



Chesterton Blog

23rd May 2025

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

Zoolabs!

On Wednesday our Year 7s came face to face with a selection of exotic animals courtesy of a visit from a Zoolabs ranger.

Buttercup the Corn Snake, Elvis the Tarantula, Brian the Giant African snail and Honey the New Caledonian gecko helped to illustrate not only some of the variety of creatures that we share the planet with, but also how they are adapted to their lifestyles in many different ways.

Many thanks to our PTFA for funding this event alongside parental contributions. Definitely one of the more memorable school days I'd say.

If you'd like further information or would like to make a contribution to the PTFA to help fund similar events in the future click here: **Chesterton Community College Parent & Teacher Association: Zoolabs Animal Handling Workshop**



'Dear England' – a Hat-Trick of Theatre Trips!

The Drama Department took a group of Chesterton students to see the National Theatre's production of 'Dear England' for the third time last Monday! We have previously seen the Show with Year 11s and Year 9s (once at the Prince Edward Theatre in 2023; once at the National a few weeks ago!).

It was fascinating to see the subtle changes in the production over this time, not least as a result of actual life events both in football and politics, which prompted playwright James Graham to keep making changes to this five-star hit! For the 20 year 10s who attended this particular trip, it was a joyous evening, travelling by train together; the Show itself was on top form, with the audience responding warmly to the humour and celebratory feel of the story, whilst silently connecting to its more serious examination of issues like male mental health and racism, as a state-of-the-nation drama.

It was lovely to escort the Cohort to London and take in the sunny evening on the South Bank, and who knows, maybe we'll go again next year, when the Show is on its UK tour! Live theatre always has something new to offer, and seeing the same play performed by different casts and with varied endings keeps us all 'on our toes' like the England football team! Thank you to all the parents who picked up from the station at midnight – it was well worth the effort and loss of sleep!



Speaking Out!

Speaking in public is for most people – students and adults – one of the most daunting things you could be asked to do. Thirty Year 10 students rose to the challenge last Thursday and had a great time doing so.

Joe Rowntree, from the Speakers Trust, spent the day with us, building skills and giving fresh perspectives on what makes effective – and authentic – communication in front of an audience. Joe is an experienced stand-up comic, and an advocate for young people struggling with anxiety. His experience in both these areas made him the ideal coach.

He taught the students simple but effective tips to overcome inevitable nerves: on entering the space, breathing, posture and eye contact. And he guided students in how to brainstorm ideas, shape them and deliver them to maximum effect. Over the course of the day, the students moved from being near-novices to polished speakers, each of them delivering a two-minute speech on topics that mattered to them, without notes.



Everyone can be proud of themselves. Joe was seriously impressed by the progress, the courage, and the good-natured enthusiasm of the whole group.

Nine students were selected to go through to a school-based final after the half-term break, from which two will be chosen to compete at the Speakers Trust Speak Out competition at Anglia Ruskin's Mumford Theatre at the end of June.

Reminder: if you want to build your skills, in making speeches and debating, join us at Debate Club every Wednesday, 3.15–4.15 (now in the drama studio).

Celebrating Student Talent: A Musical Summer Ahead!

Well done to the students who performed in Tuesday afternoon's Live Lounge. We had a series of great performances including solo items and three band performances, including two newly-formed Year 7 bands.

Next half-term is a busy one for the music department with the following performances (and more!) due to take place:

- **Friday 20th June** – lunchtime concert at St Andrew's Church
- **Saturday 21st June** – samba band, jazz band, folk fiddle band and Year 9 band perform at Chesterton Festival
- **Saturday 21st June** – folk fiddle band perform at Jesus Green Lido
- **Sunday 22nd June** – Junior Choir and Mirada perform at Cambridge Corn Exchange in the Michael Rosen concert
- **Thursday 3rd July** – school summer outdoor concert in the Wynn Williams Garden (all ensembles/choirs involved)
- **Wednesday 23rd July** – students perform with Gabrieli Roar in Ely Cathedral

Hopefully we will have fine, sunny weather for all our outdoor performances!

NFL Flag Football tournament

On Friday, a group of Chesterton students took part in an exciting NFL Flag Football tournament – and what an experience it was! Despite it being their first time playing the sport, our team threw themselves into the challenge with great enthusiasm and energy. The event, superbly run by the NFL team, was a brilliant introduction to the game, and everyone learned loads about the rules, tactics, and teamwork involved. To top it off, every student walked away with their very own NFL T-shirt to remember the day!

Chesterton finished 5th out of 6 teams, but more importantly, they came away with new skills, big smiles, and a real sense of achievement. Mr Hema was incredibly proud of the team's attitude, saying how impressed he was with their commitment and how much they enjoyed themselves throughout.

Well done to everyone who took part!



Regional Finalists and More NYT / NYMT Success

There have been multiple blogs in the past few weeks regarding individual successes amongst our thespian community, so just to wrap these up before half-term:

Congratulations to May and Olivia for their performance in the East of England Regional Final of the ESU's Performing Shakespeare Competition, where the panel of Judges placed them in the top 3 entries, though only one monologue entry was able to be selected for the Grand Final in London! Nonetheless, both girls gave sterling performances as Desdemona and Emilia in 'Othello' and were praised in particular for their emotive characterization as well as their superbly eloquent oracy element introducing the duologue.

Olivia and May should be very proud of their achievements, and for being so gracious in congratulating the event's winner as well as reaching out to everyone who was part of the Regional Final, showing a real sense of camaraderie and professionalism. We'd also like to congratulate Shira (year 10) who – having been placed on the Reserve List – has now won herself a place in National Youth Theatre (the Newcastle course). Shira is thrilled and richly deserves this marvelous opportunity to work amongst the Country's finest young actors; it just goes to show that initially being a substitute can lead to ultimate stardom! Shira's success takes the number of new NYT members to a whopping nine from the twenty who auditioned from Chesterton back in March – staggering when nationally less than one in ten applicants win places!

Finally, Kate (year 11) – who is currently in the middle of her GCSE exams – has won a place as a Stage Manager in National Youth Music Theatre this summer, working on the UK premiere of the musical 'Tuck Everlasting' at the Birmingham Hippodrome studio theatre. Kate is phenomenally talented as a theatre maker, and had to compete for the place through process which included a workshop and interview. She has made an outstanding contribution to Chesterton Youth Theatre in this role, as well as in acting roles. We wish her every success in what may well be the start of a glittering professional career!

Breaking News: Chesterton Wins Again!

Not only did we win the first athletics match of the season, but we've just taken first place in the second one too—amazing work, team! This week, it was our turn to host the tournament, and we welcomed seven other schools to our field. The sun was shining, and it was great to see the PE staff from all schools helping run the events and cheering on the students.

Results? Couldn't have been better! Chesterton came out on top with nearly 100 points more than second place Comberton. Swavesey came in third. Even better: we won every category: Year 7 Girls, Year 7 Boys, Year 9 Girls, and Year 9 Boys. Impressive!

Some highlights from the day:

- **Year 7 Girls:** Emilia W and Holly Y smashed their sprint races and both came first.
- **Year 9 800m:** Aleks, Gjang, Sam, and Harry all took first place in their middle-distance races.
- **Javelin:** Filip I (Year 9) threw an impressive 35.70m—7 meters further than second place!
- **High Jump:** Thomas B (Year 7) came first after all his hard work at after-school athletics club. Great to see it pay off!

A huge shoutout also goes to our brilliant Sports Leaders from across different year groups. They did a fantastic job helping with time tracking and supervising field events throughout the afternoon. Their support helped the whole event run smoothly.

These are just a few of the highlights, and we're so proud of everyone who took part.

The effort, team spirit, and determination were brilliant—especially from our Year 7s, competing in their first ever match for Chesterton.

Next stop.... Year 8 & 10 Athletics match on the 4th June at St Bedes!



Invitation to the International Breakfast For Parents At Chesterton Community College 26th of June 2025 at 9am

Please join me and some of our subject teachers for breakfast in our school's canteen on the 26th of June at 9am

You will meet current and new international parents (whose children will join Chesterton in year 7 in September 2025) in an informal and relaxed atmosphere.

During the event I will give a short presentation about the Secondary English School System for the parents who will be interested in having one, and I will answer all questions you may have on our English as Additional Language support programme and policy at Chesterton.

Furthermore, I will be delighted to inform you about all the exciting international opportunities available to you and your children in your new school community.

I look forward to meeting you on the 26th of June!

Kind regards

Rosaria Maffei

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Italy 2025
Read the full report from the Classics Dept after half term!