

Dear parents and carers,

Please see below this week's Chesterton blog. We hope you enjoy reading the updates from departments and teams across the school.



Thank you so much to all our staff and students for their ongoing hard work.

The team at Chesterton are always keen to hear from parents who'd like to get involved with school life: please don't hesitate to get in touch if this is true for you.

All the best for a lovely weekend.

**Rolf Purvis**  
**Executive Headteacher**

## Chesterton ranks #1 in Cambridgeshire

We are delighted to be able to confirm, following publication of Department for Education (DfE) 2023 performance tables this week, that Chesterton officially sits at the top of all schools in the Cambridgeshire local authority in terms of progress made by our students. Nationally, according to the DfE, we come in at 58th place (out of almost 7000 schools) – which once again places us in the top 1% of schools nationally.

We are the only school in Cambridgeshire with an overall 'Progress 8' score of above 1. That score means that Chesterton students, on average, get one grade higher in every GCSE they take, than they would if those same students had gone to an average school.

Life at Chesterton is about much more than exams, but exam results have a major effect on our children's life chances. So we are extremely proud of our students for their amazing effort, and of our dedicated staff for supporting students so well in the return to formal exams.

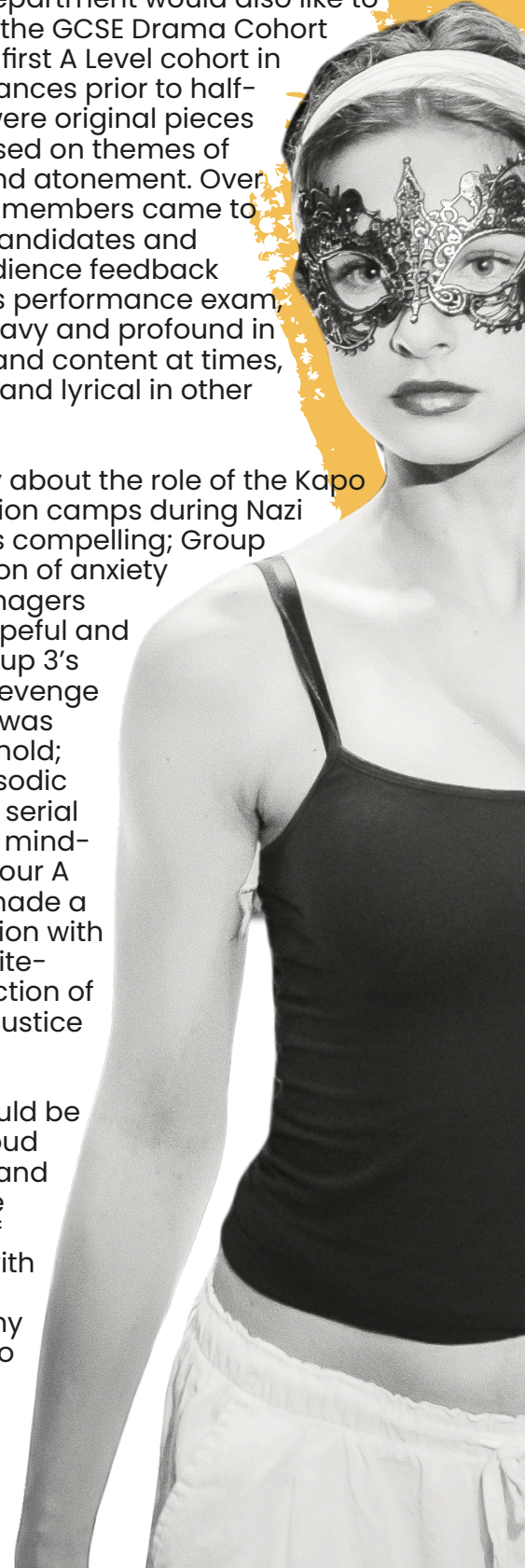
## Year 11 and 13 wow audiences with their devised pieces

The drama department would also like to congratulate the GCSE Drama Cohort 2024 and our first A Level cohort in their performances prior to half-term, which were original pieces of theatre based on themes of censorship and atonement. Over 100 audience members came to support the candidates and complete audience feedback surveys in this performance exam, which was heavy and profound in atmosphere and content at times, whilst playful and lyrical in other moments.

Group 1's play about the role of the Kapo in concentration camps during Nazi Germany was compelling; Group 2's examination of anxiety amongst teenagers today was hopeful and touching; Group 3's love story of revenge and betrayal was searing to behold; Group 4's episodic narrative of a serial predator was mind-blowing; and our A Level group made a stark impression with their Complicite-inspired depiction of a restorative justice case.

Everyone should be extremely proud of their work, and also enjoy the sense of relief that comes with having completed any assessment to their best of their abilities!

**Very well  
done.**



## Calling all maths graduates

Following our excellent maths results, we are always looking for new people to welcome into our team, especially in maths.

If you are interested, or know anyone who might be interested, in joining Chesterton in a maths teaching capacity, please do get in touch with the Head of Maths, Tara Watts: [tjwatts@ccc.tela.org.uk](mailto:tjwatts@ccc.tela.org.uk)

Chesterton has an outstanding track record in training teachers, so even if you do not hold any formal teaching qualification at present, but are still interested, please do get in touch.

## Music News and Highlights

It is a busy time of year in the music department. Please see some highlights below:

■ Well done to one of our Year 8 students who was invited to take part in a National Youth Orchestra Inspire workshop in Nottingham over half-term. A brilliant achievement!

■ On **Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> November** at 3.45pm we have our second Live Lounge of the term. All students are welcome to perform in this concert and should sign up on the sheet on the music office door. Families of performers are welcome to attend and should meet at reception at 3.40pm.

■ On **Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> November** we have been invited to give a soloists' concert at St Andrew's Church, Chesterton. Any students who would like to perform as a soloist or in a small group should see Miss Wilson quickly to sign up.

■ Please share the invitation for our Senior Citizens' Christmas Entertainment with your family and friends, which you can find at the end of this blog. Booking is essential!

■ Preparations are well underway for our school carol service at St John's College Chapel on **Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> December** at 7pm. As well as great work in rehearsals, we have also received some lovely entries for the programme art competition. Further details of this are on student notices.

## CYT – Twelfth Night and Rent

Chesterton Youth Theatre is delighted to have cast its January production of the hilariously romantic and occasionally dark comedy, **'Twelfth Night'** by William Shakespeare, with approximately 75 year 7 and 8 performers, playing every role in the story from Countess Olivia to An Ocean Wave(!). We were blown away by the standard of auditions on the final evening of last term, in which over 100 younger students performed speeches to a panel of assistant directors from Years 9 – 13. There is some extraordinary talent and performer's intelligence within this debut-making cohort, and, in particular, we would love to commend Jack D and Siddharth from Year 7, plus Shiv and Mila, from Year 8, for being so committed and expressive in their auditions as newcomers to the company! Every single auditionee deserves special mention for their bravery and impressive acting, but there isn't the space in this article! Rehearsals are off to a great start, so watch this space for more information about how to book tickets for the production in due course. Meanwhile, it is so wonderful to see older students coaching younger actors to make their first theatrical marks here, so thank you to them too!

Now that 'Twelfth Night' is off the ground, we are also launching **'Rent'** which we have license to perform in July. Information about this very exciting production of one of the most ground-breaking musicals of all time, can be found [here](#). Having held an open workshop on the production as part of Sixth Form Open Evening, we have seen the potential for Chesterton Youth Theatre members to bring their hearts and souls to what is at times a devastating depiction of the AIDS epidemic, set in New York towards the end of the twentieth century. It is this balance of comedy and tragedy that CYT feels is so vital to its work, as well as giving chances to musical theatre artists to showcase their stunning voices through witty and breathtakingly beautiful songs. We look forward to the auditions for this show from students in year 9 upwards, as per the details in the handbook.



## Supporting the MFL department

The MFL department would like to ask if there are any native Spanish, French or German speakers from our parent community who could offer an hour or two per week to act as a speaking assistant with our A Level linguists. It would be in the format of a one-to-one session that provides students the opportunity to practise their speaking on one of the core 12 topics. All resources and training would be provided. If you would like to know more or are able to help, please contact: [ebowles@ccc.tela.org.uk](mailto:ebowles@ccc.tela.org.uk)

## Year 8 Students Illuminate Science

Prior to the half-term break, a group of year 8 students embarked on an engaging scientific exploration. They delved into the intriguing world of chemical reactions, examining how temperature influences their rates and to add an exciting twist to their experiment, they employed Glowsticks as their colorful and glowing test subjects!

## Fireworks Night Hedgehog Awareness

Nature club would like to send a friendly reminder to all those celebrating Bonfire Night this coming weekend by lighting their own bonfire at home.

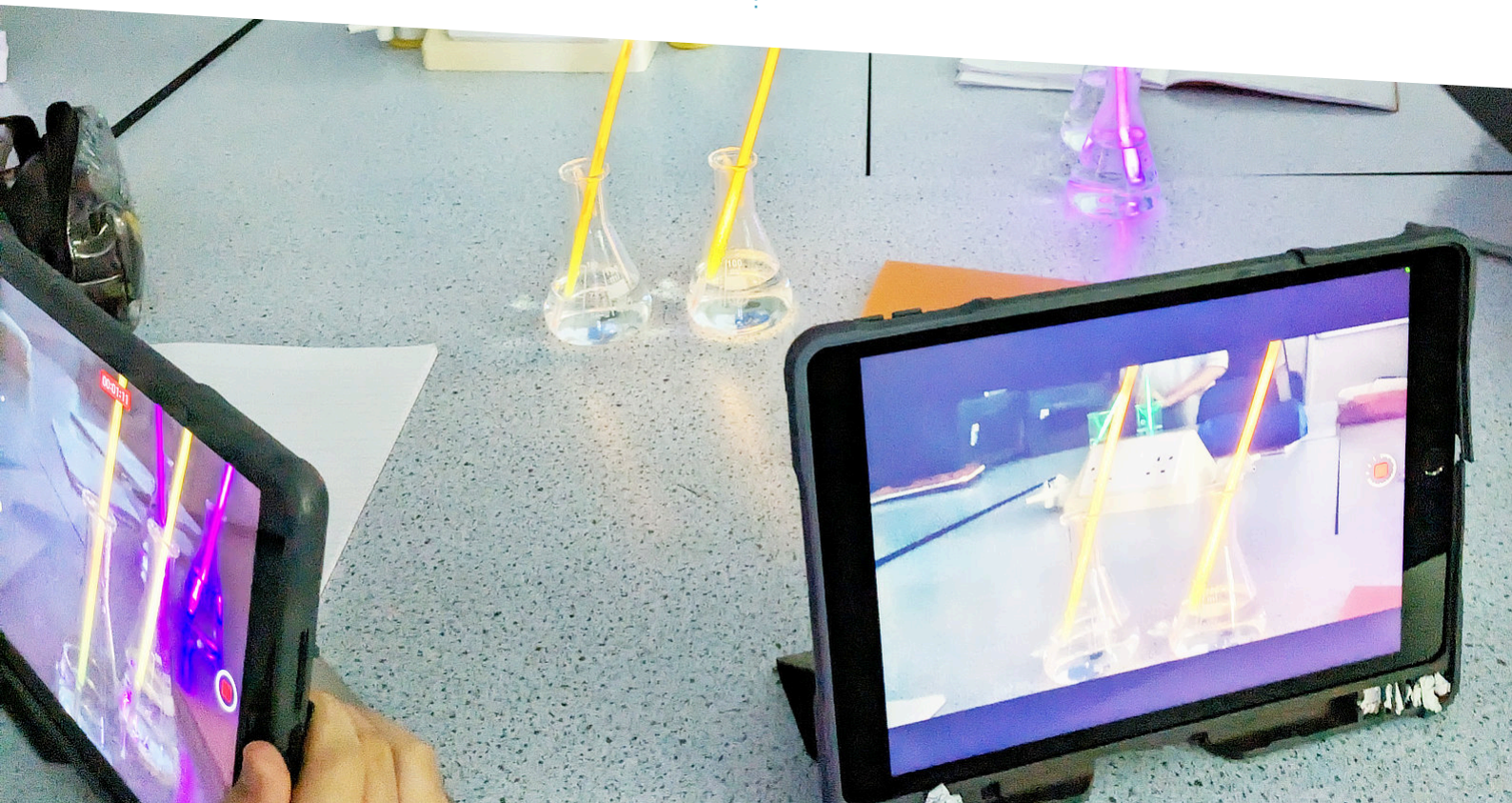
**Please follow the advice in the image to keep hedgehogs and other wildlife safe!**



Just before lighting, always check bonfires for hedgehogs, ideally moving the entire pile, and then only light from one side.



[f](#) [t](#) [in](#) [@](#) [britishhedgehogs.org.uk](http://britishhedgehogs.org.uk)



## Exciting Times Ahead!

Just before the half term break, we hosted 550 people for our sixth form open evening. The evening was a huge success, where those attending were able to gain a first-hand experience of life at Chesterton Sixth Form and understand and see our holistic offer in all its glory. It was so encouraging to see so many of our own students taking the lead to ensure attendees were provided with a thorough account of life at Chesterton Sixth Form.

This half term, we will be offering tours for prospective students and families where you will be able to see lessons in action and the opportunity to speak to one of the Directors of Sixth Form as you go around the school. If you wish to book, please do so [here](#).

Our sixth form community have all been working hard to organise a host of new clubs and societies that will be launching to the rest of the school soon. They include a maths challenge club, programming, archaeology, debating, and a table-top games club to name a few! - **watch this space!**

## Autumn in the library

Autumn is a season of special days and events, and we try to reflect that in our library displays. Our World War display is up ready for Remembrance Day and already proving popular, and our Black History Month trolley is making way for books on light and Hinduism ready for Diwali. Students are very welcome to pop in before or after school or at lunchtimes to see if anything catches their eye. We are also onto another jigsaw, mostly thanks to some very enthusiastic Year 7s!

## New library volunteers

Welcome and thank you to our new team of assistant librarians. Students volunteer their time to help with jobs in the library such as issues, returns, reshelving, processing, and making displays. We are about to run another training session for people who have signed up but didn't make it to the last training session, and we hope to soon have a full compliment so that there is an assistant librarian on duty at each break and lunch slot.

## Introducing "The Long Sit"

The whole school reading initiative for the half term is "**The Long Sit**", encouraging students to sit to read for sustained periods of time to build their reading stamina. In a busy world of TikTok videos, phone scrolling soundbites, and exam extracts, it can be hard to find time to enjoy uninterrupted reading. Practising this to develop reading stamina can help students meet the reading requirements of GCSE studies and beyond, and set them up for all the benefits to well-being that come with reading for pleasure. Students will be taking part in dedicated form times to learn the principles of building reading stamina, and will have opportunities for focused reading time, including at after school reading cafes. We are also looking forward to welcoming two authors in December to talk to students on this topic. This is something we are doing very much in partnership with home, and please see parentmail for more details about how to support your child with this.

Please also [see our website](#) for ways to support your child's reading, including recommended lists for each year group.

## Four school book clubs and seven new book club sets

Reading in a group or alongside a friend or family member can be very motivating and enjoyable. The school currently has four book clubs on the go: KS3, KS4/5 and staff, an A-level History reading club, and a student-led KS5 club.

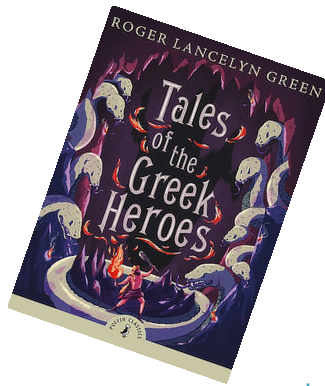
Book clubs do not need to be formal and we are proud of our large selection of books with multiple copies, which are available for anyone to borrow. Students are very welcome to take out multiple copies of the same title to share with people at home.

We have just had a delivery of seven more titles in sets of 10 books (that's 70 books!), some of them specially designed for reluctant readers, which we hope will help students and their families find things to read together. The library team and some keen Year 7s have been busy trying to process all the shiny new books so they will soon be ready to borrow.



## Staff reading recommendation of the week

Mr Moore (Head of Geography) recommends **'Tales of the Greek Heroes'** by Roger Lancelyn Green.



**Mr Moore says,** "I did not learn about ancient Greece in school and have always been confused when people mention Greek heroes. Who is Hermes? What is a Titan? What is the difference between Prometheus and Pandora's Box? 'Tales of the Greek Heroes' is a collection of simplified stories from ancient Greece. It is easy to read, very interesting, and now I know more about the ancient Greek heroes!"

## Student author recommendation

Wilder in Year 7 recommends Chris Priestley. Wilder particularly enjoyed **"The Last of the Spirits."**

**Wilder writes:** *An interesting recreation of "A Christmas Carol", the two main characters are a homeless brother and sister fending for themselves on the streets of London when the boy's temper is aroused by mister Scrooge. With the intention of robbing him, the boy heads up to Scrooge's mansion only to find a considerable number of spirits there. This story is very well described, has good morals and uses quotes from Charles Dickens.*

**Mrs Phillips adds:** *Some of you will recognise Chris Priestley as our KS3 visiting author last year. We have plenty of his books in the library, including some book club sets.*

## Term Dates

### Disaggregated training day

24<sup>th</sup> November 2023  
Closed to students

### End of autumn term

19<sup>th</sup> December 2023  
Last day of term for all students

### Disaggregated training Day

20<sup>th</sup> December 2023

### Disaggregated training Day

3<sup>rd</sup> January 2024

### Start of Spring term

4<sup>th</sup> January 2024  
All students in school

### February Half Term

19<sup>th</sup> February 2024 to 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2024

### Easter Break

29<sup>th</sup> March 2024 to 12<sup>th</sup> April 2024

### Early May Bank Holiday

6<sup>th</sup> May 2024  
Closed to students

### May Half Term incl. Late May Bank Holiday

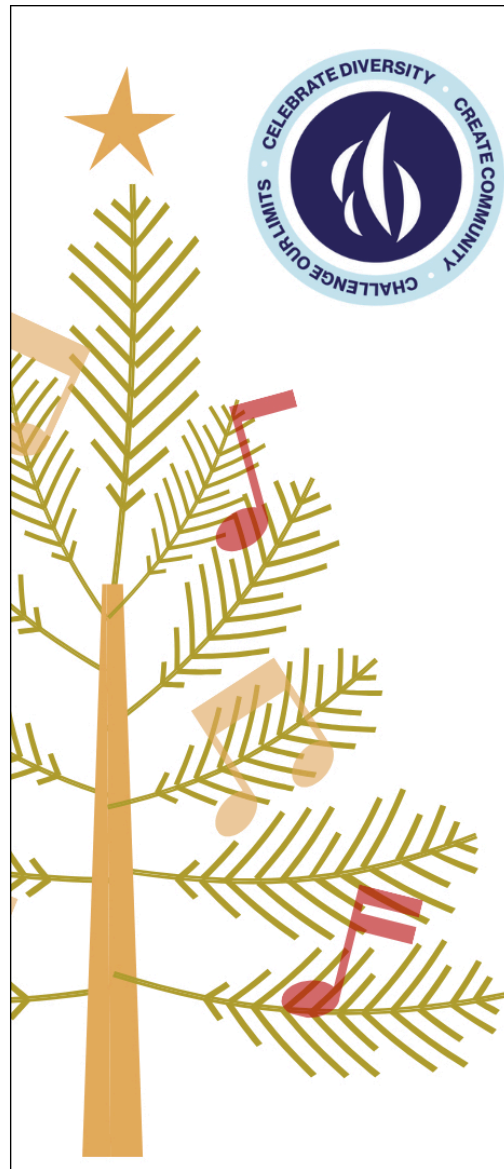
27<sup>th</sup> May 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2024

### End of Academic Year

19<sup>th</sup> July 2024  
Last day of term for all students

## Creative writing updates

The **"This is me"** poetry competition is now closed (Mrs Phillips enjoyed reading and uploading all the students' entries). October is over, but the deadline for the "Saluting Our Sisters" Black History Month poetry competition is 15<sup>th</sup> November so there's still time to **submit your reflections** on an inspirational woman.



# SENIOR CITIZENS' CHRISTMAS ENTERTAINMENT

**Wednesday 6th December**

Arrivals from 1.45pm

Music from 2-3.20pm

Chesterton Community College,  
Gilbert Road

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*Local senior citizens are warmly welcomed to an afternoon of music provided by the Chesterton Community College Music Department. There will be the opportunity to join in with some carol singing, to listen to musical items and enjoy some seasonal refreshments.*

**Booking is essential.**

Please book via this QR code  
or via the college reception on  
01223 712150.



**CHESTERTON YOUTH THEATRE**  
PROUDLY PRESENTS



**FOR PRODUCTION PACK AND  
AUDITION INFORMATION, PLEASE  
SCAN THE QR CODE.**

**PLEASE NOTE**

**YOU MUST BE IN YEAR 9 AND  
ABOVE TO TAKE PART IN THIS  
PRODUCTION.**







**Year 11 and 13 wow audiences  
with their devised pieces**