

Chesterton Blog

6th June 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 weekend.

Rolf Purvis
Executive Headteacher

- a giraffe sanctuary in Nairobi where we were able to feed the giraffes and gain an understanding of the conservation work that is being completed to enhance the giraffe communities in Kenya. We also stopped at Lake Naivasha for a boat ride to see the hippos.
- Thompson's Falls waterfall in Nyahururu, where we explored the markets and trekked down to the impressive waterfall.
- Hell's Gate safari park where we cycled the 10km route through the park, walked through the gorge (The Lion King is set here!) and saw pride rock. We finished this day swimming in the thermal baths which are a byproduct of Kenya's geothermal energy production.

Sixth Form Kenya Social Action Trip

Just before half term, we embarked on our annual Sixth Form Social Action trip to Kenya. Firstly, we have to say a massive thank you to the Chesterton community for the donations we received. We were able to take 3 extra suitcases (and some hand luggage) full of donations. British Airways also kindly allowed this extra luggage free of charge through their charitable fund – so we thank them too. The Kenyan school and students were so grateful for the donations and the Nakuru Children's Project charity team ensured that all students that received items were means tested to guaranteeing that the neediest students received the donations.

The first part of our trip was a mix between some tourist/acclimatisation visits and time spent in our link primary school. For this period, we lived in homestays, which enabled students to get an immersive Kenyan experience. We visited:

Our time in the Kenyan primary was the core purpose of the trip, our aims were to interact with the students [in English, as their exams are written in English], to teach lessons, and to help provide the free school meals that the charity kitchen provides to c. 250 students each day (this is often the only meals the students receive in each 24 hours).



Kenya... continued...

Our students were absolutely fantastic in the school, they built some really positive relations with the Kenyans, taught excellent lessons, and provided so many opportunities to play and interact. Our final day was very emotional and quite tough, saying to goodbye to people that we had spent some very intense time with over our 4 days.

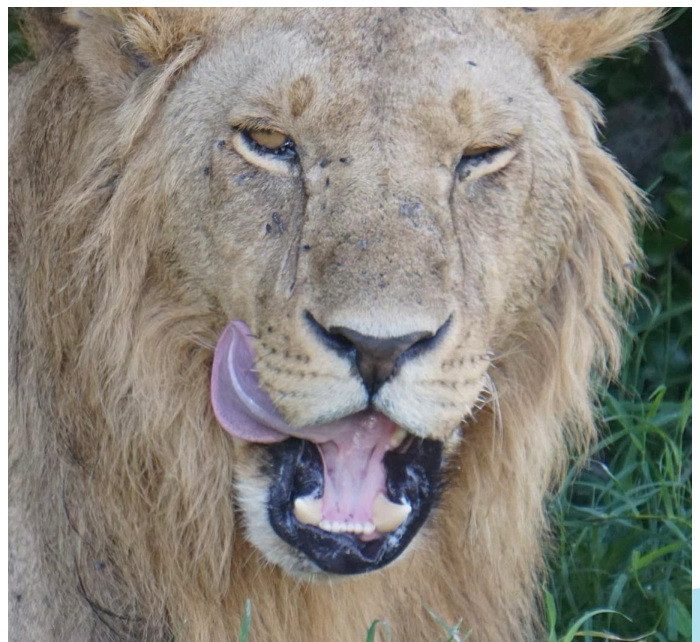
Whilst at the school, we had the opportunity to visit some of the homes of the students on the feeding programme, it was a really good opportunity to see the home situations. These often consisted of a 1 room house, where the family cook, live, and sleep. We were able to donate a food parcel to the families which will support them for a number of weeks, as most are living on the minimalist amount of money and food. We also visited a local quarry, where a lot of the parents of the school children work, it was clear that they have to work very hard to earn a small amount of money – we took some crates of soda and bags of mandazis which we very well received.

On one afternoon, we had the opportunity to visit our charity partner, The Nakuru Children's Project, land. We heard about the story of how the charity came about and planted fruit trees. At the moment the charity run feeding programmes in specific schools but their new buildings will allow them to cook at a central location and then feed more schools by delivering food around the local area. Through parent contributions and fundraising, we were able to donate £1000, which should fund the building of large fires to cook lunches.

The second part of our trip was a visit to the Maasai Mara National Park, spending a couple of days on safari and learning about how the Maasai people live. Our safari drives were brilliant, seeing an array of animals and spending lots of time taking in the vast plains of the Mara. We finished our time in Mara by visiting a Maasai village where we danced, jumped, learnt how to make fire, and looked around their houses. This serves as a fantastic opportunity for our sixth form students to partake in some social action, gain an understanding of new cultures but also to make a contribution to the lives of those that are less fortunate than us – we're sure this opportunity will stick with the sixth form students for a long time and will no doubt influence their future understanding of the world.



Kenya... continued...



Orb Dance Day – a Breathtaking Experience!

The drama department remain hugely grateful to Oliver and Laura at Vanhulle Dance Theatre for the transformative workshop they ran for 30 selected students from years 7 – 10, and the performance they shared with over 60 students in the drama studio earlier this week. It was both a profoundly beautiful and disarmingly fun experience for all involved. The company wrote some heartening feedback to us afterwards: “We had such a brilliant time at Chesterton – the energy in the room, the openness of the students, and the way everyone threw themselves into the work made it feel really special from the moment we arrived. Performing ORB in that packed studio was a joy...Everyone’s reflections were so thoughtful and beautifully put... we were both quite moved.”

ORB was truly breathtaking, and demonstrated with such brutal and yet humble honesty what the human body is capable of, and most of all, how it can become a manifestation of the soul. The workshop in the morning, meanwhile, enabled students to discover the contemporary dancer within themselves, and to make a link between dance and martial arts.

VDT celebrate neurodiversity in both the way they work and their own life stories, so it was also a platform through which some SEND students’ creative skills could shine. VDT and the Cambridge Council gifted the day to Chesterton, which made it even more special and accessible, added to the fact that Oliver is a former student of Ms Marston’s! It is so wonderful to see how the work we do in school evolves like a butterfly; suffice to say, if anyone reading this ever gets the chance to see ORB, be sure to take it up! Meanwhile we hope to see more of Oliver and Laura as practitioners here in the future; this day of dance was an unerring example of why we must fight for performing arts to remain at the heart of every young person’s education – encore!



DofE Volunteering Success

We're pleased to share that students taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award over the past year have collectively contributed an impressive 1,066 hours of volunteering. This represents a social value of approximately £6,821 – a fantastic achievement.

Whether supporting local charities, helping at school, or assisting in the wider community, our students have shown real dedication and a strong sense of service. We're very proud of their efforts and the positive impact they've made.

Well done to everyone involved.

PE Awards Ceremony: Thursday 12th June

Next Thursday 12th June we're excited to be holding our first PE Awards Ceremony! Over 50 students have been nominated for their outstanding achievements across a range of sports and activities over the past 12 months.

We're really looking forward to celebrating their hard work and dedication with students, families, and staff. This special evening marks the beginning of what we hope will become a proud annual tradition, starting right here in 2025!



Year 8 trip to the Super League Basketball Finals at the O2!

On Sunday 18th May, 50 Year 8 students headed to the O2 Arena in London to watch the Super League Basketball Playoff Finals, and what a day it was!

First up was the Women's Final, where the Sheffield Hatters took on the Oaklands Wolves. The Hatters were cruising with a 14-point lead and less than a minute to go, but Oaklands made a crazy late comeback. Sam Ashby scored five points in just nine seconds, making it a nail-biting finish! In the end, the Hatters held on to win 83-73.

Then came the Men's Final, and the Leicester Riders were on fire. They completely dominated the Newcastle Eagles, winning the game by a huge 31 points.

It was an awesome day full of excitement, incredible plays, and a great atmosphere.



Latin, Classical Civilisation and Greek trip – Italy 2025

From 21st –25th May, the Classics department took 40 Year 9s and Year 10s to the Bay of Naples. We visited a range of archaeological sites, including Paestum, Pompeii, Herculaneum and the underwater archaeological park of Baiae. We also did some other cultural experiences, which included a buffalo mozzarella tasting and a visit to some Roman thermal baths! Please read below for more details...

After a very early flight from Luton – and some technical issues on the plane causing a delay! – we arrived in Naples and got the coach straight to Herculaneum. In two groups, students toured around Herculaneum, seeing the House of the Wooden Partition (as featured in GCSE Classics!). Once we got back to the hotel and settled in, we went for a quick dip in the pool and got an early night.

On the second day, we had a guided tour around Pompeii. We saw the Roman Forum and the House of Menander, before a picnic lunch near the exit of the site. In the afternoon we did some souvenir shopping and ice cream eating in the beautiful town of Sorrento, before heading back to the hotel. We went down to the beach after dinner for a quick paddle in the sea.

The third day was Miss Legg's highlight of the trip! We went to the Stufe di Nerone, a complex of thermal baths which date back to the time of Emperor Nero. We followed this up with a boat tour around Baiae archaeological park, during which a scuba diver uncovered and re-covered mosaics from sunken Roman villas, as we watched from a glass bottom boat. The local football team, SSC Napoli, won the Italian football championship on this day – their supporters near the hotel celebrated with fireworks until late in the night!

On the fourth day we visited the spectacular site of Paestum, a well-preserved ancient Greek colony in Italy. We paired this with a visit to a mozzarella farm, where we sampled the ice cream, chocolate and cheese!

The students on this trip were an absolute delight and they were wonderful ambassadors for the school (as was remarked upon by several of our tour guides!). It was a real joy to bring them on this trip.

I'd like to give a huge thanks to the staff who supported this trip, Mr Kirkland, Mr Hynd and Dr Kirk, for making it run so smoothly!

Student reactions:

- "I really enjoyed the Latin Trip! It was exciting going to Italy and experiencing Italian culture- I learned a lot. My favourite part was the Roman baths, but watching the mosaics from the boat was a close second."
- "Italy was like a dream I did not want to wake up from – to walk where those ancient people once walked, to see what they once saw, was simply magical. Those sunsets shall forever haunt me with their beauty, as shall all the rest of the memories I made there, surely the best of what I have."
- "I thought it was a really nice and well organised trip and I especially liked seeing Herculaneum and learning about the ancient Roman fast food!"
- "I loved going to Italy, everything was exquisite, from the food to the scenery and of course the ancient Roman relics! An experience I don't think I'll ever forget."



Celebrating Creative Student Talent

We celebrated GCSE Art, Photography and Textiles work at our annual summer exhibition. It was a wonderful evening with a great buzz, so many proud students, parents, teachers and friends admiring the impressive work and congratulating students on their achievements.

We also displayed an exciting showcase of year 12 Art and Photography work and can't wait to share our first Chesterton 6th Form year 13 A level exhibition. **It will take place on Thursday 26th June 5.30-6.30pm in the A Level art studio, all welcome.**





**YOUTH
WITHOUT
LIMITS**

Thank you

to

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award participants

from

Chesterton Community College

who spent

1066 Hours

**volunteering between
1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025.**

We are immensely proud of the dedication, effort and achievement
of young people making an impact in their community.

The social value of these hours is

£6821

Ruth Marvel OBE, Chief Executive

June 2025