



Sixth Form Charities Christmas Jumper Day

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

Welcome to the latest edition of @Oakwood. It is tremendous to see that we have managed to give so many opportunities to our students in what continues to be a challenging time for the school in terms of Covid.

Amongst the reports here, it is impressive to see the individual achievements of some amazingly talented athletes as well as continued success in team sports. Well done to our 41 students who have had their poems published as part of a national competition. It is good to see that the House System has been very popular this term, with a number of competitions.

As ever, thank you to the Publicity Team for their hard work in compiling this edition. We are also enormously grateful to the staff of the school who continue to work extremely hard and give of their time to provide opportunities.

I hope you and your families have a safe, peaceful and happy Christmas and New Year. .

Mr K.W. Moody - Headteacher

STRIVE

AND

SERVE

Art – The Footprints We Leave

Year 7 pupils had the opportunity to use their creative skills to produce designs with an eco-friendly message.

They worked within the framework of footprints to help emphasize the individual and collective impact of our lives on the future of the planet. We were delighted with their imaginative responses to the brief and they will be eventually presented together on a large scale display. Well done to all involved.



Year 9 Maths and History Trip to Canterbury December 2nd 2021.

Year 9 students visited Canterbury and Canterbury Cathedral on December 2nd for an enrichment day.

The trip had 2 parts. Students took a tour of the city centre and used their Maths skills to solve problems which might arise from a trip to the High Street. Problems such as changing currency, compiling the cost of a 2-course meal and some of the geometric patterns visible on a town tour. Students used a clinometer to measure the height of the cathedral and some other objects on their tour.

For the second part of the trip, students were given a guided tour of Canterbury Cathedral. The tour was led by local experienced guides who talked through some of the long history of the construction of the cathedral. They explained the significance of the murder of the archbishop, Thomas Beckett and gave an insight on how Canterbury Cathedral plays a central role in the Christian faith today.

Students completed three assignments on their trip and despite the challenging cold weather, all agreed that they had learned a lot about one of our most important historic buildings and cities in the country along with answering some Maths questions.

Ifan Bambury S9:

I am writing this the day after the trip and recalling some truly excellent memories, that will go with me through life. I thoroughly enjoyed learning some amazing facts about this wonderful town and its rich history, especially the magnificent Cathedral. The real-

world Maths that I had the privilege of doing in this area was very enjoyable. Despite the nose-nipping cold the entire day was gratifying!

Cade Breytenbach S9:

I am writing this a few days after we went on the trip, I recall it being quite an enjoyable experience due to the cultural richness of the surrounding town and the freedom we were given as students to look around and be independent. Personally, I thoroughly enjoyed the tour we had around the cathedral due to the information that was told to us and the friendly staff. Overall, despite the cold, I enjoyed this trip very much and would definitely go again.



UK Bebras challenge

In November, 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 Challenges 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 points	0 points	0 points
B	+9 points	-2 points	0 points
C	+12 points	-4 points	0 points

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

- 152 students from year 7 participated in the Junior category, and 38 were awarded a distinction with Roven Fernando from P7 being awarded best in school.
- 300 students from years 8 and 9 participated in the Intermediate category. 79 students were awarded with a distinction and Nathan Peake from P9 was awarded best in school.
- 53 computing GCSE students across years 10 and 11 participated in the senior category and 14 were awarded a distinction with Alistair Prigg

from T10 being awarded best in school.

- 13 students participated in the Elite category, with 4 achieving distinction. Hayden Smith from year 12 and Mateusz Gorecki from year 13 awarded best in school. 75 students from OPGS were placed in the top 10% nationally in the Bebras challenge and were awarded a gold certificate.

The top 10% students are invited to compete in the Oxford University Computing Challenge. This is a competition organised by the department of Computer Science at Oxford University. The top 10% have received a letter from their Computing teacher to let them know.

We hope to run the next round in school, but this will be dependent on being able to safely room the students according to whatever risk assessments may be necessary at the time. The provisional dates for this competition are:

- Round 1: 7th-11th February 2022
- Round 2 (Finals): 15th March

Further information, including advice on how to prepare, can be found at: <https://oucc.uk/>



Swim for Charity

Dominic Teodorescu in Year 9 swam 16 miles in October to raise money to support people suffering from Dementia. He was able to raise £50. Well done, Dominic!

Design Museum Trip Year 10

Have photos. Have article.

On Thursday 2nd December, students studying Design and Technology visited the Design Museum in London to view the 'Waste Age', 'Amy – Beyond the stage', 'Discovered: Designers for Tomorrow', 'The Conran Effect' and 'Designer Maker User' exhibitions.

'Waste Age' showcased a range of ways designers are tackling environmental issues and sustainability problems with the use of technology, new materials and design.



The students then visited the 'Designer, Maker, User' exhibition which features almost 1000 items of twentieth and twenty-first century design. The exhibition covers a broad range of design disciplines, from architecture and engineering, to the digital world, fashion and graphics.

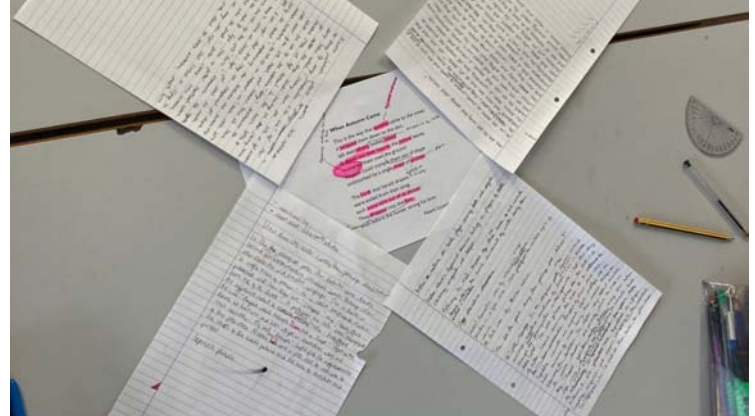
'Amy – Beyond the Stage' was a tribute to Amy Winehouse with a display of the outfits she wore during her greatest performances, handwritten lyrics and personal items that have never been exhibited before, including her blue Daphne Fender Stratocaster guitar.

'The Conran Effect' is a tribute to Sir Terence Conran, featuring early furniture designs and the establishment of Habitat.

Students at OPGS will use the knowledge and resources they gain from this trip to inspire and develop their own projects.



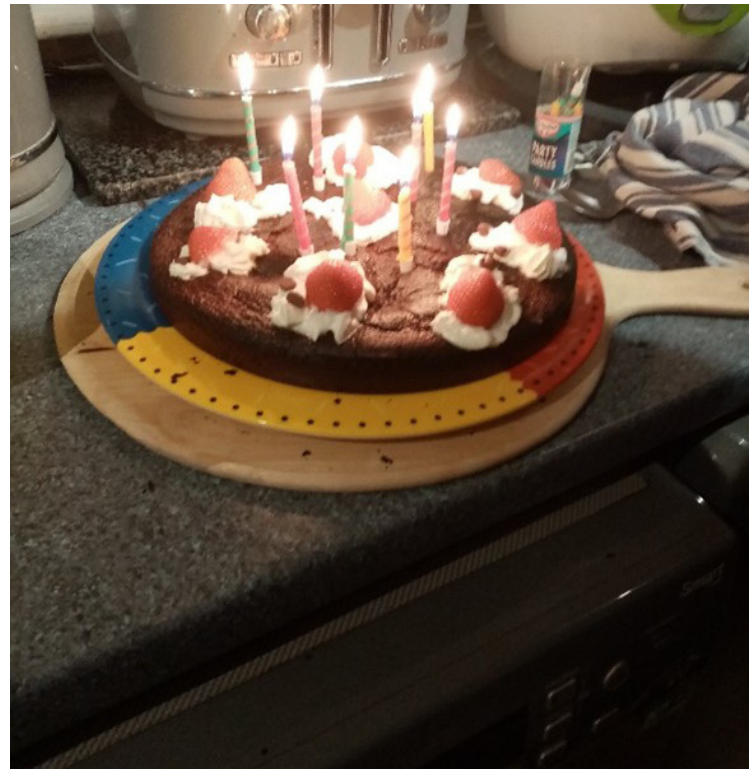
During the enrichment day, Year 11 students worked hard to develop their Literature skills by deconstructing unseen poems. In group work and whole class discussion, students demonstrated perceptive and interesting interpretations of the two poems, exploring the symbolism of the season of Autumn and articulating their ideas with clarity and passion. Written work demonstrated their increasing confidence in producing extensive, evaluation responses. Well done to Year 11 for engaging so purposefully with the day.



Year 7 and 8 French Projects

In French this term, Year 8 studied food as well as places in town and directions.

As part of their homework, students had to translate a yummy chocolate fondant recipe and bake a chocolate fondant for their family. Some students did amazingly well and we wish we had been able to try the cakes!



James Pouchier

Sageas Beckwith
Yes interesting

5 facts about French speaking countries

1. Belgium is the home of the NATO headquarters and to the EU Commission and European Parliament.
2. Canada: French Canadians can trace their ancestry to French colonists who settled in Canada in the 17th century.
3. Gabon: French is the official language in Gabon but 32% of the people speak Fang which is a language they have grown up with.
4. Luxembourg: is the second richest country in the world.
5. Senegal: Sosa kaani is a sauce made from Scotch Bonnet Peppers and is on every table at every meal and is thought to be the national dish.

Facts About France & French Speaking Countries

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • French uses the roman alphabet, like English. • It is illegal to kiss in a train station in France when the train arrives since 1910. <i>Il est interdit de s'embrasser quand le train arrive!</i> • The French army was the first to use camouflage in 1915. • The Tour de France cycle race has been running for over 100 years. • The Louvre in Paris is the most visited art museum in the world. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The French Academy, established in 1635, watches over the language. It decides on the rules of the language, including how new words are introduced. • France is the most popular tourist destination in the world, it welcomes some 89 million visitors each year! • France is the largest country in the EU • There are over 400 kinds of cheese made in France. • King Louis XIX was king for only 20 minutes in 1830 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • French is the only language (besides English) that's spoken on all the continents. • French is the second-most popular language to study as foreign language in Europe. • There are 75 million mother tongue speakers. • Most people who live in Quebec speak French. • Poutine originated in the Quebec region. It consists of French fries, gravy and cheese curds. • Belgians invented the "French Fries"
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Excellent travail!

In French, Year 7 carried on discovering France and made fact files about famous French people and the French speaking world. The French language has 80 million native speakers as well as 190 million secondary speakers meaning that around 290 million people speak French worldwide. French and English are the only languages spoken on all 5 continents. French is the official language in 29 countries.

October House Competition

In October, we ran a geography related house challenge in which students could either submit entries for the furthest or most interesting place they have visited.

Alternatively they could build a model of a famous geographical landmark. We had over 90 entries, ranging from Year 7 to Year 11 and have selected the winners from each competition. Thank you for all the entries and congratulations to all the winners and runners up!



Furthest or Most Interesting place visited:
Winner:

Thomas Porter C8 Broughton



Runners Up:

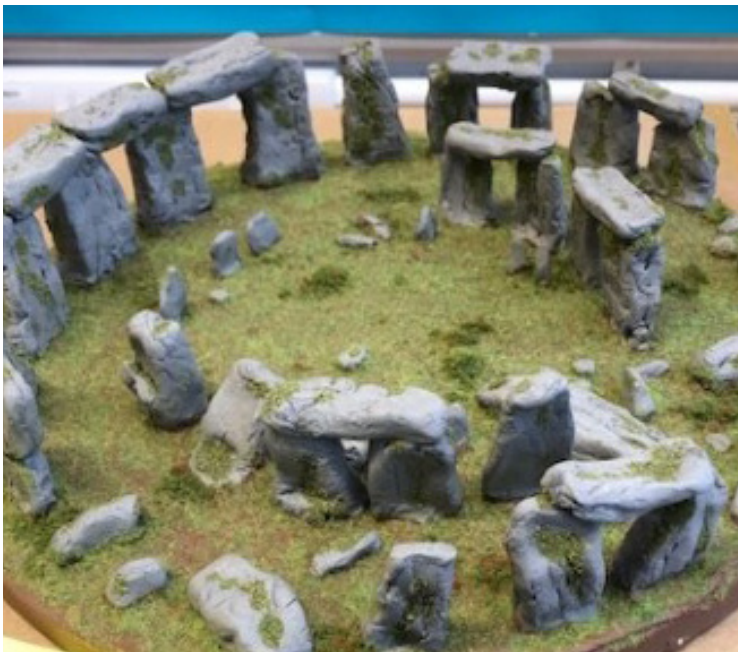
**Dylan Wright C9 Sadler
Noah Halliday S7 Broughton
Leon Pearce T7 Fisher
Tom McIvor X8 Sadler**

Geographical Model:
Winners:

**Michael Tidball T8 Fisher
Harry Jordan T7 Fisher**

Runner Up:

Cody Geehan P8 Wilberforce



2021 SIAB Under 16 Boys Combined Events Champion

Joe Stone (P10) represented England schools' and Oakwood Park Grammar School in Glasgow on Saturday 4th December competing in the Schools' International Athletics Association (SIAB) under 16 boys Combined Events International, against athletes from Ireland, Scotland and Wales at the Emirates International Arena Glasgow.

Athletes finishing in the top 5.

A huge achievement. Congratulations Joe.

After placing 4th in his first event 60m Hurdles, Joe placed 2nd in the Long Jump, Shot Put, 200m Sprint and the 800m race.

With the points total accumulated through the day Joe won the Individual title and is the 2021 SIAB Under 16 Boys Combined Events Champion.

England Schools' won the team title with all 4



Schools' Pentathlon International

Emirates Arena 4th Dec 2021

Under 16 Boys														
Pos	No	Name	Country	Total	60m Hurdles	Long Jump (cm)			200M		Shot Putt		800M	
1	26	Joe Stone	England	3436	8.83	784	648	693	23.38	750	11.94	603	2.09.64	606
2	25	Samuel Wright	England	3399	8.56	846	604	595	23.75	716	12.37	629	2.09.19	613
3	27	Conor Sean Kelly	England	3227	8.79	793	603	593	23.46	742	10.90	540	2.12.66	559
4	57	Benjamin Parker	Wales	3219	9.68	603	656	711	23.33	754	11.12	553	2.10.17	598
5	28	Thomas Hobbs	England	3029	9.34	673	600	587	24.21	674	10.17	496	2.10.09	599
6	41	Cormac Crotty	Ireland	2966	9.19	704	586	556	24.01	692	9.37	448	2.12.20	566
7	11	James Clark	Scotland	2865	9.67	605	542	465	23.89	703	10.31	504	2.10.81	588
8	10	Brayden Dean	Scotland	2862	9.40	660	570	523	24.49	650	11.47	574	2.19.76	455
9	59	Osian Parry	Wales	2713	9.32	677	577	537	24.27	669	7.92	362	2.18.84	468
10	9	Callum Newton	Scotland	2705	8.96	755	550	481	25.49	565	9.19	437	2.18.89	467
11	42	Jack Kelly	Ireland	2686	9.56	627	533	447	24.81	622	8.73	410	2.11.31	580
12	12	Finn Bryce	Scotland	2512	9.26	690	506	394	25.97	527	9.78	472	2.21.64	429
13	60	Cameron Eley	Wales	2438	8.81	788	583	550	24.50	649	9.43	451	DNF	0
14	43	Eoin O'Callaghan	Ireland	2290	9.59	621	467	321	26.90	455	9.76	471	2.22.14	422
15	44	Ethan Dewhirst	Ireland	1922	9.76	587	463	313	26.05	520	10.28	502	DQ	0
16	58	Salem Mbimu-Kiambi	Wales	53	13.85	53	DNS	0	DNS	0	DNS	0	0	0

England

1	26	Joe Stone	England	3436
2	25	Samuel Wright	England	3399
3	27	Conor Sean Kelly	England	3227
4	28	Thomas Hobbs	England	3029
				10062

Ireland

1	41	Cormac Crotty	Ireland	2966
2	42	Jack Kelly	Ireland	2686
3	43	Eoin O'Callaghan	Ireland	2290
4	44	Ethan Dewhirst	Ireland	1922
				7942

Scotland

1	11	James Clark	Scotland	2865
2	10	Brayden Dean	Scotland	2862
3	9	Callum Newton	Scotland	2705
4	12	Finn Bryce	Scotland	2512
				8432

Wales

1	57	Benjamin Parker	Wales	3219
2	59	Osian Parry	Wales	2713
3	60	Cameron Eley	Wales	2438
4	58	Salem Mbimu-Kiambi	Wales	53
				8370

Year 7 Enrichment Day in Music



Year 7 students got creative in the music workshop all trying to create their own version of 'Times like these' from the BBC Live Lounge.

They had to follow a song Lead Sheet, play guitar chords, keyboard chords and karaoke.

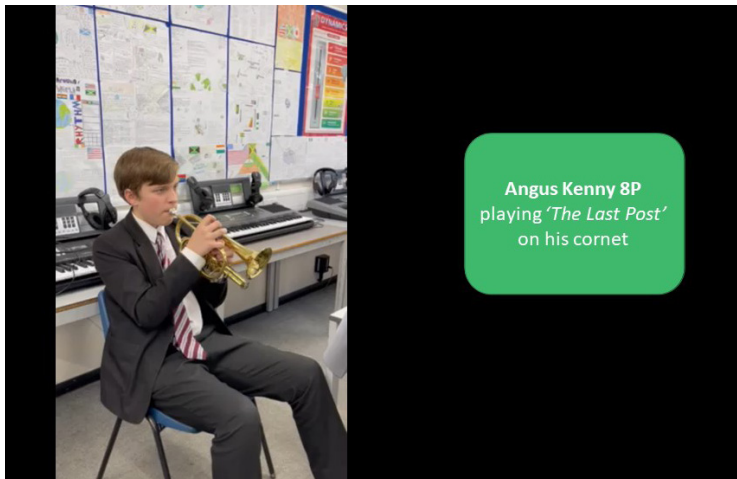
Fun was had by all.



OPGS Remembrance Ceremony 2021

On Thursday 11th November 2021, the students at OPGS held a virtual service to commemorate the annual Remembrance Ceremony on the anniversary of Armistice Day.

On this day, there are usually ceremonies at war memorials, cenotaphs and churches throughout the country, as well as abroad. The Royal Family and top politicians gather at The Cenotaph in Whitehall, London, for a memorial service, but due to Covid 19, these events have been held differently.



The PowerPoint and recorded readings from the Sixth Form Prefects were presented in every classroom followed by the two minute silence as a mark of respect for those who have given their lives to protect us.

*When you go home, tell them of us and say,
For your tomorrow, we gave our today.*

As a school community, we feel rather strongly it remains important for the students to be a part of the remembrance ceremony and show their respect.



Year 8 Science Enrichment Day: Harry Potter

This year the Year 8's of OPGS jumped into a thrilling wizardry adventure of what it's like to be at the famous magic school of Hogwarts.

Science Enrichment Day this year for the Year 8's had a wide range of interesting topics to learn about based on things from Harry Potter. Including lessons like broomstick flying, charms, wand making and more. Not only did we have these exciting enrichment day lessons we also had the magic sorting hat decide our fate with what house you would be in. Hufflepuff, Ravenclaw, Slytherin and Gryffindor; what house are you? That was the question being asked for every student some getting what they want some not, but the universal pH indicator does not lie. So, after the sorting the Harry Potter Day filled with fun had begun.

Lesson 1: Herbology

Herbology the lesson of the study of plants, the lesson of learning about the intriguing facts of plants and the magical properties they may behold. This fun lesson was finding out if something is acidic or alkali, we looked at different foods like boiled cabbage and beetroot and tested them for pH. We did this by boiling these foods with Bunsen Burners underneath maize in a plastic pot with the vegetable like the cabbage or beetroot in the pot. Then we put these vegetable liquids in 5 other liquids 2 being acidic 1 being water (neutral) and 2 being alkali to test how acidic or alkali the vegetable was. We also did this with curry powder and other spices and ordered them into a table, seeing what colour they are, to decide if they are acidic or alkali. So, in summary we mixed two substances together to find out the pH level of different items and compare them between each other. Some may find this boring, but this was only the beginning of the fun yet to come!



Lesson 2: Fire

The fascinating look and the warmth of the fire; we all like it, but it can be dangerous, despite that fire is a cool thing to experiment with (safely) and that is exactly what we did in this lesson. A mix of Art and Science, two considerably exciting subjects put in one, and what we did was even better. In this lesson, we used potassium nitrate to paint a Harry Potter themed drawing on a piece of paper towel and let it dry. Once dry the fun begins. A match plus potassium nitrate equals fire, and this fire due to the potassium nitrate only stayed on the potassium nitrate drawing we had previously made. This cool effect made it so that your art would appear once burnt out as it specifically traced your art and burnt those lines drawn. Once finished the match was disposed of in a bucket of water and repeated with an optional second piece of art to repeat the fun once more!

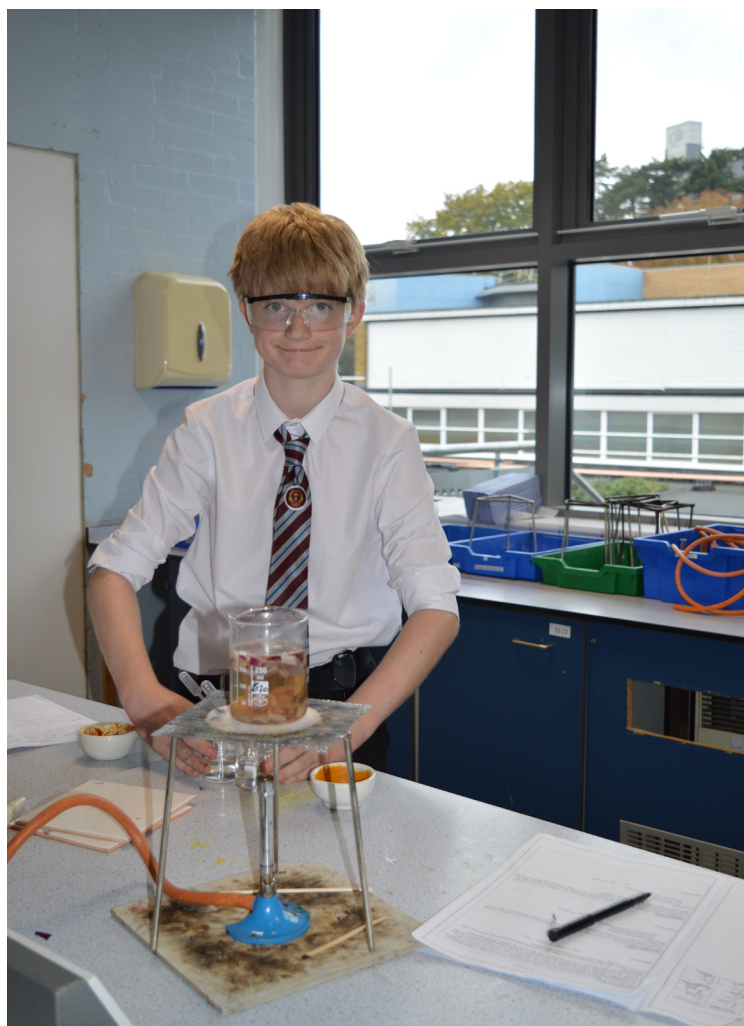
Lesson 3: Potions

Creating potions are some of the coolest things we wish we could do. Letting our imagination going wild on the infinite possibilities of endless fun you could have with these potions. Going invisible, having super strength, or even the ability to have super speed all due to these cool concoctions. Making them is what we did in this lesson and specifically Harry Potter themed potions. Maybe a bit of dragon bone dust or maybe a few drops from the drool of a beast? Doesn't sound nice to think about but the result it made was amazing! From a sticky pink slime to a black liquid mixed with ashes and crushed unicorn horn filtered into an amazing sky-blue coloured potion that makes you have magical powers. These different potions created with chemical reactions of different salts acids (with a low concentration of that acid) and compound liquids. This lesson was very fun for most people and my favourite.

Hudson Jameson C8

Lesson 4: Brooms

One of our magical classes for the Enrichment Day was Brooms where we learnt about the physics behind flying. We made brooms out of cardboard and then added a cone to them and took them outside to the flying arena, where we filled them with air and fired them, trying to get them through the hoops. I enjoyed watching the brooms hurtle through the air.



Lesson 5: Wands

Making wands was a mystical class where we made wands with LEDs that turned on at the press of a button. We attached some copper tape to two lollypop sticks and fixed the LED in place. We then got a third stick and cut off a piece the size of a battery. We stuck the long end in the middle and then taped the battery to the other end with electrical tape. Then we added the short end of the lollypop stick to the wand and stuck it down. When you press the switch the LED comes on and you have light. It was great!

Lesson 6: Charms

Our last enchanting class of the day was Charms where we tested chemical substances on splints to find whose wand they were, to try and solve the riddle. At the end our lesson we watched a demonstration of burning powders like cornflower and custard powder and watched a turret of flames erupt. It was thrilling and had to be one of the best classes.

This Enrichment Day was amazing and we learnt a lot.

Jacob Hammick



Sixth Form Open Morning

The Sixth Form Prefects have been busy showing potential Sixth Form students the amazing opportunities offered at Oakwood Park Grammar School.

Meet and greet sessions for every subject were set up in the hall, there were guided tours and a host of information on the school website.

Two more dates have now been added to the



Open Morning Calendar. If you missed the first set, please book your slot online

<https://www.opgs.org/sixth-form-open-mornings-2021/>

Tuesday 18th January 2022 9:00am – 10:40am.
Wednesday 19th January 2022 9:00am – 10:40am.

Wilberforce win House Challenge!

Well done to Wilberforce, who since September have won 2 out of the 3 house academic competitions, and impressively took 1st, 2nd and 3rd place in the most recent competition!

A special congratulations goes to Ewan Tweddell in Year 9, who won both the Computing and Drama house competitions! For his Drama competition entry, Ewan wrote a script about the “War of the currents” that didn’t reveal the identities of the two characters until in the footnotes.

Over the past few months, Wilberforce students have made computer games, shared photos of places that they have been to, written memorable playscripts, designed Christmas cards, and even built models of Big Ben!

Thank you to everyone who has entered, and let’s keep the momentum going into the New Year.

By James Cooper



'You Can Help'

One of the highlights of the school's Christmas charity fundraisers has been taking part in the annual 'You Can Help' Christmas Appeal set up by the Homeless Care Charity in conjunction with the Kent Messenger.

Last year, thanks to the support of parents, students and staff we donated over £1,500 to the charity. By making a cash donation, rather than the donation of dried goods, tins or toiletries, the charity is able to buy fresh produce such as fruit, vegetables and meat or fish to ensure that families need not suffer from food poverty.

Homeless Care Charity and Maidstone Day centre have been caring for the town's homeless and vulnerable people for almost 30 years. Every day they provide hot showers, clean clothes and home cooked meals for the men and women who come to them for help. As well as using the food in the Day Centre kitchens, they deliver to school breakfast clubs, children's organisations



and those for elderly people who are faced with the dilemma of paying the bills or buying food. As a result of COVID-19 and its devastating impact the charity (which usually focuses on offering a comprehensive service to homeless) shifted its operations to concentrate more on distributing food to those at greatest risk of food poverty.

If you are able to make a donation please visit

<https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/19006#!/DonationDetails>.

Thank you on behalf of the charity for your support. It really is appreciated.



Tracey Crouch MP

OPGS Sixth Form Students were pleased to welcome Tracey Crouch, MP for Chatham and Aylesford to a Question Time run by our Head Students.

Ms Crouch discussed her role in attempting to regulate credit card limits on gambling, her opinion on votes at 16 and her battle against cancer, among other things.

As we can see in her tweet following her visit, she was very impressed by OPGS Sixth Form questions and promised to visit again.



Year 7 Paper Towers Competition

Students in Year 7 Design and Technology were challenged to make the **TALLEST** and most **STABLE** tower possible from only 30 pieces of A4 paper and 2m of masking tape.

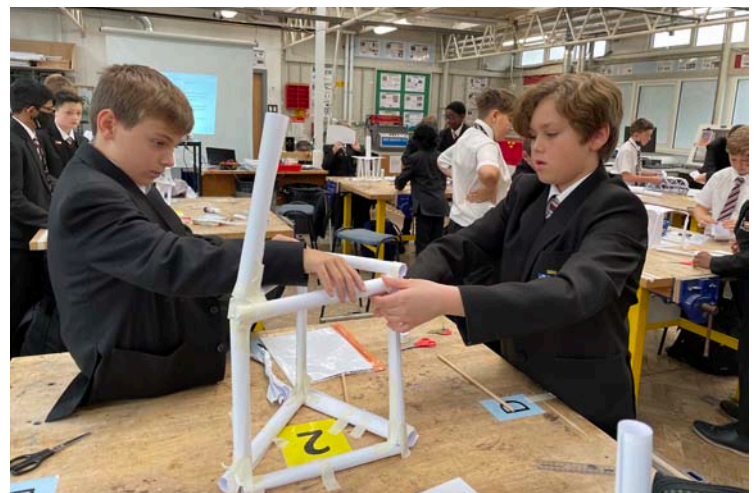
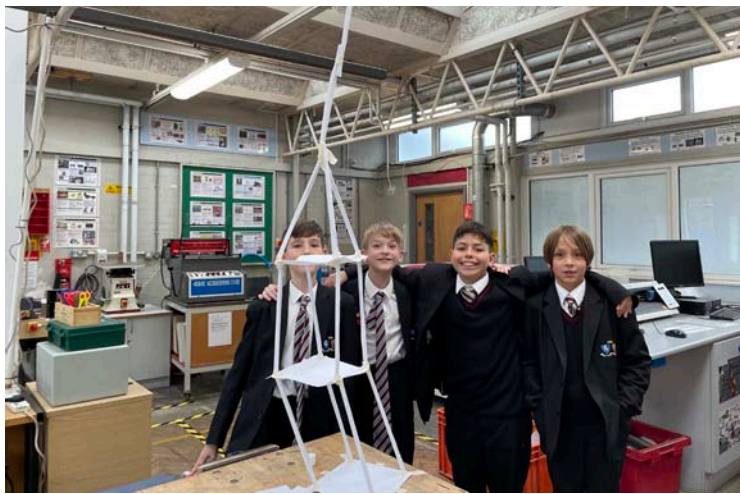
Students learnt about forces, structures and how a piece of A4 paper can be turned into something quite strong and rigid.

There were some fantastic team efforts; a range

of OPGS Shard designs alongside OPGS Leaning Tower of Pisa designs. Some stayed up and some didn't, but it was all about the experience and learning from the mistakes.

The tallest paper tower of the day reached an impressive 2.86m.

Well done to all who took part.



Year 12 Debating on the International Stage

Not deterred by the restrictions on public events, OPGS Sixth Form debating continues apace, but via online platforms.

Rather than lament the loss of an audience, Year 12 debaters enjoyed the new ability to debate on the international stage. As part of Debating Matters GB vs India, the team took on prestigious schools from Delhi and the UK. We drew some difficult positions. The team had to defend the right of people to live unhealthy lifestyles uncontrolled by the government, to support lack of privacy online and to give online tech companies the right to censor what we post. Not only were the debates against the opposition challenging, but the students found the interrogation of their position by the three adult judges extremely intense. Nonetheless, all three teams held their grounds in the face of detailed opposition. They were congratulated for their quick thinking and their courage under fire.

Despite the challenges, all three teams won their rounds and now we wait to see what cards we



are dealt for the next level up in January. Thank you to speakers Robson, Ben, Isabelle, Branden, Izzy and Ashwin (despite his senior moments) and researchers Owen, Lauren and Robin for putting awkward questions in the practice.

EMPOWERED

POETRY COMPETITION FOR 11-18 YEAR-OLDS

- ★ You could win £100 and a trophy!
- ★ Become a published poet!
- ★ Your entry needs to be handed in by:

EMPOWERED

Your Voice Shapes You

See this teacher for more information.

Poetry Competition Empowered

The English department and Creative Writing club ran a competition this term from Young Writers titled Empowered.

Students were tasked with writing a poem, in any form that they liked, about something that inspired or empowered them. Students wrote a range of poems from animal rights to football, cultural identity and more. We received a huge volume of entries and 41 of our students were identified as talented writers and were selected to be published in an official poetry book. This publication is a collection of anthologies, featuring young writers from all around the UK.

We are so proud of the students for this achievement and for their creativity and hard work.

Taking Geography A level, but actually want to be a fashion designer? Studying to be an Economics undergraduate but still keen to keep your creative side active?

Then the Extended Project Qualification could be for you. The students below are modelling some of young OPGS designer Jack Green's summer 2022 collection. Jack decided to use the EPQ to further his desire to be a fashion designer, despite the fact that he does not study Art at A level. After much



research honing in on his chosen style and designs, he set about producing the collection at home. The path was not an easy one. After discovering how difficult it was to hand print designs onto clothes, he set about making his own print table with sliding trays and a lid.

The designs that the students are modeling show only two of his fantastic designs. Still to be produced are designs such as the car and cherry tree. We can see the inspiration he has taken from Eastern art and fashion. He fused the genre with clothing items that were comfortable and unisex. The prefects were sorry to return the clothes at the end of the shoot!



The Extended Project can be taken during Year 12 or 13. Students can come up with any idea they like which Mr Ramkhalawon and Ms Hern will help them to apply to the course requirements. Students can write an essay, perform, experiment or create an artefact as chosen by Jack Green. High scoring EPQs are recognized by universities who often lower the required grades for students completing it. Universities rate them because they challenge a students' time management and motivation, two qualities vital for success on a university course. Any student in Year 11 or 12 wishing to know more can see the Sixth Form Team for support. We look forward to hearing your ideas!

Signing of Anglo-Irish Treaty marked 100 years on

One hundred years after the signing on the 6 December of the Anglo-Irish Treaty, students had a virtual Awareness Assembly on this important topic for the History of Britain and our nearest neighbour.

Students learnt how the big issue of late 1800s-early 1900s Irish (and British) politics had been Home Rule for Ireland, but that parliamentary progress on this had been suspended at the outbreak of the First World War in 1914. Following the Easter Rising of 1916 in Dublin by Irish nationalists, and changing attitudes towards Britain as a result of the authorities' response to this, the Irish War of Independence raged until British and Irish leaders met in December 1921 and signed the agreement.

This made Ireland a Free State within the British Commonwealth, giving Irish people more independence than the previous centuries but less than some aimed for. This had immediate repercussions in Ireland where a Civil War broke out between those within the new Free State who accepted the Treaty and those who saw it as keeping Ireland too close to Britain. The biggest long-term outcome of the Treaty for Britain was that Northern Ireland remained as part of the United Kingdom, leading to the political border on



the island of Ireland that we know today. Ireland became a fully independent republic in 1937.



U13 Kent Schools Table Tennis Championships Team Event

On Wednesday 24th November the U13 OPGS Table Tennis squad went to the Kent Schools Team Championships.

This is the pinnacle of the school's county table tennis programme, with all the leading schools throughout Kent in attendance. The format includes a group stage to determine the teams that progress to the knockout stages of the championship and consolation competitions.

The team were unlucky to draw an extremely strong Skinners 'A' team and face them in the first fixture of the group stages. In the first round of matches vs. Skinner's 'A' the OPGS team played some brilliant table tennis to leave the half time score at 2-2. Notable performances came from Logan Baxter (11-5 and 11-7) and Jacob Pelc (11-5 and 11-8) who won both of their matches without conceding a game. Unfortunately the Skinners 'A' team won all four of the next matches to win the fixture 6-2.

Determined to bounce back, the OPGS team upped their performance levels to record two resounding 8-0 victories against St John's and Brompton

Academy 'B' teams. This meant that they would now finish second in the group stages and qualify for the semi-finals of the consolation cup against Brompton Academy 'A' team.

After a tense start to the semi-finals all four boys took control of their respective matches to lead the fixture 4-0 at half time. With four matches remaining, OPGS now needed just one more victory to progress to the final of the consolation cup. Oliver East secured this victory, beating his opponent 11-4 and 11-1 to secure the five points needed. The final score in this game finished 8-0 to OPGS.

The boys now faced Skinner's 'B' in the final of the Consolation Cup. Like the semi-finals, there was nothing between the two teams in the initial stages. Skinners B took 1-0 lead before OPGS won the next two matches to make the score 2-1. Trailing 2-1 in the final match of the opening session, James Roots made a brilliant comeback to win 3-2. This shifted the momentum of the fixture and OPGS went on to complete a resounding 7-1 victory and become KSTTA Consolation Cup winners. A huge congratulations to all four boys who played so well throughout the whole day.



Pictured left to right- Jacob Pelc (Year 8), Oliver East (Year 7), James Roots (Year 8) & Logan Baxter (Year 8).

U16 Kent Schools Table Tennis Championships Team Event

On Wednesday 1st December the U16 A&B teams travelled to The Howard School, attempting to emulate the success of the OPGS U13 team.

The U16B team were extremely unlucky to draw Dane Court GS and Norton Knatchbull GS in the group stages of the competition. Despite battling hard, the team lost both fixtures by seven games to one meaning that they were knocked out of the competition. Norton Knatchbull were to go on and win the consolation cup which highlighted the challenge that the OPGS B team had faced in playing them so early in the competition. A special mention must go to Fin Murton who was the only player in the team to win two matches, beating top quality opposition player in both fixtures.

The U16A team enjoyed a more successful start to the competition, recording emphatic victories against both Skinners GS B (7-1) and St John's Catholic Comprehensive School A (8-0). This meant that they progressed into the semi-final of the main competition, facing an exceptionally strong Skinners A team who had two county players within their squad. Despite several fighting performances, the OPGS A team (Josh Klein,

James Tricker, Lucas Dick and Charlie Razey) were edged out in several games to eventually lose 7-1. This was a very unfair score line that certainly didn't reflect the competitive nature of the fixture. A special mention must be given to Josh Klein (year 9), the youngest player at the tournament who only lost one match throughout whilst playing as the number 1 seed in the OPGS A team.

A big congratulations to all the boys involved who represented OPGS so well throughout the day.

U16 A Team- Josh Klein, James Tricker, Lucas Dick and Charlie Razey

U16 B Team- Lyle Sheldrick, Fin Murton, Sam Gibbons, Freddie Fagg.



Ethan Murphy (Year 7) Elite National Gymnastics Finals

Hi, my name is Ethan Murphy and I am in year 7. I am an Elite gymnast and have been competing since the age of 6. I am part of the Men's Artistic Squad at Pegasus Gymnastics Club and train approximately 20 hours per week.

I qualified for my first National Finals at the age of 9. To qualify for an Elite National Final, I had to compete in the Southern Area qualifiers where I placed 2nd. This enabled me to compete in the National Finals in Birmingham. After performing on 7 pieces of apparatus, I placed 7th in the individual event and 1st in the team event. Due my performance that day, I was invited to the Great Britain team selection day.

Most recently, I qualified for the Elite National Finals held in Telford's National Centre. It was the biggest arena I have competed in yet, and I felt extremely nervous as I hadn't competed since



2019 due to Covid restrictions. Unfortunately, it wasn't my day and I fell on 2 pieces of apparatus which put me in 9th place at the end of the day.

To be an Elite Gymnast you have to remain committed, determined, focused and have a positive mind set. My favourite piece of apparatus is the Pommel. To be successful on the Pommel you need to have a strong core, flexibility and endurance. My biggest challenge at the moment is keeping on top of my academic studies whilst training lots of hours in the gym.

My aspiration for the next couple of years is to be selected for the Men's Artistic Great Britain Squad and in the future I hope to be an Olympian! I am fortunate enough to train alongside James Hall - a former student of OPGS and Olympian at the 2020 games. James has encouraged me to persevere when things get tough and to celebrate my successes.

Senior Maths Challenge

A large number of OPGS students recently took part in the Senior Maths Challenge for Yr. 12 and 13 students and there were some outstanding results.

The Senior Maths Challenge is a Maths competition open to all A-Level students in the British Isles and also a large number of international schools.

Along with a number of students achieving Gold, Silver and Bronze awards, 6 students qualified for the next round which is known as the Kangaroo. This is a challenging one hour exam consisting of 20 questions requiring tactics as much as knowledge. These six students have now completed the next

round and are awaiting results.

The six students who qualified were Samuel Folley, Daniel King and Benjamin Plane, (Yr. 13), and 3 students from Yr. 12, Joseph Castle, Thomas Lenham and Jack Wilson.

Results should be with us shortly. Well done to all students on their outstanding achievements.

An example of one of the 20 questions.

Q: Some years, like 2022, have the property that they use at most 2 different digits. How many years between 1 and 9999, inclusive, have this property? (3 minutes)

Year 9 Inter-house Sports Day

Please see below the results from yesterday's year 9 inter-house sport enrichment day:

- Fisher- 1st
- Wilberforce- 2nd
- Hazlitt- 3rd
- Broughton- 4th
- Sadler- 5th

Thanks for all your efforts to put on a successful day for the boys.



Year 10 House Sport Enrichment Day 2-12-2021

Please see below the results from last Thursday's Year 10 House Sports Enrichment Day:

1st- Hazlitt

2nd- Broughton

3rd- Wilberforce

4th- Sadler

5th- Fisher



Sixth Form Charities Christmas Jumper Day

On Wednesday 15th December we hosted our annual whole-school Christmas Jumper Day and raised an incredible £984.59. The charities this event was in support of were Demelza and Dementia UK.

Demelza provides care and support for seriously or terminally ill babies, children, young people, and their families during times in their lives that would be terrible to go through alone. Our donations will help fund their #FestiveWishes Christmas Campaign.

Dementia UK also provides a huge deal of support but for families with a loved one with dementia. Christmas time can be particularly challenging for these families so our donations will be invaluable in helping everyone through the Winter period.

We were so pleased to see such a great turnout of festive jumpers, and the event was a huge success in rekindling some Christmassy school spirit at the end of another challenging year.

Have a very Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year!

Best wishes,
The Head Student Team



The Year 7 rugby team have enjoyed a successful first term of school rugby despite being on the wrong side of results in a challenging term of fixtures.

Since starting rugby in PE lessons this term, over 30+ students have been attending the lunchtime club on a weekly basis. This enthusiasm and commitment have allowed me to work with the squad on a consistent basis, helping the boys develop the core skills and tactics needed to play competitive fixtures against established rugby schools such as the Hayes School (45-20 loss) and St Lawrence College (35-15 loss).

Despite results, the team have improved considerably during these games. There have also been several fantastic individual performances, with Ayman Azeez gaining the man of the match award vs. Hayes for a hattrick of tries, the last of which running the length of the pitch to level the second half score at 15 points a piece. Daramola Adesanya, Jenson Clarke (captain) & Reece Roberston have been the standout forwards this term, providing aggression in defence and the ability to control possession through their rucking.

We now look forward to the Maidstone Schools District Tournament at Aylesford RFC this coming Thursday 16th December. OPGS will have over 25 boys in attendance to form an A&B squad for the first time this season. The tournament will consist of a round robin format with the top schools progressing to the Maidstone Schools final in term 3.

In the new year several fixtures are planned, starting with games against Herne Bay High School and Dover Grammar School for Boys. We will then progress to the Grammar School league, with several other games organised for terms 3&4. Well done again to all the boys that have done so well in committing to weekly training and representing the school this term. You should be very proud of the start you've made to your school rugby career.

It has been great to finally get some rugby played with the Year 8 rugby team and having so many interested in playing for the school team, we have been able to develop a really strong squad mentality.

Since the start of the year, we have had approximately 25 students attending the lunchtime

club on a regular basis, which has really allowed us to develop their skills and prepare them for the matches they have played.

It has been hugely impressive that so many boys have wanted to represent the school and are seemingly enjoying the experience. Despite some results going against the team, they have continued to train and improve.

The boy's first game was against Norton Knatchbull, a great starting point for the squad, with a slow start to the match they came together as a team and whilst the first half wasn't as they would have liked they won the second half, 2 tries to 1. The confidence the boys took from this was great. On they went to their second match against Simon Langton, always a tough opposition. Playing a three way tournament was always going to be tough, but the boys put together a sterling performance and their final try was one that demonstrated what they could do if they put it all together. Half term came at a good point, the boys had a short break but returned excited and ready to continue working on their skill sets and tactical development. Chatham and Clarendon were their next opponents, a game they travelled to with confidence and optimism. Some great performances by Woody Lyons, Caine Wright and Elijah Anijeke meant that the boys walked away from the field with an impressive 40-25 win, their first for OPGS.

The boys continued attending training and working at what was required to develop as a team, looking forward to their next match against Hayes and Sir Roger Manwood's. Hayes was a tough challenge for the squad, a school we know would be well prepared, playing as a team would be important to maintain a challenge. The boys started well, but unfortunately quick tries by Hayes led to disappointment in the squad, and the inexperience of maintaining team work soon showed itself. This would end up as our biggest loss of the season, and something the boys were confident would not happen again. Our final game of the term was against St Lawrence College, again another tough opposition, but one we wanted to show that we could work as a team. Whilst the result did not go our way, it was clear that the boys were determined, had improved, and were looking forward to the next challenges of the Grammar School league in the new year.

The fresh-faced Year 9 boys were finally back to training and ready for a new season, friendlies along with cup fixtures were ahead of them and there was excitement considering they had played no rugby since Year 7.

We started the season against Norton Knatchbull, a game we won easily in Year 7, but times had changed. The Norton boys had developed both physically and tactically. With a clear game plan Norton took the lead and the challenge was on. A challenge that they were prepared for. Good performances from George Rhodes, Will Aldrich and Sonny Smith bought us back into the game, ending up with a 20-15 win with a last play of the game try to win the match. Confidence was now high and the next match, which was due to be Herne Bay high in the Kent Shield competition, something that we felt we could achieve well in this year. Following a walk over, it actually meant that we have progressed to the semi-final v Tunbridge Wells. Knowing Tunbridge Wells may be strong, we were confident of a win. Tunbridge Wells arrived after a difficult journey and they started quickly, scoring two quick tries. If we were to win we would need to improve quickly and begin playing as a team. Again, performances by Sonny, George, Will and Ryan Ward bought us back into the match, unfortunately it was not enough and we lost the match 25-10. A shame as we really felt that we could get to a second final in Oakwood Park's history.

Two strong matches were to follow, Sir Roger Manwood's and then St Lawrence. These were two matches that we had confidence that we would be able to win. Sir Roger Manwood's arrived full of competition, but the Year 9 squad played as a team, and this meant that together we were able to create opportunities to score. Moving quickly into the lead, the boys did not give up and continued playing as a squad. This was a comprehensive performance running out as eventual winners with a score line of 35-10. The following week came St Lawrence, again confidence was high following the previous week's performance, and the match did not disappoint. Both teams were performing well, tries being scored by both teams. Eventually losing by one try, the boys walked away from the field knowing that they were in a good position to challenge the Grammar School league next term (as long as they continue training that is!).

The Year 10 & 11 rugby team have been extremely unlucky this term with numerous injuries decimating the squad and making it impossible to field the same XV players for any two games.

Some would say their luck has resembled the Welsh squad in the recent Autumn internationals! Despite this, the team have shown enormous versatility and character to perform well against very strong rugby schools that have included Maidstone Grammar School for Boys, St Lawrence College and The Hayes School. One of the teams' strongest performances came in the local derby against MGS. In a tight first half there was nothing to choose between the two teams and a strong defensive effort kept the MGS backline at bay. The boys were also excellent at the breakdown to control possession and create several opportunities in attack. Unfortunately OPGS were made to pay for these missed opportunities and a lack of squad depth, with MGS scoring several second half tries to finish 32-3 winners. A special mention must go to Tom Martin for his Man of the Match performance, working tirelessly at the breakdown to give the team go forward.

The second fixture involved a long journey to play St Lawrence College in Ramsgate. Hampered by this journey the boys were slow to start and conceded 35 points in a very disappointing first half display. A lack of defensive organisation and support when attacking resulted in losing possession throughout. The team then showed superb character to fight back and improve upon their first half performance. The second half score line finished 20-19 to St Lawrence College which left the team rueing their slow start. A special mention must be given to Sam Gibbons who played brilliantly at full back, catching the ball securely and providing a counterattack threat throughout.

This term's final fixture vs. The Hayes School was a very even affair in which neither side could breach the opposition defence. Having lead 5-0, The Hayes School team then bounced back with two tries to lead 12-5 at half time. Upon restarting the game an unfortunate injury caused the remainder of the fixture to be postponed. We will now look to replay the fixture in the new year. The team will also look forward to playing Herne Bay High School, Simon Langton GS and Dover Grammar School for Boys.

Term 2- 1st XV Rugby Report

With improved availability I'm expecting some strong performances from a refreshed squad.

The PE department would like to thank the players for their on-going commitment to OPGS rugby and the parents who have supported this term, be that on the side line or with lifts to and from matches. The new year bodes well and hopefully the Grammar School League will allow us to experience success.

The new term was approached with excitement, after the success in term 1, the squad were optimistic and ready for all the challenges ahead. There were targets for more wins and challenging the schools we traditionally did not perform against.

The first week we were up against a strong Simon Langton outfit, and following the match pre- half term, Simon Langton wanted a challenge for their 1st team. Something we accepted with confidence, feeling we could do something special against a traditional tough opponent. We did not disappoint, taking an early lead in the match and continuing the performance, we took the game to Simon Langton. It meant that they had to make some changes to their team to eventually pull away from us. But it was only the final 10-15 minutes of the match that Simon Langton looked any better than us. It was a performance to be proud of, considering the difference in preparation that Simon Langton had had for the match.

Following a period of home fixtures, we did have to travel further afield for the next matches. A visit to Chatham and Clarendon was on the calendar followed by Sir Roger Manwood's. Unfortunately due to circumstances out of the squad's control, the first fixture was postponed, which meant we had a week of training prior to visiting Sir Roger Manwood's, a team we traditionally experience great games against. This was not to disappoint. We took an early two try lead, which on this occasion worked against us, and with a light bench of substitutes meant we were not able to play the match that we were used to. Sir Roger Manwood's then took advantage of the rules and snatched a late try through some strong and direct running, meaning that they won the match 29-24, not something that we enjoyed and the long journey back was not something to look forward to.

Two more fixtures were scheduled before the end of term, St Lawrence away and Hayes away. Two fixtures we had targeted as some of the biggest challenges, but games we would be able to see how far we had developed. Unfortunately, these were the first fixtures affected by Covid this year, and we were not able to complete the fixtures, we look forward to next year and recommencing our battles.

Not wanting to end the term without a fixture we managed to arranged the annual OPGS v MGS fixture, away on their new 3G pitch on the final Wednesday of term. A challenge the boys fully wanted to take up, hoping to end the term on a high. With a full squad we headed over to MGS, prepared ourselves fully for the challenge on the pitch, but also aware that they will have home field advantage.

The match started well, with some fast play, quick rucking and huge hits taking place from both teams. But unfortunately, MGS were first to strike, scoring two quick tries. The boys knew they would have to improve and speed up their play if they were to pull this back. We battled and played some good rugby, but just were not able to find an answer for MGS's quick play of the ball or our struggling line out play to build an attack from, something that bewildered Mr Housden as the lineout had been strong all season. The match continued, no team giving up, the big hits continuing, crowd roaring in support. However, MGS's defence held out against all we could put to them and with them capitalising on some slow defending and positioning they scored again, slowly pulling away. By half time they were ahead by 24-0, the boys were determined not to walk away without a score.

The second half began, and it took strength, organisation and some improved set plays to keep MGS from scoring again, OPGS coming close to breaching the opposition try line. Unfortunately, 20 minutes into the half MGS broke the line and managed to score another well worked try.

We continued to battle through the half, challenging the opposition, making more line breaks and getting beyond the gain line in a more attacking manner. The team came together, we increased the speed of play and support play, always looking for that break to get over the try line. MGS scored one more try before we finally got over the white line. Playing from deep in our own 22 metre line, the boys pulled together a number of phases, worked

1st XV Rugby Report Cont...

our way up the field and Brad Martin scored a well-deserved try. Whilst the result may not have been what the squad would have wanted, we can say that in the final match of 2021, a year to reflect on, OPGS had the final say on the rugby pitch.

Bring on 2022 and another term of quality fixtures

that will both show the excellence of the squad and provide challenge for the boys.

Several other games are organised for terms 3&4. Well done again to all the boys that have done so well in committing to weekly training and representing the school this term. You should be very proud of the start you've made to your school

December Football Season Report

Year 7:

'The future is bright' is the prediction from Mr Devonald in charge of the year 7's this year. Over 80 boys attended football trials in September to try to gain a place in the Year 7 Football Squad this season. Following a couple of trials 28 boys were selected to play in 'Friendly' interschool fixtures and throughout the season players have been selected to play in both 'A' and 'B' team fixtures.

With both teams dominating the Maidstone football tournaments and scoring 16 goals and only conceding 1 we look forward to the second round of tournaments due in January/February against the remaining Maidstone schools to decide who plays in the finals in May.

In both Kent Cups and English Schools Cup competitions both teams have had notable wins including a 6-1 Win against St Simon Stock and 9-1 against Streatham High School. I am writing this report following a narrow 2-1 defeat against Tunbridge Wells Grammar School in the Quarter Final of the Kent Cup. On the day I believe the occasion played its part and the performance of the team was below their normal standards. It is, however, experiencing these occasions and the pressure and expectations to play in these conditions that will improve the players as we progress in the ESFA competition. With only 4 rounds to go, can they repeat the 2014 ESFA Champions and get through to the final and win?

Year 8:

The year 8's have run two teams this season to give as many students the opportunity to represent the school in district, county and national competitions. Both teams have been excellent throughout the season and have recorded some fantastic performances. The U13B team recently beat Shoreham school 4-3 (aet) with Charlie Beale

scoring a dramatic winner. They then travelled to Tunbridge Wells GS in the ESFA Cup, who have over 280 boys to choose from, so it was always going to be a tough game. The squad held their own and played some brave football, looking to build from the back. On the day TWBGS were deserved winners and we wish them well in the next round.

The A team have recorded good wins vs St Gregory's (5-4) and Aylesford (3-2) in the Kent Cup and are playing at the end of this term vs Meopham in the round of 16. If successful they will play Hayes school in the 1/4 Finals at home in January.

Both teams have continued to develop and improve throughout the year and there is a strong pool of players which the school can be very excited about in the future.

Year 9:

This team have had some bad luck so far this season in the big competitions. Losing away from home at the North School in Ashford when leading 2-0 at HT and 3-2 with 5 minutes to go, can only be put in the, 'one that got away' category. That said, the experiences from these types of (away) games can often help the squad to mature and toughen up mentally and physically, we are still hopeful that, despite the disappointment, there would have been some valuable learning for all involved.

The district season will start up again in the new year and the squad will hope to prove that they are still able to compete with the best schools in Kent.

Year 10:

Mr Devonald has made some sweeping changes to the team with the introduction of a new centre back partnership and 5 new players to the squad.

December Football Season Report Cont...

It demonstrates that the PE department are always looking at the development of players through the years. Winning the first Maidstone Tournament whilst developing a new style of play with so many changes is never easy and with players adapting to the new positions and roles in the team this will take time to imbed itself. In the Kent Cup the team put on an impressive performance and were leading rivals MGS 2-1 with 3 minutes to go, conceding a last-minute equaliser and then an injury time winner was hard to take. This was especially so as the referee (Mr Devonald) failed to send off their opposition goalkeeper or award a goal line clearance and then went on to disallow a last gasp equaliser for offside. It demonstrates to the boys that we do not adopt a 'win at all costs' at Oakwood Park GS and morals and integrity in sport are just as important than the end result.

Year 11:

We do not enter the Year 11 teams in to the Maidstone Competitions but they have the opportunity to represent the school at senior level in both 1st and 2XI teams. However, they did play in the Kent Cup and lost 2-0 to Fulston Manor.

2nd XI Football:

It has been a frustrating season so far with many year 11's opting (understandably) to focus on their GCSE's Those that have been available have been outstanding, with Reece Merenda and Freddie Stone the stand out players so far and Freddie subsequently being called up to represent the 1XI for the remainder of their season. Following three very successful seasons it has been difficult to field a competitive side on a regular basis which has contributed to a lack of consistency in performances and results. Wins against Queen Elizabeth GS and Beech Grove being notable performances when players have made themselves available. Sitting in 6th position in the league at the midway through the season and only 2 points off 3rd place, a strong finish in return fixtures should give the opportunity for a strong finish this season.

1st XI Football:

Lack of 'character', a word bounded about far to often by managers and coaches when they are

looking to distract from below par performances or poor results. This is certainly not true of the 1st XI this season, who have character in abundance as well as the performances to match (with the exception of MGS away, but we don't mention that). A slow start to the league campaign with some tough losses in close games has only helped the squad become tighter, which is essential for success during the winter months and also the Kent Cup. Since half term the squad have climbed to 6th in the league and have remained unbeaten in league and cup matches since 10th November. A huge Kent Cup win away to Cleeve Park means that the boys will get the opportunity to reach the 1/4 Finals, if they can avenge an earlier defeat away to QES.

Captained by Ben Parks, the team could be finding their rhythm just at the right time to have a run in the cup and if beating QES isn't motivation enough, there is the added incentive of playing MGS in the 1/4 Final and righting a few wrongs.



End of Term Awards

Ordinarily we would be celebrating student success in a series of end of term assemblies, however due to Covid restrictions presentations had to be scaled back to prize winners only.

With so many talented students it was difficult for staff to select just two students in each subject per year group, therefore congratulations to the award winners. We have also been recognising the achievement of our students through nominations for Headteacher's commendations and achievement points. Certificates for 100% attendance have also been awarded.





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