a Spanish cooking video. We also learnt about Pan de Muerto (Bread of the Dead), a traditional pan dulce (sweet bread) often gifted and eaten on the Day of the Dead, and sugar skulls, intricately decorated skulls made from sugar which are often given as gifts and placed on alters. The skull is meant to represent the soul of a departed loved one and it is customary to write the name of them on the sugar skull.

Afterwards we created decorations based on el Día de los Muertos. Depending on students' art ability, they either coloured a skull, constructed and coloured a small skeleton, moulded and decorated a skull from plasticine or helped construct a full sized skeleton, all of these in the style of La Calavera Catrina (The Catrina Skull), a famous satirization of an upper-class woman created in

1910 by Mexican print maker and cartoon illustrator José Guadalupe Posada and popularised in 1947 by artist Diego Rivera, which has become an icon of the Day of the Dead.

Lastly, we recapped what we had learnt and went into further detail by answering Spanish comprehension questions about the traditional festivities, food, origins, and beliefs from Spanish information sheets.

In all, it was fun learning about Mexican traditions and customs in a way that developed our Spanish skills while remaining entertaining. I really enjoyed this Spanish enrichment day and feel that many of the other students did as well. It was very informative, and I learnt a lot about Mexican culture and el Día de los Muertos. The Spanish teachers also presented all the information in a fun and engaging way with videos and crafts which kept everyone involved and interested.

**-Nathan Peake 10P**



## **Sixth Form Charities Fund Raising**

**In the run up to Christmas our Head students from Year 13 have worked alongside our prefects in Year 12 to help bring the festivities to Oakwood.**

In our final week we have three events for the students to enjoy, all of which will be raising money for the chosen charities Air Ambulance UK and Spadework based in Offham. On Monday

12th the sixth form students will be baking and buying treats to be sold at lunchtime in our annual cake sale. On Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday the Prefects and Head Students will be decorating the SFC and hosting a Year 7 games room in which there will be a plethora of games for the students including: Carpet Bowls, Giant Jenga, Mario Kart and Chess. As well as these, Wednesday will be Christmas Jumper Day for the whole school to take part in.

# U13&U16 Kent Schools Table Tennis Team Championships

This term has seen our students compete in the annual U13&U16 Kent Schools Table Tennis Team Championships at the Howard School in Rainham.

OPGS entered three teams into the U13 competition, giving twelve of our year 7&8 students the opportunity to play against the best junior table tennis players in Kent. All three teams were low on experience with Oliver East the only student to have played in last year's competition meaning we faced a tough challenge as a squad. Despite this, all three teams had some extremely close matches against Tunbridge Wells GS, Rochester Maths and Skinners School in round 1 but were unable to progress into the next stage of the main competition. This meant that all teams were now entered into the U13 Kent Plate, the competition that OPGS had won in 2021-22.

The OPGS A team performed brilliantly to overcome St John's A before losing to Solefield School A team on points difference in the semi-final. This meant they would contest the 3rd/4th play off in the Plate competition against Solefield B. All the boys bounced back brilliantly to secure a 6-2 victory and 3rd place finish. Despite the B and



C teams not progressing in the Plate competition all students had a really enjoyable day and will look to use this experience to come back stronger in the 2023-24 championships.

U13 Students representing OPGS: Oliver East, George Cleverly, Elkan Agyei-Fokuo & Marli Collier (A Team), Freddie Gibson, Daniel Mulvenna, Flynn Kemp, Jakub Druzkowski (B Team), Oliver Roots, Jack Goodwin, Alfie Pearson & Khanyo Ndlovu (C Team).





The U16 team were in action the following week, entering two very strong teams that were made up of school and club players, the pick of which being Joshua Klein who is currently ranked number 1 in Kent at U16 level.

The B team were unfortunate to draw a group that consisted of Tunbridge Wells A (last years winners) and Skinners B team. In an extremely tough first match the team lost 7-1 to TWGS before winning 8-0 against Skinners B team. The B team then moved into the U16 Plate Competition, running out 6-2 winners against Leigh Academy in the quarter final.

OPGS lead 3-1 at the halfway stage in the semi-final fixture vs. Rochester Maths GS, thanks a brilliant comeback from Tom Ansell who prevailed 12-10 against the number 1 ranked Rochester Maths GS player. The team then held their nerve in the second round of fixtures to win 6-2 and progress to the Plate final. This was a great performance given the tough draw they been given in round 1 of the cup competition.



Finishing in second place following their round 1 group matches (losing 5-3 to Norton Knatchbull GS and winning 5-3 against Rochester Maths GS) meant that the OPGS A team were also entered into the U16 Plate Competition. Following a comfortable 7-1 victory vs. Leigh Academy the team prevailed as 5-3 winners in the semi-final against Rochester Maths School. This win set up all OPGS U16 KSTTA Plate Final that promised to be extremely competitive given the rivalries between players in the OPGS squad! Despite several close fought matches the A team finished up 6-2 winners and lifted the U16 Kent Schools Table Tennis Plate. Well done to all students involved and especially the year 11 students who played their last Kent Schools Competition for OPGS.

U16 Students representing OPGS: Josh Klein, Lucas Dick, James Tricker, Charlie Razey (A Team) Jacob Pelc, Tom Ansell, Oliver East, Freddie Fagg (B Team).

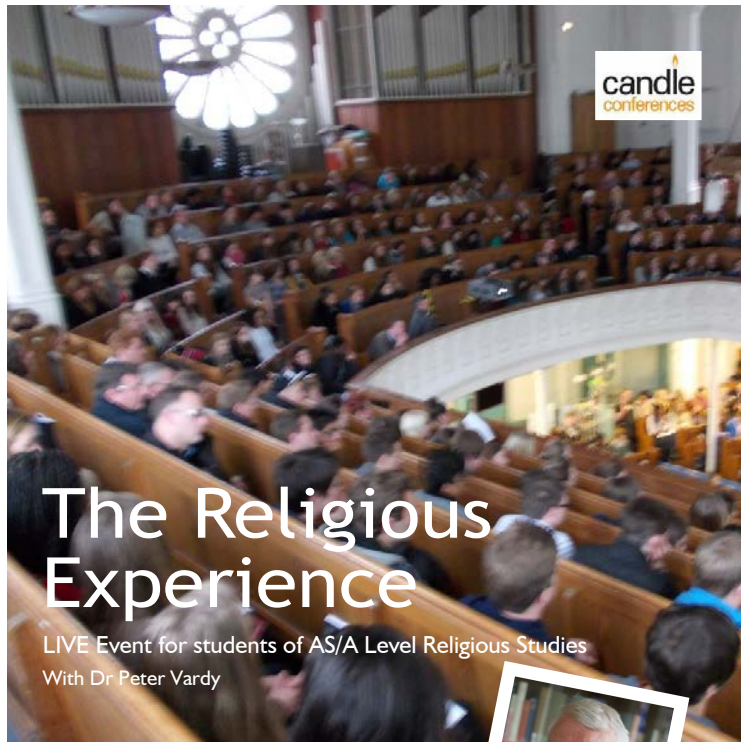


# Vardy Conference

The conference was on the 1st of December, and A Level students doing Religious Studies attended a conference in London by Dr Peter Vardy.

As usual when walking into a church the topic of conversation was religion. Yet opposed to the traditional support of it found in typical church congregations, we instead found an invigorating critical analysis of religious experiences, surrounding the existence of God and Christian morality.

Dr Peter Vardy was clearly familiar with these topics, and proficient in his ability to teach us about them. This was a welcome change from textbooks which quickly brush past topics, with Vardy giving us an in-depth understanding of them. Moreover, he made it particularly captivating, and I found myself rehearsing the information in my mind throughout the course of the day.



Is euthanasia right – as Vardy asked, why put down a dog and not a human? Why do humans have primacy over animals regarding rights, we both suffer surely? Should we believe religious experiences, and does belief of it simply rest on belief in God?

Overall, the conference – and the day as a whole – was deeply enjoyable, and I find myself, as I imagine does the rest of the cohort, eagerly awaiting the next conference the following year.

**Hugo Boston**

#### Dates for 2022-23

- Chichester 29<sup>th</sup> November
- London 1<sup>st</sup> December
- Coventry 6<sup>th</sup> February
- London 10<sup>th</sup> February
- Frome 28<sup>th</sup> February
- York 10<sup>th</sup> March



# Year 7 Family Project Winners & Prize Giving

The success of this year's Family Project is long reaching into Term 2. The students' projects were on display for both Parents Evenings and thereafter, in pride of place, at the front of the hall for weeks.

The exhibition was voted on by students, staff and parents and the winners of each category were recognised in a prize giving assembly in November.



| Student Name       | Prize category  |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| James William T7   | Artefact        |
| Darren Orji X7     | Display         |
| Noah de Georgio S7 | Working Model   |
| Henry Craig C7     | Vlog            |
| Max Stevenson C7   | Written Project |
| Heath Niblett T7   | Runner Up       |
| Robert Early C7    | Runner Up       |

They students were thrilled to receive their awards in assembly and should feel very proud of what they achieved. Mr Keeling Jones took the opportunity to highlight instances where Year 7 and 8 students could be seen to exhibit the school principles in

action with the idea of striving for excellence in all that we do. There was a showcase of music, sporting achievements and quotes from an array of staff who have noticed the students' dedication to the core principles that make up our ethos at OPGS, including kindness, tolerance and respect.

There was also a particular mention by Mr Keeling Jones of the acclaim given to Connor Russell, please find an article by Maidstone United Football Team published on their website on 30th October 2022 below:

<https://maidstoneunited.co.uk/2022/10/30/too-cool-for-school/>



| Winners            |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Student Name       | Prize category  |
| James William T7   | Artefact        |
| Darren Orji X7     | Display         |
| Noah de Georgio S7 | Working Model   |
| Henry Craig C7     | Vlog            |
| Max Stevenson C7   | Written Project |
| Heath Niblett T7   | Runner Up       |
| Robert Early C7    | Runner Up       |



## Too Cool for School

Stones fan Connor Russell brought the 'Gallagher Stadium' to the Gallagher Stadium.

The Oakwood Park student was tasked with making a model of something historic for a school project and with the home of the Stones turning 10 this year, he chose to recreate that.

The model includes the Manchett, Genco and Town End stands, along with the Spitfire Lounge,

Wall of Fame and 3G pitch.

Club captain Gavin Hoyte met Connor and his family and was impressed with the mini-Gallagher. He said: "It's amazing, it must have taken hours and hours of work. The detail on there is something else, even down to ad boards and solar panels on the main stand roof. Congratulations, Connor!"

The model will be on display in the club shop before Saturday's game against Solihull Moors.

