

Dear parents and carers,

Happy new year! 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

Sixth Formers Return Focused on Future Success!

Sixth form students have returned after a deserved Christmas break, looking well-rested and ready for more! For Year 12, the main focus this term will be exploring post-18 options from looking at Visioning from the VESPA Mindset to exploring university types, degrees, apprenticeships and career pathways. The aim is to help students work back from their desired end goal in the future, considering what they can do to now in whilst in sixth form to take steps forward to achieving their respective goals.

With Year 13, whilst we are congratulating students as they receive university offers for next year, we also wish them the best of luck as they are about to sit their mock examinations next week.

Finally, we would like to say huge congratulations to Jay and to Rigina who have been successful with their application for the Corpus Christi Pelican Programmes for History and Classics, and to Piotr who has successfully secured a place on Cambridge University's STEM Smart Programme!

Well done to all of you, this is a real reflection of continued hard work, and your passion and dedication to your studies; you truly deserve it!

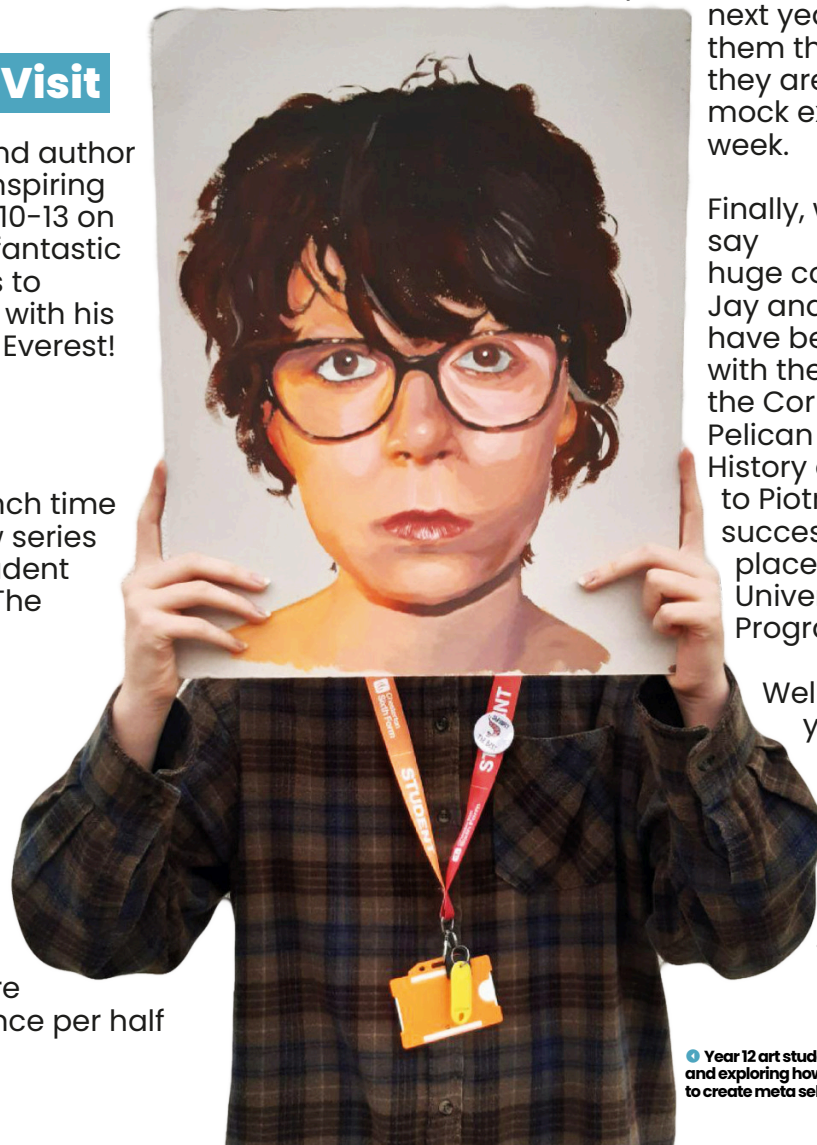
Matt Dickinson Visit

Thank you to explorer and author **Matt Dickinson** for his inspiring visit to present to Years 10-13 on 15th December. It was a fantastic opportunity for students to develop their worldview with his tales of adventure from Everest!

Faith corner

Our popular Monday lunch time Bible groups start a new series this term. Please see student notices for new rooms. The staff prayer group has restarted with some enthusiastic new participants.

All members of the school community are welcome to email sphillips@ccc.tela.org.uk if you have a prayer request (it can be anonymous) or if you are interested in meeting once per half term to pray with us.



Pop-up book exchange

Our half termly book exchange will take place at the festive fair on Tuesday. Please bring in preloved books from home, and grab some new books to take away.

Reading cafes

Thanks to all members of the school community who supported our festive reading cafes Friday 8th and Friday 15th December (not least the kitchen team, who always produce delicious treats!)

It's wonderful to see families browsing and reading books together. We look forward to welcoming families to more reading events in the new year.

Julian Sedgwick visit

Students in Years 7, 8 and 9 had a wonderful time on Wednesday 13th December with a visit from young adult author, **Julian Sedgwick**. Julian was an amazing presenter, who enthralled audiences with his tales from Japan, complete with audio and visual effects.

It was a real eye-opening and inspiring experience about the 2011 earthquake and tsunami, and how healing, creativity and community can come through grief.

All the staff who attended were hooked too, with some saying they were going to buy their own children copies of his books after hearing him talk. **Julian emailed:** *"Please do pass my thanks to all staff who supported the visit, and especially to the year groups, who listened so thoughtfully and attentively throughout. It was lovely to meet students in the break times and I was glad to sign copies of the books."* Many thanks too for parents for their support of the event. We've had a flurry of book orders, and will try to get these handed out on Tuesday.

Year 9 and 10 Reward Event

It was great to see our year 9 & 10 students enjoying the reward event last week after achieving lots of House Points in the first term..

The inflatable assault course was very popular with many students trying to beat the recorded teacher times but lots of success.



Upcoming theatre performance for Year 7

Year 7 are looking forward to an in-house performance of Shakespeare's **"A Midsummer Night's Dream"** with the ever-popular company "Shaking Up Shakespeare".

This will really enhance students' appreciation of how humour is created on-stage. Please see parentmail for details, including how to pay.

On at local libraries

The Cambridgeshire library service **new year newsletter** is out, with details about local events which might be of interest to families, for example an author talk about the Windrush Generation.

New library helpers

Many thanks to students who have signed up to be library assistants. This involves spending 20 minutes or more per week on library jobs like issuing and returning books, reshelving books, updating displays, and library stationery. We plan to run a training session next week.

The library is looking updated with new displays including a big Shakespearean comedies display, to celebrate the Drama department's production of "Twelfth Night", and encourage our Year 7 students in their current scheme of learning on Shakespearean comedies.

Book clubs

The KS3 book club meets every Friday breaktime in the library. We have had a real challenge recently: reading Shakespeare for fun (including graphic novel versions, and prose versions). Students will each try to summarise a story to the group, which is a harder challenge than you might imagine as lots of the plots are so complicated and involved!

There is still time for older students to join in reading "Animal Farm" with the KS4/5 and staff book club – we will next meet in February.

Teacher reading recommendation of the week

Miss Reavley (English teacher) recommends **'No Season But The Summer'** by Matilda Leyser.

Miss Reavley says, "It's a really interesting exploration of climate change from the perspective of the Demeter – Persephone myth. In many ways, an exploration of grief on a historical, ecological and personal level."



Romeo and Juliet at the Arts Theatre

All Shakespeare fans might be interested to know that the Arts Theatre is staging a production of **"Romeo and Juliet"** 31st January – 3rd February. See [here](#) for more details. This would be a really valuable experience for all students, perhaps especially any KS4 student who has not yet had a chance to watch a live version, for example on previous school trips.

We are organising a trip for 95 Year 9 students to go to watch the show, ahead of their unit on "Shakespeare's tragedies." Please see parentmail for details; tickets will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

Meanwhile, **"The Tempest"** is showing at ADC Theatre 16th - 20th January, with [tickets](#) starting at just £10.

Creative Writing Competitions – Poetry

We are currently promoting two creative writing competitions in conjunction with Young Writers. **"Through their eyes"** poetry competition invites students age 11-18 to write from the perspective of another character, for example, a famous person.

"Winter Wonderland" poems should be inspired by or set in winter. Poems can be any style or length, and entries should be sent to sphillips@ccc.tela.org.uk Please make sure your name and age is on the entry.

A big thank you

We really appreciate the time and expertise that parents kindly donate to various events at school. We always welcome volunteers to read for 20 mins per week one-one with readers; we are very grateful for two new volunteers and we are always agreeable to hearing from more people. A huge thank you to Joy McAlpine-Black for volunteering to come in to run our creative writing classes. Previously, we have also had parents run workshops on journalism and creative writing, and would love if any more members of the school community thought they might be able to help in this way. Please email sphillips@ccc.tela.org.uk

SCHOLASTIC SPRING 2024 PREVIEW

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Advance warning – Scholastic Book Fair

Many thanks for all the support for last term's reading focus of building reading stamina. Plans are already afoot for plans for this term, including a day of fun activities (and dressing up!) for World Book Day, and a visiting book fair so that students can use their £1 WBD vouchers. The Book Fair will take place 28th February – 6th March in the school library, with an opportunity for students and parents to visit the library to browse the selection (30% of the books on offer are £5 or less).

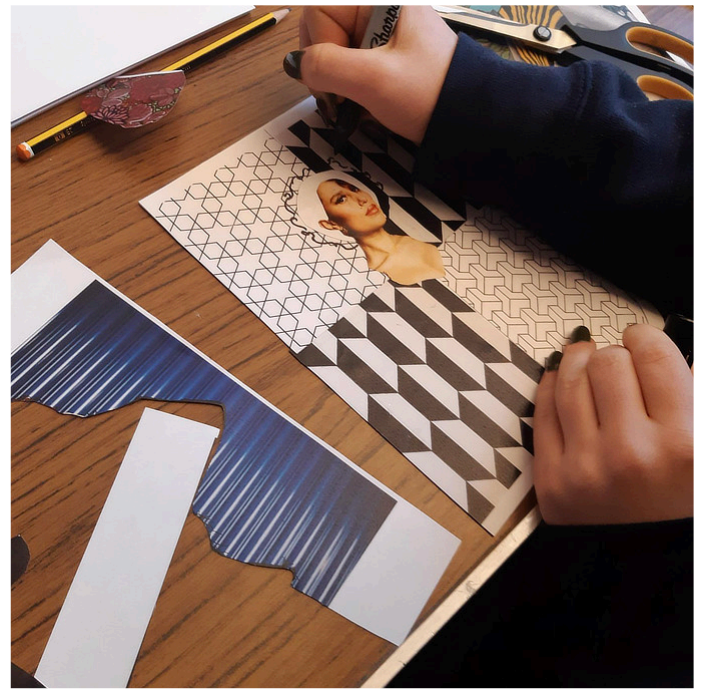
More details to follow – watch this space.

Students Immerse in Sohelia Sokhanvari's Exhibition at Heong Gallery

Year 10 and 12 Art students visited the Heong Gallery in Cambridge to see the Sohelia Sokhanvari: We Could Be Heroes exhibition. Students learnt about the artist's life and work as an Iranian born artist.

She has created portraits of women performers silenced by the 1979 Revolution and family portraits filled with intricate Islamic patterns.

Students also had an opportunity to create their own portraits inspired by the work.



THEATRE OF MENACE!

On Monday 11th December, Chesterton Youth Theatre's Year 9 Company performed an original piece of theatre entitled '**Phantom Manor**' in our drama studio, to a sold-out audience of parents, friends, theatre lovers and visitors of a different sort...

The ghostly event was thrilling to behold, beginning in the dance studio with melancholic live music and figures who sat simply staring into our souls! Audience were then led – if they dared follow – into the main performance space, through an immersive array of ghoulish figures, who then told the story of a

troubled and troubling man and spirit, Henry Ravenswood. His possessive hold on his daughter, Melanie, led to multiple and untimely deaths, and the cast of year 8 and 9 actors were unnervingly committed to telling this story, incorporating the techniques of Artaud's 'theatre of cruelty' with their painted faces lit up by ultra violet torches.

The play itself, based on a Disney ride, evolved from Mr Cooper's imagination, and was written by Marnie in year 11, who co-directed the performance along with fellow GCSE student Ceana and Mr C, who has been devising with the group over several weeks.

Our new theatre manager, Will Males, also made an appearance on the day, or at least, we think it was him behind that lighting board...but who could tell in the darkness and fog?

Huge congratulations must go to everyone involved for their dazzling collaboration.

Last words today must go to the company of '**Phantom Manor**' for a brave and brilliant theatrical happening!

See you in the new year....Mwah, ha, ha, ha, ha, haaaaaa.....



