

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

## SEN Department Update

It's been a busy term in the special educational needs department. It's with great sadness that we say goodbye to **Liz Askham** as she moves on to St Mary's school in the new year. The team will have a new look from January, with **Jake Lawrence** (Assistant Headteacher and SENCO) – **Nicole Blanchard Tweed** (Assistant SENCO) – **Rocio Rodriguez-Fernandez** (Leading on interventions and admin support) – as well as two new progress support workers joining us in the new year.

We've already been able to set up new interventions such as the Zones of Regulation and speech, language and communication support. In the new year we will be looking to further develop our intervention programme and increase support for our SEN students. Our staff remain committed to providing the best experiences possible for our students and we look forward to an exciting 2024.



## Festive Generosity Unleashed

Over the past week, tutor groups have been busy designing festive sacks which will be filled with donations for

**Jimmy's Cambridge**, a charity which support the homeless in Cambridge, and surrounding areas.

We have worked with them over the past 5 years and this year we have been amazed by the generosity of our students, and their families as we look to support those in need this Christmas. As Mr Firth and the team deliver the donations to Jimmy's this Friday, we just wanted to take this opportunity to say a massive thank you for your support with this project - there were some fantastic designs!



## National Ovid Competition Victory!

Khandro H, a Latin student in Year 7, won the **Cambridge School Classics Project's Ovid Competition**, a national competition for students in Year 7. Every autumn, students are asked to come up with a creative response to the myths in any one of the four categories (Performance, Artefact, Creative Writing, Animation). As an out-of-school project, Khandro produced an absolutely stunning entry for the animation category on the myth of Arachne, the spinner whose skill at weaving inspired the jealousy and wrath of Athena. Khandro's victory was announced by an expert panel of judges, including the famous author Caroline Lawrence, during an online prize-giving event last week.

Well done to Khandro for her hard work and well-deserved prize - **watch it here!**

## Unsung Hero Award Celebrates Exceptional Resilience

A huge congratulations goes to Abigail Blaukopft in Hill 6, who this week was awarded the Unsung Hero Award by the Scouting Association. This is in recognition of her resilience throughout her recovery from a brain haemorrhage, which she suffered from in January 2022.

Following major surgery and over the course of her recovery she has shown determination, resilience and independence to both the Scout Association, school and her extra curricular activities.

The Scout Association awards 20 awards nationally each year in recognition of their achievements. Abi received her award last Friday at a ceremony in Birmingham with Bear Grylls.

She is really grateful for everyone who has supported her, including her scout leader, parents, and the wider community.

**Congratulations - we are really proud of her.**

## Cross Country Victories

Over 30 of our speedy runners took part in the District Cross Country Championships last week at Netherhall School.

All students performed superbly in very difficult conditions and were a credit to the school. The minor girls (year 7) had an excellent team performance with 4 students finishing in the top 20!

A special mention to AJ who finished in the top 3 and has qualified for the County Championships in Peterborough next month. Also qualifying, was Pippa in year 9, and Maja in year 10 who finished 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 14<sup>th</sup> respectively.

**Well done to all students involved - I hope you have finally managed to warm up. You have certainly earned yourself a mince pie (or two) over the festive period!**



## Laser Tag Reward Achieved!

Well done to year 11 who have been working exceptionally hard this. We have over 130 who qualified to attend the laser tag reward this week which was thoroughly enjoyed.

## Sixth Form's Year in Review: Achievements and Future Plans

As we approach the end of term and a well earned break for the sixth form, we can reflect on a positive academic year to date. Students have been incredibly responsive and proactive both in lessons and with the array of opportunities that they have had available to them. From the first day of term with Y12 heading down to Cornwall; the multiple trips that have taken place; inter-school debates competitions; sixth form societies starting; and of course students contributing to fantastic lessons where they are developing their academic practices. The growth of the sixth form has seen a much more obvious sixth form presence around the school and this has been complemented by students regularly integrating with students lower down whether it be through supporting weak readers, subject mentors, or whole school leadership roles, for example running whole school clubs or organising the Y7 movie night.

Next term, we look forward to the next part of our recruitment process in the form of guidance meetings, that is concluded at the end of term with a meet and greet event. This is a great event and really starts to generate a buzz for the subsequent year.

With our Year 13, we will be sending off all UCAS applications, an exciting step in their journey and one that really highlights just how close they are to moving onto the next exciting chapter in their lives. Next term, we will continue our fundraising work to support the Kenya trip taking place in the summer. This will include quiz nights, sport tournaments and even a car wash!

We are always looking to improve and develop the opportunities we are able to provide students and so we are very keen to work more closely with the parent community throughout the rest of the year. If there is anyone who feels they can support the sixth form provision, whether it be for a specific subject or focused around personal development, we would love to chat!

## London Thinkers Tour

On Friday the 8<sup>th</sup> December, Sixth form Students from across the Social Sciences at Chesterton participated in an educational visit to London. The visit began with the Karl Marx walking tour of London, where tour guide Mark Bygrave took students on a tour of both the locations where Marx worked and lived as well as the writings and ideas he worked on during this time. Students learned about the historical context of the revolutionary ideas proposed by Marx, as well as their philosophical and economic underpinnings. The tour challenged students to consider the Marxist economic theory and the extent of its relevance in the modern day.



In the afternoon, students travelled to Hamstead, to the former lodging and now museum of Sigmund Freud, the father of Psychoanalysis. Here students were introduced to the ideas of Freud which, while controversial and largely discredited in the modern study of Psychology today, were an important foundation in the study of the human mind. Students were able to see the areas where Freud wrote some of his most famous works, his famous sofa on which so many of his subjects would lie back and share their thoughts, and the archaeological artifacts with which Freud adorned his home.

Throughout the trip, students were able to see and experience the real places where these famous thinkers lived and worked, and were challenged to think more deeply about their ideas and their implications than is possible from reading a textbook.

## Exploring Cambridge's Changing Landscape

On Monday the Year 12 Geographers spent the day on Mill Road in Cambridge. It is their example of a nearby changing place, so this was an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the street. Students completed some fieldwork activities and visited local landmarks, including the Gateway from India, Romsey R, and Cambridge Central Mosque.



## Musical Extravaganza Lights up St John's College

Well done to all the students who took part in our carol service at St John's College Chapel on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> December. This was a real highlight of the term, featuring around 200 students in many of our musical groups, including Junior Choir, Chesterton Singers, Cello Group, Recorder Ensemble, Flute Ensemble, Senior Strings, Year 7 and 8 Violins, Wind Band, Brass and Woodwind Group, Chestertones and Ukulele and Guitar Group. We also welcomed Year 6s from Milton Road Primary School to join the service. Thanks to all involved for a lovely festive evening.

On Monday and Tuesday next week we are having some festive music on the playground at the end of the day.

On Monday, both the Year 7 and Year 8-11 steel pan groups will play, as well as Year 9 band 'Blank' and Year 10 band 'Zephyrus'. The PTA will be serving refreshments – all students are very welcome to stay and watch. Parents and carers are welcome to watch from the Bateson Road gate area.

On Tuesday, the brass and woodwind group will play some festive items to send students on their holidays, together with staff singing.

**We hope this will be a great musical end to the term!**

## Orchestra's Winter Wonderland

Members of the school orchestra from Years 7 and 8 are taking part in an exciting project with the Cambridge Philharmonic in January. As part of this they will be attending a family concert given by the Cambridge Philharmonic. Please see details of the concert at the end of the blog – all are welcome and it is a superb way to gain experience of watching an orchestra.

Follow us on a magical journey into an enchanted winter forest where the storybook comes to life before your eyes!

This is an exciting way to enjoy a classical music concert as a family with iconic pieces of orchestral music including Vivaldi Winter from 'Four Seasons' and Humperdinck's Overture to Hansel & Gretel. Cambridge Philharmonic Orchestra and conductor Harry Sever will be joined on stage by presenter Lucy Hollins, with live illustration from artist Angelina Dove projected onto a screen above the musicians.

Ideal for families with children aged five to eleven.

## Japanese stories

As a school, we ran a creative writing competition in conjunction with our visiting author, Julian Sedgwick. KS3 students were invited to write a story in no more than 100 words, inspired by Japanese culture, like Julian's books. We were blown away by the quality of stories entered by our students, as was Julian when we shared some with him.

We could easily have picked about 20 winners, but Mrs Phillips thought that Lauren's story particularly met the brief: it is set in Japan, inspired by Manga characters, and is written in exactly 100 words. It definitely leaves us wanting to read more.

**"I love Japan" said Hamirai as he was talking to his best friend Tsumugi as they were walking to school which was called "Yokosuka High School".**

**"Me too, and let's have tempura and enari and salmon sushi when school is finished!" Tsumi said.**

**After the school day...**

**"Let's go to the Salmon sushi bar!" Tsumugi said as they left "Yokosuka High School" and went on the street of "Kanmon-ordi" and then...**

**"Well who do we have here..." the school bully Botan and his friends Hinata, and Akio said. "Well look at these bunch of burgers - let's beat them..."**

**Lauren was announced as our worthy winner at the event on Wednesday, and Lauren was personally presented with her prize of a signed copy of Julian Sedgwick's latest book by the author himself.**

Here are some other fab entries we wanted to share.

A very special mention to Jasper who wrote:

### Hidden Joy

It was smoky in the izakaya. Taku sat alone, twiddling chopsticks aimlessly. His ramen finished, he had nowhere to go. Earlier, his heart had been broken.

He meandered through the bustling streets of Sannomiya, passing towering sky-scrappers and noisy konbinis. Stopping at a vending machine for green tea, he thought about fleeing on the shinkansen. Instead, he was swept along by throngs of tourists to a small shrine.

Washing his hands, he felt his worries float away, leaving him strangely at peace. Bowing deeply at the shrine, his eyes were opened to a new, beautiful world.

All was not lost.

### Divyam wrote poetically:

I was just finishing up my last bits of my mouth-watering ramen as a cool soothing breeze flew upon me as I sat relaxing in a café after a long action-packed day. I put the ramen beside me on small wooden table and glared ominously at the throngs of people as they strolled on the old cobblestones and emerged into the booming bright bustling streets of Japan. In the distance, the sakura trees calmly swayed as the vast cobalt river drifted into the sunset. But then the misty murky sky fell in. Pitter-patter rang in my ears and soon the rain poured hard on me and the wind whistled loudly. My view of Mount Fuji slowly faded away. I sighed. Could this get any worse?

### And Chester wrote very enthusiastically:

Japan, a beautiful place full of spirit and wonder. Filled with many beautiful cities, Tokyo, Sapporo, and many more. Fresh air swaying around the wonders of the clear sky. Anyone would be extremely lucky to live here. When I first saw Japan, I knew I came to the right place! Filled with lovely people, delicious food and crime-less places. It would be anyone's DREAM destination! Once you visit, you refuse to leave. Fascinating culture, home to the Tokyo Tower, Himeji Castle, and Tōdai-Ji. Japan is the cleanest country in the entire world!

**It was great to see lots of students getting involved and stretching their imagination by writing about a different culture. Thank you very much to everyone who entered!**

## PTA's Festive Thanks

Many, many thanks to all of you who have donated such beautiful gifts and chocolates for the Christmas fair on Tuesday and all of those who have volunteered their time this term.

The Christmas Fair is looking like it's going to be a fantastic success with loads of goodies stored up for the students to enjoy.

Also, a huge thank you to the music department for arranging student musicians and ensembles to bring Seasonal Musical Delights to students as they leave school on Monday after school. The PTA will provide further cheer for students with a Hot Chocolate and a Cookie Stall to be enjoyed with the music.

Please remind students to bring plenty of change and money on Monday the 18th and Tuesday the 19th for both events.

In addition to all the fun on the ground, we are also raising money for the PTA with online giving via Enthuse towards the teachers **Chesterton Winter Wishlists**.



Why not consider buying a piano key for the music department's desired **Clavinova Piano** so students' can further their music making in 2024! 14 keys have been sold (£324 raised so far). Only 73 to go to reach our target of £2000!

**Many thanks again for all of your generous support in 2023.**

**We hope that you have a magical festive season and look forward to seeing you at the next PTA Meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> of January 2024!**

## Creative writing success

Well done to Charlotte, Bethany, Marco, Shira, Thea and Zak who have all gained recognition in a competitive 11-18s national creative writing competition. Students will have their poems on the theme of identity published in an anthology entitled, "**This is me.**" It is brilliant for students to have this encouragement, and we look forward to getting a copy of the book into the school library.



**Saturday 13 January 2024** 2pm & 4pm

**West Road Concert Hall, Cambridge**

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