

Last week we sent out the final blog of the year... but so much has happened this week we felt it important to send an extra special end of term edition!



I'd like to take this opportunity to say an enormous thank you to staff, students, parents and our wider community for all their efforts in making this year at Chesterton such a successful one.

This is an extremely special school and I feel very privileged to be the headteacher here. I look forward to welcoming everyone back in September for another fantastic year.

All the best for a restful summer break.

Rolf Purvis
Executive Headteacher

Happy Retirement!

Nicola von Schreiber, our exams officer, retires today after over 15 years service at Chesterton. Over this period she has timetabled, delivered, logged, invigilated, packed up and sent off with a courier more than 75,000 public exams.

Nicola has done so much more at Chesterton than just being our exams officer. She's been BTEC Quality Nominee, a learning mentor, a lunchtime till operator, a walking bus conductor, a first aider and many, many more things beside. We wish her the very best for her retirement.

Junior Choir and Chesterton Singers Set to Shine at Gabrieli Roar Choral Course

From 21st-26th July 19 members of the Junior Choir and Chesterton Singers from Years 8-10 are going on the annual Gabrieli Roar choral course, together with Miss Wilson, Mrs Thurlow and Mr Bond. Students will be rehearsing Elgar's Dream of Gerontius as part of a massed youth choir of 200 students from around the country, before performing in Ely Cathedral on Wednesday 26th July, alongside a professional orchestra and soloists. There are a few remaining tickets for the performance, available [here](#).

Y12 Classics – end of year project

Recently our sixth formers studying Classical Civilisation have been experimenting with vase forms inspired by the Greek Art module we studied earlier in the year. During lessons, students spent time creating their own vases from some clay last week and decorated them this week, with a range of mythological themes!



Enrichment Week Empowers Students: Leadership, Enterprise, and Job Skills Explored

The first day of our Enrichment week focused on leadership, which saw students take part in a series of activities and discussions that explored the concept of leadership and how they can act like a leader in their everyday lives. They had the opportunity to interview three very reputable leaders in their own respective fields: Lucy Scott, CEO of The Eastern Learning Alliance (our trust), Simon Peyton Jones, Computer scientist and researcher for Epic Games, and Will Cotteril, Director of Operations at Shelford Rugby Club. Each gave an insightful talk on their take of leadership from their differing positions and stances, as well as communicating with students what their sixth form experience entailed and how they made the most of their education in terms of personal growth.

Day two of Enrichment week was all about enterprise with the main task being the paper clip challenge! In groups, students were issued with a paper clip that they then needed to take into Cambridge city centre to try and trade for something 'better'. All groups really took to the challenge with a lot of them stepping out of their comfort zones when it came to speaking to people they didn't know with the objective of negotiating. It was great to see such an array of things coming back to school, from coffee machines to jewellery, and even a selection of sunglasses and mobile phones...they even work!

For day three, AIM came to run sessions on CVs and interviews. Students reflected on their strengths and how best to exemplify these in a job application / interview process before then carrying out mock interviews. This proved a more than worthy exercise for students who despite being interviewed by one of their peers, felt somewhat under pressure!





Enrichment Week

in pictures!

CHESTERTON DRAMA FESTIVAL: A HIT! A PALPABLE HIT!

Chesterton Youth Theatre's drama festival took place between Friday 7th and Tuesday 11th July, and – by all accounts – was an absolute triumph.

It would be impossible in one article to capture the vast range and high quality of all the performances that took place over the 5 days, involving over 100 actors from the College and even beyond, but here are a few headlines:

Congratulations to Evie for winning Best Actor at the Year 7 plays festival, for her depiction of a charismatic villain, which adjudicator Lesley Ford loved! The winning plays were from Equiano and Hill Houses, and were awarded for their creativity and team work. The dark theme of 'death' did tend to dominate this competition! But all the plays were dramatic as a result! The year 7 cohort have shown they truly are a "vintage crop" of actors! Their years ahead on stage at Chesterton look anything but dark!

The professional audio performance of 'Equus' was described as 'phenomenal'. It was a total privilege to experience live, and can be listened to as a radio play by [clicking here](#). Chesterton is hugely grateful to the local and London-based performers who came on board with this ambitious, far-reaching project.

The Pantomime Festival was in complete contrast to the seriousness of the work that went before it, and brought the house down with laughter and spectacle. Congratulations to Dhanvika and Charlie C for winning Best Actors, Rosie for winning Best Panto Spirit and the Churchill Class for their version of 'Cinderella' which won Best Overall Panto. Adjudicator Debbie Radcliffe was wowed by the talent of our Year 8 students, as well as the sheer quantity of performers involved!

The Improvisation Hour was led by Esme Sharpington and again, brought its audience chuckles of hilarity through various games and exercises that required their participation. It was wonderful to see former students acting alongside younger students in spontaneous scenes that ranged from a zany advert for accident insurance in a toilet; to a parodied romantic pop ballad about becoming a doctor!

The 'High School Musical' Open Rehearsal brought another full-house, and gave parents the opportunity to see what it's like to prepare for a CYT production. Students exhibited outstanding levels of maturity in responding to constructive feedback from their directors in front of the audience, and one parent joked at the end 'I can now see why my child is so tired when they come home!'. The Show is looking very promising and everyone expressed their excitement to see the finished product at the end of September: watch this space for tickets!

The final event, 'The Rep', ended the Festival in a way which was described as 'mind-blowing' and 'exceptional' by its audience, who also gave it a standing ovation. West-end star Ryan Hutton came to adjudicate its performers – who shared musical theatre and dramatic extracts ranging from Shakespeare to 'Shrek' – but he could not award a medal, because 'they were all too incredible to pick one individual out'. There was laughter but also tears at this event, as we said goodbye to some of CYT's greatest actors who have been through lockdown in their time here, but still carried on acting in 'Henry V' and much more since. It was a performance that one year 11 student said was 'one of the best nights of my life' and Ms Marston would tend to agree! The passion of these Chesterton actors was beyond compare.

If you managed to catch any of the Festival, thank you for supporting us! If you didn't, we hope to be back next year! It's a lot of work, but so worth it, all the way! Let's finish with some lyrics from the song 'Electricity' sung by Kate in 'The Rep' about what it feels like to perform:

'Then I feel a change, like a burning deep inside, something bursting me wide open, impossible to hide...And suddenly I'm flying...flying through the air, like electricity...electricity: sparks inside of me...and I'm free, I'm free...'



Drama Festival Highlights
Photography by Alex Scott

German Exchange 2023

Six Year 9 and six Year 10 students have just returned from an action-packed week in Schriesheim, near Heidelberg. Students lived in a German family and enjoyed experiencing a different culture as well as improving their German language skills. Highlights included a trip to Heidelberg Castle, meeting the local mayor, and a day-trip to the cathedral city of Speyer where the huge technical museum proved very popular, as did the local ice cream!



Enrichment Week Highlights: 'Powerful Percussion' and Inspiring Proms Concert

During enrichment, 'Powerful Percussion' involved students taking part in both a gamelan workshop at the University Faculty of Music and a Boomwhacker workshop in school. We heard some fantastic performances during the week and students made great progress during the day. A big thanks to all who took part and to Rob Campion who led our gamelan workshops.

On Sunday 16th July 103 students from Years 7-12 and 15 staff saw a fantastic concert at the BBC Proms. We travelled by train and tube to the Royal Albert Hall, South Kensington. After an afternoon of museum visits and exploring the local area, we went to the hall to watch Prom 4: The Four Seasons. The concert was hugely inspiring and featured Beethoven's First Symphony followed by a high-energy performance of Vivaldi's Four Seasons interspersed with folk performances on violin and cittern. The students were a credit to Chesterton throughout the day and we look forward to running the trip again next year. Thanks also to all the staff who supported the trip.



Year 9 English enrichment trip

During enrichment week, nearly 90 Year 9 students were lucky to experience “a day in the life of an English university student”. Starting the morning off at St John’s College to see how undergrads live, our students later went on to enjoy an English undergraduate-style lecture, kindly put on by English lecturer Dr Morris. We were challenged to explore big ideas like, “How do people use language to sound powerful?” and “How can a map be a narrative?”. We also got to learn how studying English post-16 can develop different skills and lead on to diverse degrees and careers, with a session with English outreach officer, Annie Winship. Students asked some great questions about applying to university and about subject choices.

We also enjoyed civilised reading picnics in the beautiful Harvey Court gardens (thanks to Gonville and Caius College) and exclusive access to the University Library, including guided tours, a talk about some special maps, and a look at a very lovely exhibition about illustrator Raymond Briggs.

The students were very positive about their day, and the university staff were complimentary about the students’ exemplary participation and behaviour. A big thank you to the university colleges, library teams, and English faculty staff, and to our own staff for their hard work making the days run smoothly.

Year 10 Students Showcase Skills and Resilience

During enrichment 39 year 10 students embarked on their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award expedition. For this they had to hike for two days while being self-sufficient. We saw lots of sharp navigation skills and very creative cooking. Despite the onset of rain on the second day groups persisted and all managed to make it to the the end point.

The expedition is only one part of the DofE award which encourages young people to try new things as part of their personal development. Look out for opportunities to sign up in the Autumn term in year 10.

PLAY-IN-A-DAY

Following the drama festival, the drama department led ‘Play-in-a-day’ for Enrichment. Over the course of 3 days, over 130 students from years 7 and 8 took part in this theatrical challenge, in which they had to work in groups to create plays based on a stimulus. The first day: **‘The Reunion’**; the second **‘The Betrayal’**; and the third **‘The Surprise’**. The plays they created were highly imaginative and each one had something different to offer, be it a plot twist or a moment of physical theatre. Students used props in multiply inventive ways to make their performances all the more dynamic, and we all enjoyed playing games at the start of each day, so that everyone felt they knew each other. Marley, Callum and Ryad were given medals for being our “actors of the day”, and the 3 winning plays, as voted by their peers, were happy to accept sweets as prizes! Students described their experiences to Ms Marston and Mr Cooper as ‘fun’, ‘enthalling’ and ‘amazing’. By the end of this intensely dramatic week, we were all ready for a rest! Bring on summer, and if you’re going to the Edinburgh Fringe, have a theatrically enriching time!

Finally, thank you to Josh, Marnie, Ceana, Holly, Laurie and Rhys for helping with Play-in-a-Day and Year 7 and 8 drama clubs this term: all their work with year groups younger than their own on developing their drama skills has been invaluable. This student leadership and direction has given our newer students the confidence to perform with panache in public: truly, these are lessons for life, and long may it continue!



Library helpers outing

On Monday, the library team had a trip to Heffers book shop, so each student helper could choose a book to keep as a reward for all their hard work in the library. We then enjoyed a drink at Le Patissier, sitting outside in the sunshine with smoothies and quickly getting stuck into the new books. We are so thankful to our wonderful team of volunteers – we couldn't run the library without them, and some have already asked to sign up again for next year!



Reading café

Thank you to all the parents, staff and students who joined us in the library after school on Monday for our reading café. It was great to see families selecting books together for the summer holidays. It was also a lovely opportunity for the library team to be able to give some personalised advice to students and parents about reading choices. Parents were very complimentary about the student library team who were there to help.

We hope to welcome you back for another reading café next academic year.

The Big Listen

Well done to all our students who have started using the Libby app for borrowing audiobooks and ebooks. We were running a competition for students to log their listens with a view to encouraging more students to try audiobooks and to recommend them to each other. We originally suggested this would be a house competition, but two students in particular, from two different houses, have gone completely above and beyond in their enthusiasm in logging and recommending their listens, so it seems only fair to reward these two individuals instead of a house team. A big well done to Oliver and Sibylle, both in Year 7, who clearly love listening to stories, and who will be rewarded with edible prizes!

Year 10 Students Triumph in Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Expedition

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Castle School Visit

Some Y10 students went to castle school. They planned and then ran a sports day there for around 50 students. They were exceptional. I am so proud of them. They were mature, thoughtful and kind. An absolute credit to the school.

Feedback from Castle school:

Balmoral class teacher *“that was an amazing sports day. I can't believe how well the CCC guys did. My class had such a good time despite the rain”*

Class TA *“the boys running the dancing and parachute were brilliant with the students”*

Pupil *“the balloons were really fun. I got wet. Can we do it again”*

TA *“the care the CCC students spent on the obstacle course to make everyone able to access it was amazing”*

Pupil *“Katy look and my spoon, can I take it home”*

Teacher *“I've been stopped by so many adults telling me that they were blown away your students. Well done Team sports day 2023!”*

Year 9 Students on Impactful Belgium Trip

The History Department is pleased to report another successful Year 9 trip to Belgium. Fifty students and six teachers made the annual pilgrimage to visit the battlefields and Commonwealth War Graves in and around Ypres, the site of several major battles in the First World War. This trip is a rite of passage for many British students, and certainly had an impact on the Chesterton party in 2023.

This year we visited three cemeteries including Tyne Cot on the site of the Battle of Passchendaele (October 1917), the largest Commonwealth War Graves cemetery in the world, and the German cemetery Langemarck. At Tyne Cot, students were able to locate the graves of men from Chesterton. Lucia (Year 9) said “it was amazing to see soldiers from where we live...it made it very personal.” We also attended the famous Last Post at the Menin Gate, and visited a popular soldier's club and chaplaincy called Talbot House, a personal favourite of Ms Powell and Mr Ware. And of course, staff and students enjoyed the customary dinner of chicken and chips and a trip to the Leonidas chocolate shop.

Thanks to all the Year 9 students who made this a special trip.

Rewards

Students that received 75 or more ABP were treated to a morning or afternoon of treats and games this week. A huge thank you to our fantastic staff in the canteen for catering these occasions.

Our top 10 achievers in Key Stage 3 and Key stage 4 were also awarded with a special voucher.

We were blown away by the amount of students that had received so many points this year and we are so proud of all their achievements.

Some of our students received the most points we have ever seen at Chesterton!

Next year our rewards system will be having a rebrand and we are really exciting to launch it in September. It will work closely with our new Chesterton Values and will award students in and outside of the classroom.



Year 7 Graphic Novels

Year 7 students took part in a fantastic workshop led by local published author and illustrator Tonka Uzu.

On each of the 3 days, students planned, designed and produced their own 1-page graphic novel, which was transformed into a book for each student to take home.

THE WINNERS!



A huge congratulations to **Simon** (Cavendish 8) and **Michelle** (Equiano 4) for winning our Values Design Competition. We loved both designs for their simplicity, effectiveness and boldness. The designs will be merged together and will be displayed across the school site ready for September.