



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 restful half term.

Rolf Purvis
Executive Headteacher

There are some great workshops and concerts taking place in Cambridge this weekend as part of a world music festival, some of which are free of charge. **They include a gamelan workshop for the community!**

Cambridgeshire Music are holding a brass and woodwind day in March. Please see the attached poster for details.

Live Lounge Hits the Right Notes!

Well done to the Y7-10 students who participated in the Live Lounge just before the half-term holiday. We had a great line up of string, woodwind, brass, piano, drum kit, vocal and band performances and it was very much enjoyed by all.

We are really looking forward to our Spring Concerts at West Road Concert Hall on Thursday 27th March. The concerts feature all our music department ensembles and choirs, with feeder primary choirs in the afternoon concert only, and Year 11 soloists also featuring in the evening concert.

Tickets can be **bought from this link** - don't delay as they are selling very quickly!



Michael Rosen comes to Chesterton

At the end of last half term, we were fortunate to host award-winning author and educator Michael Rosen. He came to meet a wide range of students, in preparation for an event in Cambridge in the summer. This event, funded and organised by media company HistoryWorks, focuses on the experience of refugees. Chesterton students will be involved in writing poems, setting lyrics by Michael to music, and adapting and performing a short drama also penned by the author.

Students were beaming as Michael passed in the corridors. Several had met him before, when they were at primary school. All, however – including Year 11s and sixth formers – were eager to say “Hello” to a figure who had played such a benevolent role in their primary education. Michael responded warmly, with catchphrases, selfies and autographs. He commented on the courtesy and friendliness of the welcome he received.

In the Atrium Theatre, Michael worked with three groups of students in rapid succession. First, he spent time with Ms Marston’s Year 10 Drama class. As he entered the space, Michael heard the young actors using his much-loved *We’re Going on a Bear Hunt* as a vocal warm-up, and he joined in. In a stark contrast of tone, the company then showed him a section of their new adaptation of George Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (to be performed soon next week, Monday 3rd and Tuesday 4th March). Michael was astonished by the professionalism. The group asked questions about elements of interpretation, and Michael shared some ideas. Powerfully, he also shared an anecdote about being monitored at the BBC when he worked there in the 1960s; and of his encounter with a shady secret service officer in Room 104 – three doors down from the infamous Room 101 of Orwell’s novel.

Miss Wilson then gathered the Junior Choir round the piano, to perform songs, and to hear Michael’s moving new lyrics for the summer event. Their conduct was impeccable and the harmonies sweet. Michael was very impressed by the professionalism on display and excited at the prospect of hearing the choir sing in collaboration with others in June.



Finally, Michael delivered a poetry workshop to all of Year 8, again in the theatre. English teachers have always admired his interactive approach with school students, his sense of fun, underpinned by deep knowledge of language and literature. The students responded with excellent focus and enthusiasm. Michael began by asking how many students spoke another language at home; he was bowled over by the number who do. He shared “magic words” from his own childhood, in French and Yiddish; students enjoyed sharing their own from their respective languages. Michael then got everyone to call and respond with particularly rhythmic phrases, in an effort to create interesting lines expressive of refugees lost, scared and determined. Teachers fielded lines scribbled on iPads, which Michael then scrawled on a flip chart, tore down and stuck to a long line of tables. The result was a poem written by the whole year group. Michael was given a rousing cheer of gratitude – and it was a challenge to move students out of the venue when the workshop ended, so keen were they to say a personal hello.

On leaving the school, Michael reiterated how impressed he had been by the experience. He said, “It’s been a very long time since I’ve been in a school like this – if ever.” He is keen to return, to work with those staff and students he met, and with our sixth form English students. It is safe to say that we would be more than keen to collaborate with this very special guest again!

Michael’s visit has also left its mark – literally – in the Library. *Watch this space to find out more...*

National Youth Music Theatre

A huge congratulations to Aeva-Jessica (Yr 8) for winning a place in the National Youth Music Theatre of Great Britain as Ensemble in their new musical of 'Lightning Boy'! Over 1100 young people aged 10 - 23 from across the Country auditioned for NYMT's 2025 season, and AJ has succeeded in being selected to perform in one of their productions (a 1 in 10 chance within the audition pool). This was AJ's first attempt to secure a place in the company, and the standard of those who auditioned was "unprecedentedly high", so her achievement is remarkable! Several other talented Chesterton students were brave in taking on this challenge, and were also successful in being offered recalls and workshops with NYMT.



A special congratulations should also go to NYMT veterans Sam (Yr 11), Charlie and Laurie (Yr 10) who were again cast in productions (Sam as Hugo in the UK premiere of 'Tuck Everlasting'; Laurie as Male Chorus in 'Carousel'; and Charlie in NYMT's showcase performance: 'Crescendo'). This Chesterton quartet will now be singing their hearts out, acting their socks off, and dancing like no one's watching over the Easter and summer holidays, as part of these highly prestigious, professionally produced performance runs at theatres in London and Birmingham. More details of how to go and see them will be sent in due course!



Freedom is the freedom to say that $2 + 2 = 4!$

We are only a matter of days away now from Cohort 2026's searing production of '1984'. Rehearsal shots taken by Felix (Yr 10) can be seen below, along with our poster. This innovative and impassioned staging of Orwell's novel is not to be missed: **the last tickets can still be booked** but don't leave it too late. Find a way. See what matters. Face the truth.

U15 Handball Chesterton Team

On Tuesday, a group of y9 and y10 boys took part in the "England Handball National Schools Competition: East" at Swavesey Village College, where they played against 3 other schools of the region.

This was the first time a boys' team from Chesterton took part in a Handball competition and therefore it was an invaluable experience for our boys that displayed the resilience so characteristic of our community.



Athens Trip 2025

Some of our Y11s, Y12s and Y13s went on a joint Classics & Philosophy trip to Athens this February half term!

We had a fabulous few days in Greece. On day 1, we left their airport and straightaway visited the Temple of Poseidon at Sounion. We were treated to glorious sunshine, as the sun shone over the cliff on which the temple was perched. Students had a chance to wander the ruins, some sketched the temple, some took photographs and others just enjoyed the fantastic views.

On day 2, we had a drizzly day at Delphi but were not put off by the rain - instead, it added to the mystery and allure of the site! Students got a guided tour of the museum and of the sacred precinct of Delphi itself. It was pleasing to see not only how students engaged in the tour, but also how independent they were when exploring Delphi at lunch time - all students ate in a restaurant or cafe of their choosing, and I know many had delicious food that day! In the evening, some students had fun having their 'prophecies' read by the Delphic oracle cards we bought in Delphi.

On our final full day in Athens, we explored the Acropolis of Athens and Acropolis museum on a beautiful sunny day. Again, our tour guide was so knowledgeable and vividly portrayed how ancient people would have lived amongst these impressive monuments. We finished the day off with a round of ice cream and some souvenir shopping.

On our last morning, we spent a sunny hour at the Kerameikos, a lesser visited archaeological site containing a cemetery. Some students (and budding archaeologists!) got particularly excited over sherds of pottery they found on the ground!

Throughout the trip, our students were a real credit to the school, with several people remarking to me how proud we must be of such a lovely bunch of young people - thank you to all our students for making this trip so smooth! Thanks also go to Mr Reed for being such a great sport during the trip, and to Ms Barker for all her support in getting this trip off the ground.

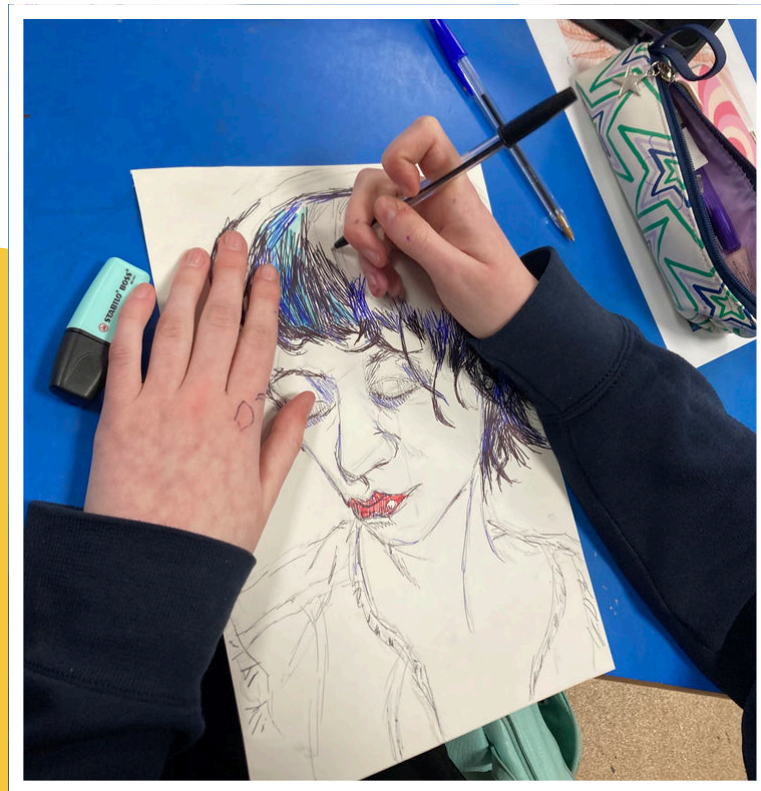
The Classics department is looking forward to their next trip to Italy in May.

Stunning Lino Prints in the Making!

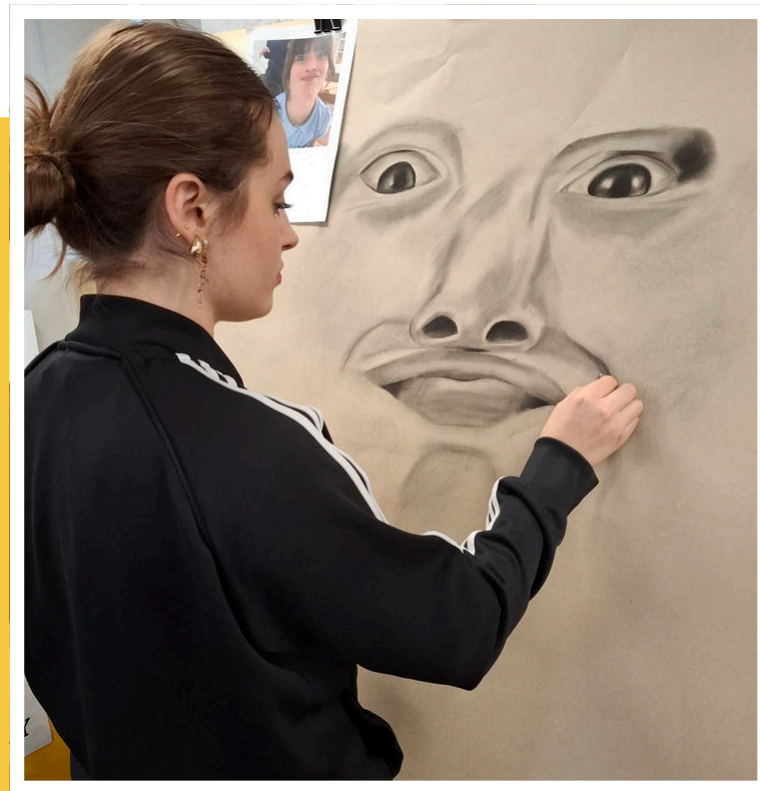
In art club the students have been designing and making lino prints. Working on different papers and on collaged backgrounds they have produced some stunning designs.



Artwork of the Week!



● Students have been exploring the work of Hope Gangloff, experimenting with continuous line drawing and mark-making. They used biro and the scaffolding method to recreate Gangloff's style, pushing themselves beyond their comfort zones.



● Year 12 have gone large, inspired by artist Barbara Walker, as they started some larger-than-life chalk and charcoal drawings. Everyone agreed they enjoyed working at this scale, so watch this space for more big artwork!



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Accelerate

Woodwind

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atrium theatre.
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youth theatre

1984

"Sanity is not statistical"

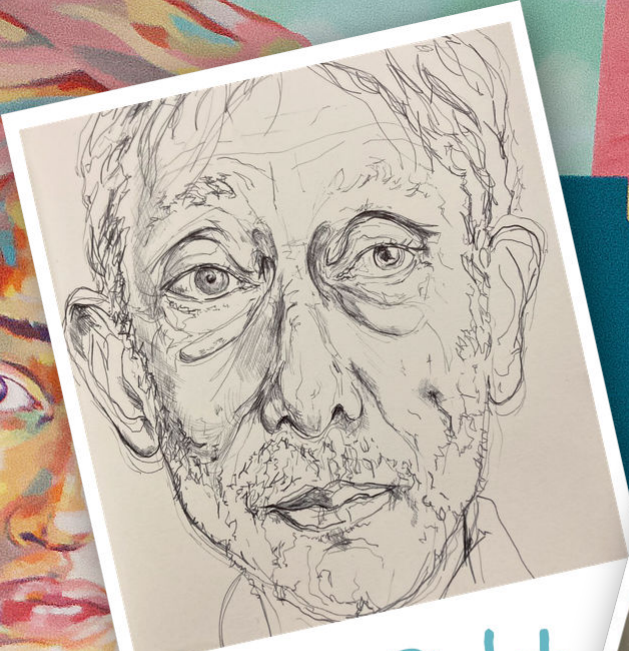


Scan me!

*7:00pm, 3rd-4th March 2025,
The Atrium Theatre, Cambridge*



Michael Rosen in the Atrium Theatre



The Sketch

The end result!



Getting there!



Michael Rosen

The library mural

