

BEXLEY GRAMMAR SCHOOL WINTER MAGAZINE





*Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year*





CHRISTMAS @ BGS 2016

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year From the Editors!

We hope you enjoy this 2016 edition of the BGS School Magazine and we would love to give a big thank you to Mrs Johnson and the rest of the magazine team!

Mr Elphick's Christmas Message

Welcome to the Christmas edition of the BGS magazine!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mrs Johnson and her team of creative students who work so hard to produce this publication. I hope you enjoy it.

As the autumn term draws to a close we look back over these vital first weeks and months of the academic year. Our new Year 7 students are now settled into the life of the school and by just after half term their parents had met form tutors, attended a Music Concert involving every Year 7 student and enjoyed a BBQ here in school. Similarly, in the Sixth Form, over one hundred students from many local schools joined our own students and together, quickly established themselves as a strong Year 12 group with exciting potential.

This is also the term where the whole recruitment process begins again; we held inspiring, vibrant and successful open events for prospective Year 7 students and a few weeks later, three similarly successful evenings for prospective Year 12 students, one for our own and two for those from other schools. The Sixth Form open events were particularly important and informative events because they mark our first fully-IB cohort, the culmination of over a decade of commitment to this world-class diploma programme. As always, the overwhelmingly positive feedback is about how approachable and friendly our students and staff are – complete strangers to the school report that

those they talk to on these evenings genuinely care.

At the time of writing, we have just heard news which means that a BGS record of 20 students have been offered interviews for Oxbridge! To get such numbers says a great deal about the quality of our students, the expertise of their subject teachers, and the sheer hard work that Mrs Stoddard and the Sixth Form Team put in. By the time you read this, students will have been interviewed in a range of subjects including English, French, Spanish, German, Italian, Economics, Classics, Medicine, Chemistry, History, Psychology and Law.

You may have heard how successful our entirely refurbished Library is proving. Relocated over the summer, it is now central in the school and is a haven for readers and those researching or catching up on homework.

Although there is not much to show of it yet, the foundations of the new Performing Arts Auditorium have been laid. The Auditorium will have retractable seating for 200 people and underneath will be a new Sixth Form study area. I hope the Spring Edition of this magazine will have a photo of more than some concrete foundations!





Meanwhile, the rest of the school engaged in the plethora of activities typical of what we manage to cram into a term: visits, residential trips, conferences, two ECM days, International Week and of course, a range of House events. We have held Parents' Evenings for Year 13 and Year 11. Our annual 'No Pens Wednesday' supported our drive in Literacy, focusing on speaking and listening skills for a day, rather than writing. As this magazine goes to virtual press, our Year 11 and Year 13 IB students are taking their mock examinations before a well-deserved break.

The Drama production of 'The Wonderful Wizard of Oz', as promised, was a celebration of talent across all the year groups! Mr Otley, supported by Ms Gabriel and Ms Brazier and some now very experienced upper school students, directed a team of students to produce a creative and witty celebration of the classic story combined with a strong message about self-esteem. It was wonderful to see our older students working alongside the next generation of thespians to produce such a memorable evening. Thank you and

congratulations to all on a stunning production.

The Christmas Concert ushered in the festive season in style. Thirteen ensembles entertained a packed hall with mulled wine and mince pies at the interval. Congratulations to Miss Swadkin, the music department, peripatetic teachers and our music prefects on a polished and inspiring evening.

Have a restful Christmas break with family and friends and may I wish you every blessing in 2017.

The Wonderful Wizard of Oz!

The Wonderful Wizard of Oz was set to be performed on the Bexley Grammar School stage as the school Christmas production. This was my first year at BGS as an external sixth form student and I have to say being in the play has been a fabulous experience. I met so many students who I may never have met before if I hadn't auditioned. There are so many elements to focus on when it comes to putting on a play but everyone was committed and enthusiastic coming to



rehearsals (even on Sundays) and it was all worth it in the end. I am so happy I got involved, as the feedback from the performances was extremely positive and everyone did a brilliant job onstage, backstage, technicians, directors, makeup and the band. Also, a huge thank you to Mr

Otley, Ms Brazier and Ms Gabriel (Toto) for their support and hard work. A MASSIVE THANK YOU!



The Wonderful Wizard of Oz was originally the first of 14 novels written by L Frank Baum as a contemporary 'American fairy tale' with Scarecrows, Woodsmen and Witches. The students of Bexley Grammar performed Carol Bird's 2014 adaptation of Baum's novel. The play begins with introducing Dorothy and her home Greysby, an aged and grey town full of boring residents who despise her. Also, she has her companion Toto, who is a sock puppet and barks rudely and randomly. After hearing a resident tell her Aunt Em to send her to a boarding school or orphanage, she is suddenly transported to the Land of Oz as she is taken away by the storm. In Oz, she meets her new friends; Scarecrow, Nick Chopper (otherwise known as the Tin Man) and the Lion. With the help of the Field Mouse Army and the servants of the Witch she ultimately defeats the infamous Wicked Witch of the West and returns home with teleporting shoes so that she can always come back to visit. Glinda, rather different from the film, is not much help with her ginger tea, kumquats and yoga! The play gives a modern and fresh twist to the otherwise much loved classic.

In an earlier interview with Mr Otley:



Why did you choose the play?

I try to pick a play that is an adaptation of a story people know and love - we have done Narnia, Alice in Wonderland and Peter Pan recently. I think it excites the actors and audiences more if they have some prior knowledge. I had a few ideas for plays this year, but once I read 'The Wonderful Wizard of Oz' I knew this was the right one - I found it really funny and there were moments where some actors would be stretched in acting really emotional scenes. It was also good to have a female lead the year after having a male lead.

I just want to find the play that can best showcase how amazing the pupils that do drama are - I want them to feel proud of what they have achieved and I want the audience to see their brilliance, like I do every day - I think this is a play with the scope to achieve this.

How do you think the play is going?

How is it going? Never ask a director that right before a show- because there are suddenly a million things that need doing and they constantly play on your mind. I think the lead actors in the show have been great, so hard-working and reliable. It is great that so many external Year 12 students have joined us and immediately wanted to be in a school show. The younger pupils are great too, it's hard with diplomas and house events to have time to do a show, so it's amazing that so many of them can be there. I think people will really enjoy the play, laugh and hopefully go home having learnt something.

We hope everyone who came to watch the play thoroughly enjoyed it and that you all have a Wonderfully Wizardly Merry Christmas!

Kiran Matharu 12NET

(Queen of the Field Mouses...not mice!)

House Report **November 2016**



Including report on the Jack Petchey Award Scheme

This term we have had several House sports competitions: Junior, Intermediate and Senior Boys' Football and Girls' Basketball alongside the Junior and Intermediate Table Tennis; Junior, Intermediate and Senior Girls' Netball and boys' Rugby running alongside the Junior and Intermediate Badminton. Both occasions went smoothly and a huge 'Thank You' to the PE department for organising these competitions. The Boys Senior Basketball has been moved to January 2017 to avoid a clash with ECM day at the end of November.

House Drama was on 12th October and again all Houses produced some excellent performances. It was good to see several Year 7 pupils taking quite major parts in these performances, despite having only been at school for a matter of weeks; Prothero gained first place. There will be an opportunity to see one or two of these performances at the Annual House Showcase next March.

The Harvest Box Challenge for Years 7 – 9 was held after school on 5th October with the results being announced in the Year 7 Harvest Assembly the following day. Intermediate Cookery was held in November with Mrs Sawyer, a former member of staff, coming into school to help judge the process, presentation and taste of the Bakewell Tarts

that were made by all the teams; Johnson were victorious. Senior Cookery was on 2nd December, the older students following the brief of 'Christmas dessert or cake', always an enjoyable competition, again Mrs Sawyer came in to judge alongside Miss Francis and Mr Elphick. Each House was able to choose what to make and apparently all judges had differing ideas on which entry tasted the best. Collins were victorious with a rather splendid Chocolate Yule Log, which went down a treat!

The Key stage 3 House Swimming Gala is due to take place on 19th December but, at present, this is how the results leaderboard stands:

251	276	229	211	208	218
Collins Second	Johnson First	Kirkman Third	Mabbs Fifth	Prothero Sixth	Wellman Fourth

This term Johnson House have been at the top of the leader board unchallenged for quite a while.

With many more competitions next term there's still time for it all to change.

Jack Petchey Awards



The first three winners for this academic year's Jack Petchey awards have now been chosen. The September Award winner was chosen by Mabbs House. Saki Okada was the winner and she was chosen for the work she does volunteering at her local library, particularly working with disabled children. Saki is always smiling, polite and helpful to everyone; she is a model student. Saki has put her money towards buying new

equipment for the Science Department and resources for the Art Department.

The October Award winner was chosen by Prothero House; Amed Yones was the winner and she was chosen for the following reasons: "She's worked with charity organisations which provide help for disadvantaged people suffering in the Middle East. She has protested the plight of the Kurdish people and wrote an open letter to David Cameron, to which she got a response. She is a caring, brilliant person all round, praised by her form, and is heading to university to study Politics and International Relations." Amed has given her money to the Library, part of the winnings will pay for entry to a literary competition and the rest towards some new books.

The November Award winner was chosen by Wellman House. Joy Hui was the winner and she was chosen for the following reasons: "Joy is known by all her teachers and peers to be hardworking, pleasant and a pleasure to have in lessons. These traits continue outside of lessons; Joy spent her summer break in Romania, volunteering at a youth camp for underprivileged children with her church group. Since returning to school, she has continued to volunteer at the new School Library every week and was instrumental in getting it set up after it was relocated to a more central location." Joy has chosen to spend her prize money between the PE Department, who are going to purchase some basketball training equipment and the Art Department, who are going to buy some more new resources.

Mrs J Snelling

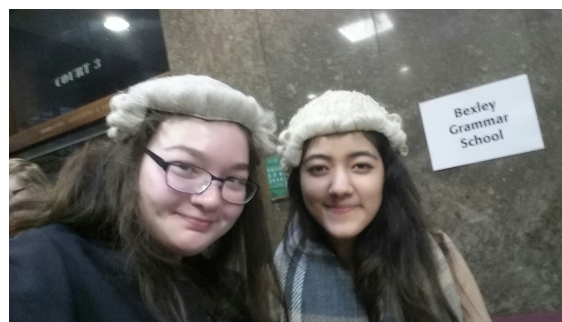
JP Coordinator/House Leader

Bar Mock Trial

Competition

2016

On 26th October 2016, a group of 14 sixth formers travelled to the Inner London Crown Court, to be pitted against other London schools in two law trials - one of witness intimidation and the other, an assault. For the second time, Bexley Grammar School participated in the Citizenship Foundation's Bar Mock Trial. Jack Dalton, Sam Sherr, Cathryn Harding, Alex Sutcliffe, Noah Robinson and I all acted as prosecution and defence barristers, which was a great learning experience for us. Sam Co, Swechha Kansakar, Laura Castel-Hallier, Georgina Lesson, Suzanne Nasery and Tianne Odogwu remained calm under the pressure of their role as witnesses. Finally, Kristine Tran and Jess Kelleher worked diligently as the court officials.



We would also like to thank John Robb, a practising barrister, for taking the time to help us on 3 occasions with preparation for the trials and also lending us his personal wig and gown! He was on hand to provide support and was definitely a big help on the day.

Even though we didn't get to the final of the competition and technically only won one case, it was said that "unofficially" we managed to win all three, thanks to the different judges ruling in our favour! If any aspiring lawyers still wants to join Law Society, please contact Ms Stoddard.

Abisola Bishi 12JJ

The Jack Petchey Speak out Challenge

For most Bexley Grammar School students, Friday 2nd December was just another regular school day, rewarded by a large portion of chicken and chips in the canteen. However, for myself and around thirty other year 10 students, we had a different timetable for the day. Initially, the premise of spending an entire day in one room with a different class focusing on 'speaking out' sounded more



nauseating than the usual Friday PE session.

Despite my first impression, the day quickly had a positive turnout for us all as we learnt from each other our likes and ambitions and how we could use these to talk and inspire those listening. We spent most of the day listening and then speaking to a man called Chris, who was very open to our questions and was funny and honest throughout. We prepared speeches during each period and then presented them for a chance to be in the Jack Petchey Speak out competition which promised a £2,000 cash prize if won and not in the sense of book vouchers!

Overall, I may not have been in the top three but I still felt like a winner in this experience

because, regardless of the competition and the money, I'd managed to develop a life skill, whilst getting to know people I wouldn't normally associate with. We sat in an open circle which couldn't have been more fitting as the day had an unwavering welcome that outshone the rest of my week personally by a mile; last week I learnt a life lesson and you can't put a price on that.

By Alfie Tindall 10RPP

Charity News

The School Council elected Demelza Children's Hospice to be the charity BGS supported this term. They are a lovely charity who care for and support children and parents in the South East. We have been holding several different fundraising events, including a non uniform day and cake sales, plus a Christmas fayre, raffles and postal service are all happening in the next few



weeks.

The BGS School Council have also supported both Macmillan, by holding its annual coffee morning, and the Royal British Legion's annual Poppy Appeal, by selling poppies. Well done to staff and students for all contributions of both time and money.

***Ms
Gradley
School
Charities***

Adam Dykes, 12RAM

Library News

Library Grand Opening

On 3rd November, the new Library had its official Grand Opening. Several Library Prefects helped set up the canapés and drinks. Slowly, people began to arrive,



including a local author, Wendy Moore. The Mayor of Bexley, who was also meant to speak, announced that she had been unavoidably delayed, and that we should continue without her. After Mr Elphick, Mrs Carey and Wendy gave a few words, a plaque was unveiled, dedicating the library to Ms McAllister, the old librarian. More drinks and canapés were passed around and people started to filter away.

Once most of the parents and teachers had left, the Mayor arrived. She gave a speech and 'unveiled' the plaque. She then proceeded to talk to all the remaining guests, and what struck me, was that she was incredibly relaxed, and very much more human than I was expecting. She talked at length about her experiences as the Mayor in a very informal way. After shaking everyone's hands and having her picture taken, she departed.

It was a very unique event and one that I will remember for many years as the time I met the Mayor and had my photo taken with her.

Fully Booked Quiz

On the 29th November, after several weeks of intense preparation, a group of nine Year 7



& 8s (Gabriel Akinkunle, Rohan Dhir, Nathan Fielding, Abbie Hewitt, Hannah Kitching, Aaron Lam, Brook Lord, Marie Mitambo and Katie Peach), accompanied by Mrs Carey, Mrs Eacott and three library prefects (Yasmin Bekir, Adam Dykes and Sumi Thapa), went to Bexleyheath Central Library to take part in the Fully Booked Quiz. There were six rounds in total, including a picture round, a round on Roald Dahl, and a round on Five Children on the Western Front, which the children had to read in preparation for the quiz.

It was a tightly fought competition, with two teams pulling in front relatively early on, but after the scores were added up, our team came a very close second to Townley Grammar.

Adam Dykes 12RAM

Trip Reports

Oxford University

Computer Science Fair

On a hazy Wednesday morning I woke up at 4:30 am, dazed but excited. Today was the day I was going to Oxford University for their Computer Science Fair. I was lucky enough to be chosen by Mr Collins and the Computer Science Department to join a group of 8 students from BGS to attend a fair that was designed to attract young talent in the UK.

We arrived at Paddington Station - at 7.30am(!) - where we caught a train to Oxford, and from there travelled to the University for 9:30am. We arrived and saw what seemed to live up to Oxford's reputation - all dreamy spires and old beautiful buildings.

We arrived at the Computer Science Department and we quickly got seated in one of their many lecture halls, to get a basic understanding of what was going to happen that day. We, and what must have been students from at least five other schools, were greeted by the smiling face and welcoming attitude of Suzanna Marsh, the Communication and Schools Liaison Manager, who was the leader of the session. After a brief talk with her, we met Dr Geraint Jones, a Fellow at the University, who introduced Computer Science to us at a theoretical level which was absolutely mind boggling. After he finished his presentation we participated in some practical computer science in one of Oxford's many labs, where the session was led by one of the fourth year students, Sonal Vedi. He introduced us to a program called GeomLab and we were able to play around with that for some time.

After a few more lectures and practical sessions we got to what is, in my opinion, the highlight of the day: a guided tour of one of

Oxford's many colleges. This one was Mansfield College, which is one of the smaller colleges, only taking in 70 undergraduates per year. But don't mistake this for being uncomfortable and lesser to any of the other colleges. In fact, during my tour of the building, I was absolutely amazed by the medieval and gothic architecture and was even more amazed at how they managed to seamlessly shift from that to modern and minimalist. Don't even get me started on the library... it looked as if it was straight out of Hogwarts. With its high gothic style arches and shelves upon shelves of books, you wouldn't be too surprised to find a book on magical incantations or something else like that!



As the day wound down we had one final lecture... on Computer Science and Philosophy. It was fascinating and we discussed the nature of genuine intelligence, as well as if machines could (or should) think. We discussed innovations like Google's Deepmind and discussed if it would have any chance at world domination! Eventually, as the saying goes, all good things come to an end. At 6:00 we reluctantly left Oxford and made our way home. We were all absolutely shattered after such a long day but that was nothing a Burger King from Charing Cross Station couldn't fix!

All in all this trip really cemented for me the fact that I want to study Computer Science at university. Even if not at Oxford, seeing what

is possible if I put my mind to it, and seeing what amazing opportunities there were available to us, really inspired me.

So, about those exams...

By Jeevan Bhogal, Year 11

'Things I know to be True' Theatre Trip

On Thursday 29th October, Year 12 and 13 drama students visited the Lyric Theatre in Hammersmith to see Frantic Assembly's 'Things I know to be True'. We entered the theatre with smiles and cheers but left with heavy hearts and tears. Our minds were bursting full of questions as we thought about the meaning of life and family. The play beautifully balanced aspects of physical theatre and realism to strongly portray the emotions of the characters on stage, which was visually spectacular. 'Things I know to be True' centred on the Price family living in Adelaide, Australia, as they welcomed back their youngest daughter Rosie from her worldly travels. The play explored many problems and secrets that were unearthed from the family's past and their present. It also brought about many funny familial moments from which every audience member could relate to. From moments to laughing out loud to times when you were quietly sobbing in your chair hoping the person next to you could not see, the play was enjoyed by students and teachers alike. Here are some reviews from some members of the audience:

'Best known as pioneers of brave and beautiful physical theatre, Frantic Assembly seem to be branching out, juxtaposing lyrical movement sequences with hard-hitting neo-naturalistic conversation pieces. 'Things I know to be True' centred around a dysfunctional family, trying to come to terms with the secrets and lies that come to the surface over the course of this two hour play.

Divorce, gender issues, drugs and identity crisis are just a few of the issues explored, which makes it sound dangerously similar to a turbo-charged episode of 'Eastenders'. Fortunately the actors' commitment to expressing conflict through physicality and a tightly written script prevent this from happening. Each character elicited our sympathy and our contempt - sometimes simultaneously; and, although, we could see that it was all going to end in tragedy, the closing moments were poignant, disconcerting and sensitively staged. I still can't decide whether I prefer this side of Frantic to the more blatantly physical style of their earlier work; but there is no doubt that they are growing as a company in terms of vision, versatility and creative ambition'.
Miss Brazier



'I thoroughly enjoyed the play and found it to be thought provoking as it explores sensitive topics. It was captivating, emotional and relatable' Emily Rynkiewicz 12REL (A Level Drama Student)

'When the lights dimmed in the auditorium, I believed that 'Things I know to be True' would be just another 'copy and paste' play about familial reconciliation. Instead, what ensued was a heart wrenching depiction of a family being torn apart. I laughed; I cried and perhaps most importantly I was reminded of the importance of family in my own life'
Matthew Smith 12NET (IB Lit and Performance student)

A special shout out and thank you to Mr Otley, Miss Brazier and Miss Gabriel for arranging the trip and accompanying us.

Kiran Matharu 12NET

Our Trip To The Wild Animal park

On the twenty ninth of November a handful of children from three year groups went to Howletts Wild Animals Park as part of ECM day. We were given on a talk called “Monkey Mayhem” while we watched the lion tailed macaques. We learnt a lot of facts and information for example: apes do not have tails and monkeys do, they mustn’t be fed apples as there is too much sugar in them. We got to see the animals from a safe distance including: elephants, gorillas,



monkeys, rhinos, tigers, wolves, lions and other animals. We enjoyed the trip very much - I’m sure that, if I asked, we would all go again!

Dylan Mankerty 7J



Visit to Beaney House Art Museum

On 20th October, I had a fantastic day at Beaney House in Canterbury. After a long journey, I arrived at the art museum.

There, I discovered new artwork that I hadn't seen before. Some of the artwork was tapestry, created by Grayson Perry. I thought the best piece was 'Vanity of Small Differences' because there were so many different aspects that were connected to the story it told. All in all, it was an amazing day.



Oliver Gray 7P

Year 10 Business Studies Trip to



Stamford Bridge

Year 10 Business Studies students, and those with an interest in 'The Business of Football', paid a visit to Stamford Bridge in November. This is the home of one of London's Premier League football clubs - Chelsea. The trip included a tour of the stadium, including the home and away changing rooms, the press room and the dugout. On the tour, our guide informed everyone of the various

expenditures needed to keep such a business running - of course wages were discussed! It was interesting to discover the 'behind the scenes' overheads such as the artificial lighting used to promote the growth of the pitch. Students were encouraged to think about the different sources of revenue and the problems that football clubs can face if they don't perform well or if players attract negative media attention. They also gained a bit of an insight into brand development and found that many businesses wish to sponsor Chelsea Football Club and offer a lot of money to do so but they often refuse bids based on ethics.

Finally, students were given some time in the club gift shop and soon realised the extent of the value added by a brand such as Chelsea! It was a fantastic insight into the running of a business such as a football club and allowed many to extend what they have been learning in class into the reality of a business environment. Many thanks to the teachers - Mr Deliss, Mr Johnson and Mrs Collier - who helped to run this trip so smoothly and provided a very enjoyable day.

Ms Wood ***Business Studies***

Year 9 Belgium Trip

On the 14th of October 2016, Year 9 students had a fantastic, once in a lifetime opportunity to visit a small town named Ypres in Belgium, a well-known town which honours and pays homage to the lives that were lost in the war battles that unfolded



there.

Ypres commemorates lost lives through their many cemeteries and memorials that people from all around the world can visit in order to give their respect to the brave and heroic men and women who fought in the war. Students were able to create their own history by having the opportunity to walk through the same Sanctuary Wood trenches soldiers had once walked through one hundred years ago and being able to see the same views, walk through the same mud and so on. Year 9 visited a number of historical sites, such as the grave of Staff Nurse Nellie Spindler at Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery, Poperinge. The importance of Nurse Nellie Spindler's grave was that she was, in fact, one of the only two British female casualties of WWI buried in Belgium. The visit to Nurse Nellie signified the importance of remembering the sacrifices that many women made during the war, both on the Homefront and abroad. This allowed students to emotionally connect with their surroundings and enabled them to realise that the graves that they were seeing were not just mere graves and that it was much deeper than just names engraved in stone, but to acknowledge that behind every name or gravestone lay many individual stories and journeys. In addition, Year 9 also visited the Menin Gate which bears over 54,000 names of soldiers who died in and around Ypres, but sadly, whose bodies were never recovered after the war.

As weighty as the trip may have seemed, the mood was lightened and elevated through the fascinating and amusing facts expressed to the students by their mentors and guides. One of the many captivating and quite humorous stories that were shared with students was that of British soldiers: when first arriving in Ypres, they were incapable of pronouncing the name Ypres which resulted



in them nicknaming it 'Wipers', subsequently the newspaper that the soldiers wrote and produced for themselves was called 'The Wipers Times'. Additionally, students were enlightened by learning about the event that occurs every night at 8pm known as the 'Last Post Ceremony', this is when volunteer buglers from the local Fire Brigade sound the 'Last Post' as a subtle, yet touching, tribute to those who died protecting the town during WWI. Although Year 9 went on a very insightful historical trip, many students will remember the trip for the famously delicious chocolate for which Ypres is known and which they got a chance to buy in Ypres town!

Mr Johnson
History Department

German Exchange 2016

Hello.....and
goodbye!

In June this year, fifteen of my good friends, Frau Symons, Herr Frost and I headed to Hamburg to finally meet our exchange partners after months of talking over WhatsApp. Naturally, there were a lot of emotions when we arrived, and after settling in, I had one of the best weeks of my life.

We had a lot of freedom to pick what we wanted to do, which made it seem daunting at first, but as soon as we started our activities, that feeling was soon



gone. We got to visit their school, and were amazed at how different it was to ours. During the week, we visited loads of popular sights, including a theme park, a chocolate factory and the Hamburg Botanical Gardens, as well as going swimming on our spare day, with the temperature reaching around 32 degrees! This was the best day by far, we were at the pool for over seven hours, and I'm pretty sure all of us came home with sunburn!

Then it was time to say goodbye, which was really hard as many of us had grown really close to our partners and were dreading not seeing them until September. We all kept in touch with our partners and finally the day came. We waited at Welling Station eagerly, even though their train was delayed three times!

They came running down the platform to greet us, and everyone was trying to catch up. Many of us had plans for that evening, including me. However, just as Fernanda, my partner, and I were about to leave to go to my friend's house, I fell down the stairs and fractured my ankle! Worst timing ever! This meant that the next day, Saturday, I couldn't go up to London with the others, but I've been informed it was very educational, as they visited the Houses of Parliament, along with many other landmarks in London.

Sunday was our free day, and my friends wheeled me around Bluewater in a wheelchair, which I found hilarious; not sure how happy they were about it! Then in the evening, we organised for everyone to go bowling. I tried to bowl, but my ankle made it very hard and I had to give up after three turns!

The Germans visited our school on international day and the day after, Tuesday, we went to a Globe Theatre Workshop. Miraculously, now armed with my wheelchair, I was able to go on this trip and we had a great day at the Globe, followed by free time in Greenwich. Then that evening, some of us went to Kaspas for waffles and

ice cream, and had a great time.

On Wednesday, we stayed in school, while the Germans had a fun day out in London. As it was their last night, we all went to Nandos and later on a park. On the final morning, we dropped them off at the train station. A lot of goodbyes had to be said, and we all hugged, much to the confusion of the Thursday morning commuters!

I know loads of people have kept in touch with their partners, and we are so happy to have made friends for life. I can say, on behalf of all that went, that we all had an amazing time, and we will never forget it. I have loved getting to know all these new people, and I would recommend this trip to anyone.

Kate Leadbetter , 10MPL



Psychologists abroad - a day at the zoo

*(Warning: this article talks about
spiders)*

Banana Spider, taken in Costa Rica by
Ryan Harwood

Are you afraid of
spiders? Do you have
arachnophobia?

You're not on your own. Despite being home to none of the handful of species of spiders that are dangerous to humans, the UK has one of the highest rates of arachnophobia in

the world. Arachnophobia is more prominent with Brits than even our cousins down-under, where there are some of the most dangerous spiders in the world. With a few lucky arachnophobes in our midst, the Year 13 Psychology cohort embarked on a trip to ZSL London Zoo, where one of the most successful arachnophobia treatments is offered: The Friendly Spider Programme, which aims to rid a person of their phobia in just one afternoon.

If you aren't the biggest fan of spiders or if you find it rather scary being around them, but can cope with being in their vicinity, then there's a chance that you have a fear of spiders. A phobia is a little more extreme. If you have a persistent, irrational fear of spiders that means your daily life is affected by your fear, then you could have a phobia. If you want to go about treating your phobia then the Friendly Spider Programme is a good way to go. We had the great privilege of hearing about the programme directly from one of its leaders, hypnotherapist John Clifford. He explained to us the basics behind causes of phobias and the problems it causes, before explaining to us the programme. At this point, we hadn't experienced anything groundbreakingly new but had gained a much deeper understanding of the treatment that reports a 98% success rate (in 2016). At this point we were given free rein for a while to explore the zoo, almost deserted on a cold and slightly dreary day.

I am an avid environmentalist and wildlife enthusiast. As a rule of thumb, I find zoos incredibly difficult to be in. I do not personally take any satisfaction in seeing the plethora of organisms in captivity, but at ZSL London Zoo I feel infinitely more comfortable. As we wandered around the zoo, we were barraged by constant reminders of conservation. London Zoo is one of the best zoos in the world for captive breeding and the ZSL which runs the zoo is one of the biggest and most active

conservation organisations in the world. I still can barely look at a majestic tiger as it sits in its enclosure, but it takes the edge off knowing the money I've paid to get into the zoo is going to help wild animals from across the globe.

After our own explorations around the zoo we returned to John for the final part of our day: our own mini-treatment session. It started with some more talking and the breakdown of people's phobic reaction in a CBT style breakdown of phobias. After the breakdown of the other parts of the programme, Mr Clifford pulled out his ace card... Hypnotherapy. Don't get yourself thinking about any sort of con-artist magician who would find the most malleable among us and irreversibly make us think we're a goat that's scared of chickens, as this hypnotherapy involves taking people to a relaxed state where they're at their most susceptible to new ideas. At that point, John spoke to us about the safety of spiders and imagining ourselves being comfortable with them. What felt like five minutes actually lasted about twenty, and some people were so relaxed that they even fell asleep. Before you laugh at the prospect of hypnotherapy being effective, take a moment to consider Freya Crouch- IB psychologist and arachnophobe. Before the treatment, Freya described spiders as making her feel "incredibly anxious" and "want to do anything to get away from even the tiniest". By the end Freya first touched a tarantula and then held one herself. This is something that she would never have been able to do beforehand. With one session of hypnotherapy combined with a little CBT Freya started to overcome one of her strongest fears and even tick something off her bucket list.

What a great day, with lots to take away to improve our chances in an exam and, for some, to improve the very quality of our lives. Thank you to John Clifford and to Mr

Asker and Mrs Boulden for making the day happen for us.

Ryan Harwood, 13SE

Flatford Mills Trip

In November, the IB Biology & Environmental Systems and Societies students spent 3 days at the picturesque Flatford Mill, a field studies centre in Suffolk. The students experienced a variety of ecological



investigation techniques. Amongst many other things they looked at the biodiversity of woodlands and freshwater, and honed their statistical skills. Mr Ward, Mrs Mehmet, Mrs Vials and Mrs Earl were very pleased with the hard work the students put into their coursework despite the long days and, at times, slightly grotty weather.

Mrs Earl, Science Dept



BGS

Young Carers

The Young Carers Club meets at



least three times a year for an outing.

We had an excellent evening with the Young Carers at the Southbank Christmas Market. After a walk to Welling station we got the train to Waterloo and off to the market. We had to fill our bellies first so we went to the Food Market to have pizza and other scrumptious food. We then did a bit of shopping at the Christmas stalls. The carousel beckoned, so we all had a ride on that - the views of London with all its festive lights really got us in the Christmas spirit. We finished off with a deliciously warming hot chocolate looking out over the river Thames. We had a lovely night and welcomed some new members of the group. Here's to the next trip. A big thank you to the PA for funding our group.

Mrs Haslam and Mrs Price

Language Department News

BGS celebrates all things international!

On Monday 26th September, Bexley Grammar School hosted its annual International Day to celebrate different cultures, traditions and languages from around the globe. Once again students and staff came out in full support of the day, dressing up in different costumes, completing various quizzes and games, and even sampling a special internationally-themed menu in the canteen (the Jamaican Jerk Chicken being a particularly big hit!). Many thanks to Mrs Woodall for organising such delicious food. Years 7-10 went one step further by taking part in a range of special lessons designed for the day. To name just a few, these included language taster sessions for Portuguese and Bulgarian, as well as Japanese origami

making, Moroccan biscuit making and Gaelic football sessions. Some classes discussed the recent Syrian refugee crisis, and many students in year 10 found out they had a new favourite pop artist from the International Pop Music lesson.

The costumes students wore this year were some of most creative yet (for example a student wearing an Ikea box to represent Sweden), and it was fantastic to see students from all years get into the spirit of things. Money raised from those who dressed up will go to the school's chosen charities. Thank you very much to all the students and staff who took part in the day, particularly the members of staff who helped to organise the lessons and create such a successful day.

Mr Gallimore
MFL Dept

Europa Town

On the 21st and 22nd of November, Bexley Grammar School hosted Europa Town for primary school students nearby. The market and

puppet show allowed the students to improve their



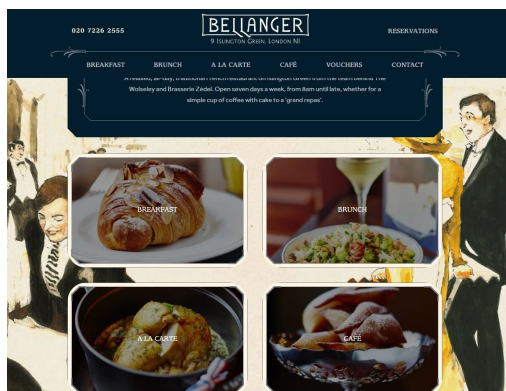
language skills in a fun and interactive way. The pupils were able to communicate effectively with the sixth form students thanks to the authentic French and Spanish market stalls, from where they were able to purchase various items. In watching a performance of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears,' the year 5 and 6 students were able to test and improve their vocabulary further. Overall, it was a great experience for both the students of Bexley Grammar and the primary school students, as both were given an insight into what using foreign languages in day to day life would be like. We hope the primary school students enjoyed the day as

much as us and that the success of Europa Town will continue for further years.

Molly Johnson 12RAM

Design & Technology Department News

Food Preparation and Nutrition



The traditional French restaurant on Islington Green from the team behind The Wolseley visited Bexley Grammar this term and treated the Year 10 Nutrition students to a culinary micro-teaching workshop. A mini viennoiserie was opened up in H5 with the baking of fresh bread and roulades. Meanwhile, the hot larder section managed to rustle up chicken schnitzels and Coq au Riesling. Since their training Bella has managed to teach her parents how to joint a chicken and Alice is planning to make bread for her family over Christmas. Ted, who was given the title of “Master Baker”, has since treated his family to the roulade experience which helped win him the title. Our Master Chef and Fryer, Oliver, managed to dish up twenty chicken schnitzels and ate rather an alarming quantity of these. Olivia wowed us with her knife skills and impressed the Executive Chef, who then gave her the responsibility of organising the herb seasoning for the Vichyssoise.

Everybody loved working with Ms.Fooksin on pastry. We are looking forward to visiting Bellanger in 2017

Miss Francis would like to thank Adam Perfitt for organising such a fantastic learning experience for our school.

Ms Chan
DT Department

Music Department News

Music Department Autumn term update

The Music Department has had a busy start to the academic year with many different trips and concerts! We have welcomed many new people into the department ‘family’, with our largest ever sets for A-Level Music and Music Technology. We were thrilled to be awarded a ‘National Partnership Award from Music for Youth this year, and October saw the Bexley Improv Group continue its journey with Music for, as group representatives Josh Masters and Luke Montgomery travelled to the Royal Albert Hall to receive the award, and meet our sponsor from Leeds College of Music for the first time.

I was lucky enough to accompany them, as Improv's director, Mr Laing, works at another school on a Wednesday! We were treated to an afternoon concert: the Music for Youth Primary Prom. It was a real treat to watch some high quality performances by other secondary pupils, and lovely to see the Albert Hall full of primary children so excited by their experience of live music. We had been given seats in a box directly in front of the stage, and I had a real 'proud teacher'



moment when I looked down at the lighting desk and realised that ex-BGS student Drew Bristow was in charge of lighting for the concert!

After the concert we enjoyed tea and cake in the Heineken Green Room, and met Sebastiaan de Krom from Leeds College of Music. Seb is a Dutch jazz drummer who has had an amazing career; he studied at Berklee College of Music in the US, and has toured all over the world (including with Herbie Hancock and British Jamie Cullum) and is now teaching at Leeds College of Music. He bizarrely has a connection to Bexley: he frequently plays at the monthly jazz nights at the King's Head in Bexley Village! He is also the Musical Director for the National Youth Jazz Orchestra Big Band, and knows another ex-BGS student Chris Goodchild, who played in his band last year.



He took a genuine interest in Josh & Luke's ideas, and together they started to lay out plans for how the partnership will work. We are looking forward to taking part in masterclasses with Seb (either at BGS or up in Leeds), and hopefully working with jazz students from LCM on a longer term basis. We all felt very lucky to have been offered this opportunity; we hope to build lasting links with Leeds College of Music, and I know

that our musicians in Improv Group (the original 5, plus new members including external Year 12's who auditioned for the group this term) will benefit so much from his teaching, connections and the opportunities this Award will offer us.

On Wednesday 2nd November the Music Department kicked off its 2016-17 Concert season with a concert by the whole of Year 7! Every student performed as part of their class choir, and also performed two songs as a whole year group. They demonstrated the songs learnt as part of a Gospel workshop on International Day (now a dim and distant memory from September), and demonstrated just how much progress they'd made in just seven weeks at BGS. Most impressive were the students who auditioned to play a solo in the concert. There was a wide range of instruments, musical styles and level of experience which made it a really enjoyable experience. Thank you and congratulations to the following: *Fola Akinsuyi, Max Ashton, Ryan Brockwell Low, Isabel Daly, Noah Hanley McLatchie, Daniel Hoang, Charlie Keeling, Hannah Kitching, Megan Le, Timothy Li, Kenna Mackey, Gabrielle Malasayeu, Constantin Rioland, Rachel Smith, James Warren, Phillipe Watson.*

Our 6th form musicians attended a Seminar presented by the LSO on the 11th November, in which they heard two of their set works performed by members of the orchestra, and they performed in a Showcase on 15th November, which showcased Year 12 compositions, Year 13 IB student recitals, and Chamber Choir and Bexley Improv Group among others. Our GCSE students attended a concert at the Royal Festival Hall on the 23rd November, in which the London Philharmonic Orchestra performed a number of interesting pieces, including two of the GCSE set works – it was interesting to see the contrast in size of the orchestra for the Baroque pieces by Vivaldi and Bach, and the enormous orchestra (100+ players on stage!) for the film music excerpts; we all particularly loved the excerpts of 'Out of Africa' and '633 Squadron'.

The biggest focus of the term was the Christmas Concert, which took place this week on the 6th December. This was a really special experience for all involved, and I can honestly say that it was probably the best concert I've been part of in the 10 years I've been at the school, with a real buzz and excitement about music from all ensembles. All our choirs performed with energy and passion, and I am particularly thrilled that we have so many new members in Senior Choir, which is going from strength to strength. The orchestras and jazz bands were as brilliant as usual, and it was wonderful to welcome new members of our musical community (in Year 7 and 12 particularly), and to see new talent emerging. I am very pleased to have the support of our peripatetic teachers in providing new challenges for our musicians, and the Flute and Clarinet Choirs performed with confidence last night, led by Mr Cooper. We welcomed Ms Ellis to our concert for the first time, with the brand new Junior Brass Ensemble, who made us feel extremely festive with their Christmas Carol performances. If you would like to re-live some of the performances from last night, or if you missed the concert and would like to see our ensembles in action, you can watch some of the highlights here:

<http://www.bgsperformingarts.com/concert-videos.html>

Boys'



Barbershop



Bexley Improv Group



Junior & Senior Choirs perform together

Miss Swadkin, Head of Music

PE Department News

During October half term the year 8 and 9 Netball and Football teams took a trip to Barcelona for some expert coaching A games. All squads did fantastically well with our Girls Football team beating the local Spanish opposition. All students trained hard and showed huge progression over the week. Well done all and a huge thank you to Mr Mackle for organising a fab week! Here's to 2018!!!





The year 11 netball squad were awarded 2nd place at the Bexley Netball competition losing only one match throughout the day. Fantastic result on a windy (and very cold day!).



Martial Arts

This term we were luckily enough to have David from Tan' Gun Taekwondo join us every Thursday after school to lead sessions with all girls. David also worked with our



Year 9 girls classes on self-defence, teaching some of the main kicks and punches from Taekwondo. If anyone would like any

information on how to get involved outside of school pop up and ask the PE department!



Netball news

A huge congratulations to our Sixth Form Netball squad who won the Bexley Netball tournament earlier this term at Chislehurst and Sidcup Grammar. The girls played extremely well topping the Bexley table!

Sky Sports for living

Former Olympic swimmer Kate Haywood came into school in November to share her experience with our students. She organised a series of fitness sessions for some of our girls, and then discussed her training and Sports Science with our IB classes.



Rugby News

The year 7 team are going from strength to strength after playing games against Hurstmere and Trinity this year.

Whilst our Year 8 team managed to notch up 3 wins and played with great courage at the Old Colfeians rugby club schools tournament.

Football news

Congratulations to the year 11 football team

who managed to reach the quarterfinals of the Kent cup this term.

Miss Leffen
PE Department

Staff Interviews

An Interview with Mrs Coleman

What are some of your favourite memories from your time at BGS?

My favourite memories are probably stuff that involves students, every single time, because everything they do never ceases to



astonish me. I

always thought there was no such thing as a silly question (until I came here!). Memories of watching people growing up and seeing them leave, then seeing the younger ones coming through as well and it's just wonderful. I love the kind of relationships we can build here and it's gonna be the kids, it's going to be all you lot I'm going to miss more than anything else. Favourite memories probably oddly enough revolve around the water rockets because I still remember very fondly, one group four project, (IBers will understand what that means). They were looking at water, so some of them decided to look at water rockets and the distance travelled etc and the sixth form centre, the new extension had just been built and the water rocket went straight onto the roof,

followed by an awful lot of laughter and running away. So that is definitely one of my fond memories but there's been a load, so it's hard to single them out.

Why do you think Bexley Grammar is special compared to other schools?

I think it's definitely the pupil-teacher relationship that makes it different from everywhere else. As teachers, we are very much encouraged to care about you, not just care about your grades but care about you as people and that makes it so different. I've been doing tutoring and I've been hearing stuff from other schools, they get virtually no support, they get the lessons but no support, I couldn't do that. I want to know if someone isn't feeling well, if they're better the next day, things like that.

What was your first memory of coming to Bexley Grammar?

Bare in mind this was 10 ½ years ago...this is a very, very long time ago. For the interview, it would be driving up looking at the building and thinking...oh, it's not very impressive is it from the outside. Then coming in and teaching a lesson to some year 7's, who I later went on to actually teach, and having at the interview, a bunch of sixth formers to interview us as well. I was given this long chemical formula and thought what the hell is that? And finding out it was some really obscure compound, how was I supposed to know that!? That was my first memory from this place but actually coming back as a teacher in the September, I was based over in the Heath building then, there were a group of us who were all teaching over there and we used to have our little teacher meetings when we still had animal club before everything died! We used to have the hamster in the ball running round the room while we were marking as a group.

Is there anything you would have wanted to change about your time here?

Yes...I think I shouldn't have stopped being a head of house. I love my form dearly, do not get me wrong on that, and both the forms I've had in year 12 and 13 I would not change for the world but I think I made a mistake not being the Johnson head of house. That's one thing I do regret and would change.

What do you think you'll miss about Bexley Grammar?

Students. Not a hesitation the students. I love the fact it doesn't matter whether you teach them at the moment or if you taught them 5 or 6 years ago it's still that smile in the corridor, "Hello Miss" "Hi, how are you doing? What you up to now?" Then people coming back, see how they're getting on. Yep going to miss the students, that is the number one thing. You're all very special people and I love you all dearly.

What are you going on to do now?

Elderly parents is the predominant reason that I'm going, my Dad is 91, my Mum's 88. So they need more care and my husband works up in London so he can't get back quickly. If they succeed in setting fire to the microwave AGAIN which they've already done once I need to get there quickly not after I've set cover for an hour. So that's the main reason, as well as looking after them during the day and I'm going to be doing tutoring in the evening, SHAMELESS PLUG, science tutoring available.

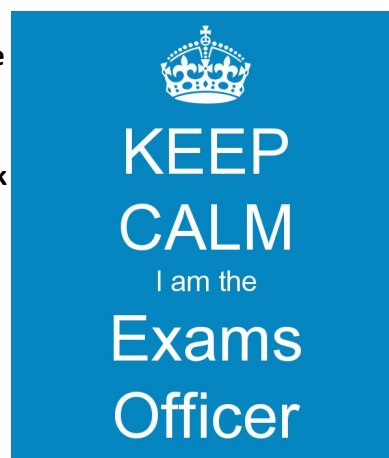
We'd like to wish Mrs Coleman the best for the future and hope she'll come back to visit us!

Alison Everest and Abisola Bishi, Year 12

Interview with Mrs Gianakakis

School's Exam officer

Can you give a brief description of your work at Bexley, including how long you have been here?



I joined Bexley Grammar on 5th March 2001 as a part time attendance officer/relief receptionist for just 3 hours each day. Having been a pupil here and never being allowed to use the main entrance, it did feel quite awesome to use the 'staff' entrance on my first day of work. The attendance officer role was a new one and involved checking registers and sick notes for Years 7 to 13. Each form had a paper register ~ some looked like a work of art and some like something out of a horror movie; registration was taken at the start and end of each day. After about 18 months, there was a change round in the school office and I left registers to work as the administrations officer - curriculum and examinations. This involved all sorts such as ~ typing and admin for the curriculum deputy (and I have been so lucky in that each and every one of them was a pleasure to

work for), UCAS/Oxbridge applications, preparing the options booklets and inputting all the choices, typing trip letters and risk assessments as well as being the exams secretary for the exams officer, Mr Dewdney. If I am allowed to say who my favourite 'boss' was, it was Mr Dewdney! Then in February 2008 I moved out of the school office and into the exams office.

Having been at Bexley for many years, are there any aspects of the school that have changed in your time?

There have been so many changes and here are just a few of them: the school changing from 7 forms of entry to 6 ~ 32 less students sitting GCSEs; exam entries used to be made using a DOS programme and now they are done in Exams Organiser in SIMS; A-level MFL students used to listen to individual cassette players rather than having their exams in the language lab on computers; UCAS applications changed from a paper form to an online one; the January exam series being withdrawn; oh and the exams office moving from the back of the canteen to the back of the hall.

Do you have any memorable moments from your time at Bexley?

Some that spring to mind are: the first time I had to type and then peel off and stick a reference on to a student's completed UCAS form ~ way up there on the terror stakes ~ I had visions of sticking it on so that it all crumpled up and the student would have to redo their whole application; making entries for the first time in DOS and Exams Organiser and hoping I didn't hit the wrong button and lose the lot; being involved with and typing the very first newsletter; starting an exam for the first time in the sports hall. But the day that most stays in my mind is when Mrs Triggs and I had to provide teas and coffees

for a conference that was taking place over in the sixth form centre on a very snowy day ~ trundling a trolley of china, etc over there in the snow, then collecting it all up and trundling back, washing everything up by hand and then trundling the whole lot back again for the next tea and coffee session. We spent most of the day in fits of laughter!

Has the school changed you at all as a person?

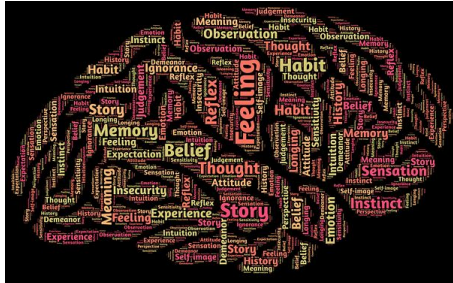
Being entrusted with so many different tasks has given me opportunities to try out new ideas and adapt to new technologies. Working in exams made me realise just how amazing the students at BGS are, especially in times of stress! I also appreciate just how lucky I have been, working with our team of invigilators who are so efficient and professional and care so passionately about the students they are invigilating.

What plans do you have for the upcoming future?

At the moment I am just enjoying not having a fixed schedule or a calendar full of exam board deadlines and even though I still wake up quite early it is bliss not to have to clear the car windows on a frosty morning. I very much enjoy gardening but have never had the time to grow plants from seed so that is one of my plans for next year. I am also hoping to do a little more travelling ~ I would love to visit Holy Island and possibly take a cruise to see the Northern Lights.

By Paula Navarro Flores 12CED

Mrs Lawrence



Why and when did you choose Psychology for a career path?

me: Psychology and teaching. I think that the reason Psychology appeals to me is because it underpins everything we do. I have always enjoyed “people watching” and annoy my friends and family by giving a psychological rationale to news items, film characters, people driving their cars, the dog...

What are some of the most interesting things you've encountered during your time in the field?

I have had the opportunity to spend some time researching and teaching in schools and colleges in North Wales (I used to live there) for Glyndwr University. While I was doing that, I became intrigued by the psychology of learning. It is an area of learning that is not often considered in depth; we look at socio-economic implications of education policy and we look at the merits of education for the sake of knowledge and education for the sake of training, but few educators think about the psychological processes which are being brought about as we learn. This turns out to be a huge area of behavioural study and has far-reaching implications for self-esteem, mental health, well-being and happiness as well as the more tangible implications for productivity, economic growth and resilience in the face of change. I could go on all day on this question!

Are there any studies that you took part in which you found specifically enlightening or surprising?

Yes. All of them. I think that if you don't find your research enlightening, you've done something wrong. The most surprising result I had was in a research study looking at literacy problems in boys in primary school – it is not that they cannot read, it is rather that they do not read. Working with a group of boys as young as 8 years old, I found that

they had a huge capacity for thinking critically and outside of the box. We don't expect them to do this at such a young age, but I found that they can if given the chance. Amazingly enough, as soon as they started to do that, their reading ability shot up to above average, often from a very low starting point.

Which aspects of Psychology do you find the most fascinating?

Well, all psychology is fascinating because it is all interconnected. Last year, I told my students that I wanted them to imagine a huge 3-dimensional model in the middle of the classroom, floating somewhere above their heads. Right in the middle is the word "psychology" and connected to it, filling the rest of the room are all the other key words, ideas, research studies, models etc. They are all connected to each other too and as time goes on, more and more connections are made between all the ideas. We won't finish the model though, we can leave it to grow and grow over the years. A bit like neural pathways really. Obviously, I think that learning- motivation and engagement in particular- are the most fascinating, because that's my research area, but you can add all those other areas to it, because they are all relevant.

Can you recommend any book/ films that might be intriguing to Psychology students?

Read everything you can. Watch an eclectic mix. As Psychology students, you will find scope for study everywhere you look, even in "Frozen" or "the Gruffalo". Embrace it all with an open mind and a critical eye.

By Paula Navarro Flores 12CED

Current Affairs

Brexit: Racism's **"breaking point"?**



After 51.9% voted to leave the European Union there have been many consequences, such as a massive fall in the value of the pound, as well as the growing economic uncertainty of the future. One of the most perplexing outcomes of this decision, however, seems to be the massive increase in racial hatred.

According to an article by The Independent there have been more than 500 racial incidents in the weeks following Brexit alone. This includes verbal racial abuse to toddlers and their mothers as well as a man in Glasgow ripping off a woman's headscarf. On the 4th October, a woman in her 40s, walking down Oxford street was attacked by a man, who at first repeatedly told her to remove her headscarf, then went on to try and pull it off. Whilst racism has never fully ceased to be, blatant attacks in broad daylight, such as this seem to be increasing shockingly.

The main question to ask, though, is whether Brexit has increased xenophobia and racism, or whether it has simply allowed



xenophobes and racists to act more freely and without as much fear of persecution. During the Brexit campaign UKIP's anti-immigration poster, which shows a

queue of migrants and refugees with the word “breaking point” over them, was described as an obvious piece of propaganda to “scaremonger” the public. Many also pointed out the similarity of the poster to that used in a Nazi campaign against migrants and said that it was a “blatant



attempt to incite racial hatred”. Recently the Transport Police released a poster inviting people to report suspicious behaviour. Whilst this is completely reasonable, the image used shows a dark,

hook-nosed, mistrustful, bearded man being spotted by a youthful, porcelain girl. There is an unsettling similarity with many posters used, again by the Nazis against the Jewish community. This follows a previously seen campaign from the Home Office warning Illegal Immigrants to “Go Home or Face arrest”. Whilst these Posters may not intend to, they rely on and strengthen our fear of the unknown or “the other”, does this help our safety or just increase our anxiety?



It is hard to say whether Brexit propaganda has worked to increase hate crimes towards migrants (especially eastern Europeans and Muslims) or whether it has unleashed a repressed verbal and physical violence that many seem to hold.

There are many dangerous precedents for when a society begins to accept racist or discriminatory behaviour as normal. Examples include the normalisation of watching boats full of refugee children perilously sailing in hope of salvation, as well

as the growing lists of police induced deaths across the USA.

Does the future show us regressing to a xenophobic time we thought had passed, or was Brexit simply an excuse that some had been waiting for to return to a time of distress and suspicion?

By Paula Navarro Flores 12CED

Brexit: Because Really Europe's eXcited, It's Terrific

In the beginning, there was the word, and the word was Brexit, and the British public was with Brexit.

The Sterling was not.

I woke up on the 24rd June, checked my



phone, and stared bleary-eyed at the news headlines before me. The UK had voted to leave the EU. At first, I shook my head with disappointment, but that was swiftly replaced with a wry grin. Brexit was going to

be great.

For some reason, I've always felt very detached from Brexit. I'm a Bulgarian, from the city of Burgas (which has been looking so good since Britain started sending Brussels its money); I still technically live here so I'm affected by the collapse of the Pound; and my father works for a German investment bank. I should be worried. Why am I not worried? Why are European immigrants not worried?

Britain died when Brexit began

The Brexit debate killed Britain's national identity. You in England are supposed to be the polite, reserved people in Europe. The entire time you were insulting us on national TV, we were sitting there, aghast, muttering 'we can HEAR you', over and over. Where was the stiff upper lip? Where was the classic British understatement? Where did British-ness go? Both sides of the Brexit debate may as well have done all their campaigning wearing top hats, monocles, and garlic around their necks.

We can always go back home

European immigrants fill vital jobs in the UK, from plumbers to doctors, salespeople to senior management. All of them are needed vitally back home, but, apparently, not in the UK. Apparently, British people have special magic boilers that never need to be fixed, so the absence of highly-skilled ethnic British plumbers is not an issue. Also the NHS is a) grievously overstuffed and b) runs like a well-oiled machine, with no queuing or waiting, or needless form-filling at all. So if all the skilled doctors and nurses go back to Bulgaria, Romania, and Poland, well that won't be a problem, now will it? Oh no, Britain will be absolutely, perfectly fine when all the immigrants leave.

Wait, they're all leaving?

Yes. We feel even less valued than we did, when all we had to put up with was racist UKIP rhetoric, the difficulty of having English as our second language, and suspicion of the British public. Sorry, did I say suspicion? I meant hatred. We would put up with all that. We will not put up with being told exactly where we can stick the vital services that we provide to the UK. So yes, we're leaving.

The Pound is turning into a really apt name

I have never seen the Bulgarian Lev so close in value to the Pound (at time of writing, 2.27 Levs for £1). I never thought the Pound would be so utterly pound-ed – like I said, that name is really apt right now. And even though I am affected by the collapse of the Sterling, somehow it hasn't hit home yet. Truth be told, we economic migrants have actually found the demise of the Pound quite amusing, because we are loving the fact our currencies look so strong.

Hard or soft?

Newsflash, Britain: you are getting a titanium-hard Brexit. You are not getting access to the single market. You are not getting free movement of labour. Worse still, you will have no power in the negotiation. Your last card was that referendum. Theresa May is keeping her cards close to her chest, which is an incredible feat when she has no cards at all. You have no bargaining chips, and we have to make an example of you to stop other countries following suit. So expect nothing from us. Expect nothing from negotiations. Nothing, that is, except an unfavourable deal that is worse than your current EU membership. We will push an unfavourable agreement across the table to you, you will push it back. We will just push it back. And this could go on for years – the

rules are that you leave at least two years after triggering Article 50. This will take a good long time, during which you still be in the EU. Have fun.

Brexit who?

Since I started writing this article, the US election happened.

I could write a detailed response to the result of the Election, the vote breakdown by state, race, and gender, but that blank space will say more than any sage commentary ever could. At the end of the day, the USA has overtaken Britain again – the student truly has become the master – they are more powerful than you, richer than you, and now they're more racist than you. From this point onwards, Trump's rhetoric is going to matter a lot more than that of Amber Rudd and Boris Johnson. That said, Trump is more likely to do a trade deal with the UK than a Clinton administration would have (read: formally ratify Britain's status as the 51st state).

So what does this mean for Britain?

Your skilled workforce is going to be skilled elsewhere. Your currency is going to continue its swan-dive. And by the time we on the Continent are done with you, you will be a shadow of the nation you once were, that you could have been, had you voted to remain. We don't even need you, what with Turkey, Ukraine, and others, hoping to join us. We wish you the best of luck negotiating with flogging yourselves off to Russia, China, and the United States. You're going to need it.

On the 23rd June, 2016, Britain made its bed. And now, Britain is going to have to lie in it.

By Alex Coates 12CED

The Refugee Crisis

The definition of a refugee according to the English Oxford Dictionary is 'A person who has been forced to leave their country in order to escape war, persecution, or natural disaster'. The definition of a migrant is 'A person who moves from one place to another in order to find work or better living conditions'. These two words have recently



been said a lot in the news, on television and in everyday life but the fact still remains that they are two completely different words with two completely different meanings. The Syrian civil war created one of the biggest humanitarian crises that our generation has faced and is still facing. From 2011 and before, the government of Syria began a violent crackdown and this caused many armed opposition groups to fight back. The Free Syrian Army emerged from this and many Syrian civilians joined and took up arms. However, many divisions between ethnic, religious and secular groups caused complications in the country's conflict. Syria has been greatly affected by this war, there have been more than 250,000 deaths and towns and villages have been destroyed. For many Syrians left in the country, basic human necessities are scarce and the threat of death is at their doorstep. But many Syrians are fleeing, even right this very minute, to surrounding countries such as Lebanon. However, many are seeking a safer life in Europe and are crossing the border to

Turkey; by fleeing the danger at home they still face numerous obstacles when coming to Europe. In 2015, Syria's situation became increasingly worse as many outside parties began airstrikes. Western Europe closed many routes for them and, even in the European countries, they face cultural tensions and many have to cope with living in overcrowded conditions, with uncertainty about their future. From the beginning of the war, the number of refugees from Syria rose to around 100,000. Now there are an estimated 4.8 million looking to find their homes in other countries, and over half are children, some without parents or families. Some refugees are lucky to have family members in other countries, but for the rest, they stay in camps or try to find places such as abandoned storage units where disease and starvation can befall them.

The youngest of the refugees, the children, may not understand what has happened to them and their country or where their family is. Many of them have to become adults and grow up too fast. They lose their childhood, their innocence and carefreeness. However, they also lose out on their education, something I believe should be free to all children and should not discriminate or disfavour anyone. A whole generation of children and teenagers will miss out on the fundamentals that we in this country have the luxury of receiving. They may not be prepared for the future or not have the opportunity to bring prosperity and happiness to their countries. Everyone should have a chance to be the best person they can be, but these children don't have that chance.

I read about a girl called Reema and was deeply touched by her story. Reema is 12 years old and she lives in Lebanon on the first floor of a house with parents and four siblings. The house is under construction and

does not have windows and Reema lives amongst rubble and rats. When her house was bombed in Syria, she and her family had to move around from place to place until they ended up in Lebanon. In an interview with Oxfam, Reema talked about how she used to like writing and wants to go back to school. She said that she cries whenever she sees children coming and going from their schools. She also thinks about her home in Syria. She misses many things; her friends and her English, Arabic and Music classes. The time Reema has, she spends writing poetry and this is part of one of her poems:

*When I take my pencil and notebook,
What shall I write about?*

*Shall I write about my school,
my house or my land of which I was
deprived?*

*My school, when will I visit you again
take my bag and run to you?*

*My school is no longer there
Now, destruction is everywhere
No more students
No more ringing bells
My school has turned into stones scattered
here and there
Shall I write about my house that I no longer
see
where I can no longer be,
Shall I write about flowers which now smell
destruction?
Syria, my beloved country
Will I ever return back to you?
I had so many dreams
None of them will come true*

To read more about Reema's story:
<https://www.oxfamireland.org/blog/syrian-refugee-reema>

The refugee crisis is still ongoing and I hope that in our lifetime we will see an end to it,

families will be reunited, people will be happy and countries will be at peace. We can't let a humanitarian crisis of this scale fall out of focus, it is current but we don't want it to be our future.

Kiran Matharu 12NET

Donald Trump:

Portrait of the President Elect

Well, that was unexpected. Donald Trump will be the 45th President of the United States. Now, I know this isn't the result most



of us were hoping for, but we must accept the democratic system, flaws and all, and move on. We

have the next President, so now I will try and predict what sort of President Donald Trump might be. Brace yourselves.

First, we look at the promises he made on the campaign trail. He started off his road to the presidency with several catchy, and extremely controversial, statements, such as 'Build the Wall', 'Make America Great Again', and his proposed blanket ban on all Muslims. It was this use of simple statements and catchy buzzwords that furthered his popularity. During the later stages of his campaign, with the Republican nomination safe, and his eyes set firmly on the White House, he mellowed slightly, proposing tougher immigration instead of a blanket ban. To his list of grand, sweeping statements, he added cutting taxes for the wealthy and big corporations, bringing back America's jobs, and (the cherry on the cake)

taking down ISIS. How he was to do these things was rather unclear, lost in his speeches between repeated rhetoric and jabs at Hillary Clinton (among others). And so, appealing to America's middle class conservatives (putting it lightly), he won the Presidency.

So what now? Well, on 22nd November, he released a video on YouTube where he discussed his plans for his first 100 days in office. In it, he details what plans he has, and the steps he will take to 'make America great again.' He said he plans to withdraw from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (a trade deal that he sees as a 'potential disaster'), cut regulations on businesses, enforce tougher sanctions on those that abuse the visa system, and work to protect America from any sort of attack. On other issues (such as education, healthcare and taxes), there is no word. But in statements released over the weeks since his election, he has proposed keeping parts of the Affordable Care Act (which he said previously he would scrap entirely), he has said he is 'okay' with marriage equality, and says it's a 'settled' issue. On the economy, he hasn't changed his opinion, and still wants to cut taxes for the middle class, as well as the large companies, which he sees as a way of enticing production back to America. As he is pro-life, he says he will try to appoint Supreme Court Justices who may overturn *Roe v Wade* (the Supreme Court Ruling on a woman's right to have an abortion up until foetal viability). On the subject of 'The Wall' he has made no changes, only saying that some portions will be a fence, and others will be unnecessary due to harsh terrain. If all these proposals were put in place, then Donald Trump's Presidency will be a very conservative one, an almost complete U-turn on what Obama has done. It will also be a time of (hopefully) great economic growth in the long term, due to all the jobs and

manufacturing he hopes to bring back to America.

And what of his Cabinet? His Vice President, Mike Pence, has caused no small amount of controversy himself, particularly due to his support of gay conversion therapy (utter rubbish, if you ask me), but, as someone well versed in the ways of Washington, he may well prove to keep the rather volatile Trump on an even keel. Most of Trump's other administrative positions are either unannounced, or have little-to-no controversy.

All in all, Donald Trump's presidential term is set up to be a very interesting one, with many things changing, many things being added, and many being taken away. It is unclear, as of yet, how divisive his Presidency will be, but given the reaction to his election, it is set to be a very interesting time ahead.

Adam Dykes 12RAM



Life After

BGS

Oxford Blues? Never Heard of 'Em

I'm a former BGS student who has just finished his first term at Exeter College, Oxford, and I must admit: university life is an

experience I would recommend to anyone, no matter the course or institution.

Friendships form so naturally, picking up tricks of the trade (laundry, ironing, taking advantage of every sale you see on your favourite items in Tesco) gives you a feeling of independence, and delving deeper into your area of expertise is rewarding. I realise university is not for everyone, but if you have the slightest urge to apply somewhere, do it, especially because Bexley Grammar is such a supportive and encouraging school when it comes to getting students where they want to be. There was rarely a time where I felt inferior or underprepared when it came to studies, and whenever I did, the nature of the university environment meant that someone who shared my struggle was never too far away. Hopefully, that will continue, but for now I wish the current year 13s good luck with UCAS applications, interviews, and everything else to come.

The short story "A Oxmas Carol" elsewhere in this Magazine is a Christmas-themed text I wrote for Cherwell, Oxford's independent student newspaper. I wrote it to capture the fear of overwork too relatable to students, but with the promise that first impressions aren't everything. I only hope that it remains enjoyable, despite the references and in-jokes it is littered with.

**By Charlie Britton (BGS Student
2009-2016)**

Problems Page

Dear

I need your advice. I've always been the sort of person who keeps a small group of very close friends and, right now, there are four of us in my friendship group. I get on really well with two of my friends and we have a lot of fun together, however, my third friend and I argue a lot and I really do not enjoy

spending time around them as we are just too different. The problem is that my other friends are very close to them, so if I want to spend time with the people I'm close to, I also have to spend time with someone I really do not get on well with. And I can't talk to my friends about it as it wouldn't be fair to try to turn them against someone they care about or to try to leave the other person on their own. What should I do?

Dear Reader,

I understand that this is a very tricky situation, and you are not alone. This is a problem that I'm sure you'll find is very common in friendship groups, no matter what stage of your life you are at. Having a close-knit group of friends is great, but it does have a tendency to cause these kinds of problems as you're spending all of your time with the same people. Larger friendship groups appear to be less prone to problems like these as it's easier to go off and talk to someone else (if one person in particular is getting on your nerves); however, it can mean that it is more difficult to become close to people. I'm happy to tell you that it is possible to feel the benefits of both, and in doing so, avoid their respective problems! My advice to you is to keep your current group as your closest friends: the people that you share everything with and enjoy spending most of your time, but also, don't be afraid to branch out. Talk to other people in your form or classes. You don't have to become their new best friend and interrogate them to find out their entire life story; just have casual conversations with others and get to know them as well as you can so that, in the event that your particular friend that you don't get on with is being especially irritating, then it's not weird if you just take a breather and go and sit with someone new, find out how they're doing and, in the process, cool off. And who knows - maybe they'll even allow you the opportunity to let off some steam and vent a bit. I understand that it's nice to only have a really close group of friends at times, but at other times it's better to widen the circle a bit and create new connections with people

that allow you to switch it up a little. Life can be more interesting when you spend time with a variety of diverse and unique individuals. Picture your friendship group like a target with 3 rings. At the very centre is you, the inner circle contains your closest friends, and then the outer circle holds the friends that you don't know as well, but still enjoy talking to and spending time with. I hope this advice is helpful, and that you'll be able to sort your problem soon.

Dear.....

I'm finding recently that all the enjoyment that I used to find in coming to school and being a part of the BGS community has gone. I remember in Year 7 always being so enthusiastic about everything: my lessons, the house system, extra-curricular activities; but as I've moved up in the school, things have become far too serious, the work has piled up and I can't bring myself to be excited about much of anything anymore. I seem to always spend my time working. If not at school, then at home, when I have all my homework to do. I feel like I don't have time for anything fun in my life. I'd really appreciate your advice in this, what should I do?

Dear Reader,

I understand that as you move up through the school, and the work that you're doing becomes more serious and important, going in everyday seems to feel like more of a chore than it did in year 7, when you were excited about your new start in this brand new place with everything so different from the way it was in primary school. It can really feel like school has completely taken over your life. Always remember that you deserve your free time. Often, it is just as important as your school work. It is impossible for you to work all day every day - it simply cannot be maintained. It gets to the point where you are mentally exhausted and you reach "burn-out". No one (not even your teachers) expects this of you and you certainly shouldn't feel that you need to put that kind of pressure on yourself. Set aside specific

time slots to do your work. Take a piece of homework and tell yourself you will spend an hour or so on it with no unnecessary breaks and no distractions and after that it will be finished, and the rest of your time is your own. It's a far more efficient way to work and you may even find that the quality of your homework improves. As things are at the moment, you probably get distracted from what you're doing far more than you realise, and so in the time you spend on your homework, only a fraction of it actually goes into producing something. This could explain why it's taking so long, and so setting aside a specific time for it will mean that you'll have far more time to spend going out and doing something fun completely guilt free. In regards to your enjoyment of the day-to-day BGS life, I encourage you to throw yourself into it more. Get involved in as many different things as you can. The school provides so many opportunities, take advantage of as many as possible. I understand that in the older years, enthusiasm for house events and clubs decreases, but staying interested and joining in as much as possible really helps to increase your enjoyment of the whole school experience as you really feel that you are contributing to the school community. It's often far too easy to say that you don't have the time for them or to just follow your friends because they're not doing it, so why should you? You may think that you wouldn't enjoy it if they're not going anyway. But you perhaps don't realise the benefits you get from going along and showing commitment and passion for something like these events. It really helps you to become a well-rounded person (and not to mention looks great on university applications). And so what if your friends aren't going? The school's clubs and house activities provide great opportunities for you to meet new people.

Perfection?

The media affects greatly the way in which people see themselves and how they

feel about things such as their face and body. All of us have insecurities and when celebrities are enhanced in photos, have cosmetic surgery etc, this gives us a distorted image of ourselves and most of us feel like we have to live up to society's ideas of 'perfection'.

It is estimated that around 70% of adults suffer from negative body image. If adults themselves feel like they're unattractive and weigh more than they should, then what does this mean for people of the future who have grown up surrounded by the media?

Many people do often just talk about women's and girl's insecurities but fail to think of men and boys insecurities. When they experience them too, insecurity is not a gender biased thing, it can happen to everyone. Insecurities can also lead to things such as anxiety and anorexia, which seem to be a growing problem in today's society.

Make someone's day by giving them a compliment and always think of yourselves positively, as there is no such thing as 'perfection'.

By Alison Everest 12JJ



Creative Writing

An Oxmas Carol

Michaelmas term fading on the winds of goodwill, tickling the spires in their sleep. Blackwell's admitting nobody, but quietly shunning a few wayward party-goers. All of

Oxford seemed arrested in either expectant slumber, or festive fervour.

And yet, tucked away at the top of staircase nine, was harboured Edward Stooze – a miser in a youth's body. While his surroundings throbbed with excitement, he paced his cramped cell, clad in his onesie of loneliness. Procrastination, cruel spectre, haunted him there. A knock at his door brought him to his senses. How stunned was Edward's friend Matthew to see such ghastly attire! His grin seemed to blurt out without moving:

"Eddie," (Edward resented the nickname) "you *are* going to Lola's tonight, right?"

Edward tried to excuse his own misanthropy, but Matthew's dog-like loyalty was insufferable. He would not understand.

The door was thus slammed upon him, not without some force. "Suit yourself," Matthew was heard to say, totally unaffected. "I'm gonna get sloshed. I'll be seeing ghosts after tonight."

With the chuckles retreating down the corridor, Edward retired to his desk, cackling, "Is *this* the meaning of Oxmas? Bah, humbug!" as he skulked. Yet it did affect him that in this time of repose and warmth he should be snowed under his work: not even the collective cheer of Broad Street could reach his window.

In a stupor of overwork, he fell asleep.

When next his eyes opened, there was a persistent knocking at his door. He was certain a 'sloshed' Matthew was playing a trick, so armed himself with a slipper. Then, suddenly, a ghoulish wraith forced his way under the door. He looked remarkably like Matthew, and borrowed his voice.

"Eddie," his voice boomed with uncharacteristic urgency. "Let me show you your past." The room was transformed into a

nightclub Edward faintly recognised. The two stood voyeurs to a more liberated player of Edward downing Jaegerbombs to the rhythm of cheering crowds.

"Is that..." Edward started.

"- Yes. Look upon but a term's work, what it has reduced you to. Never will you rekindle that Fresher's spirit."

Edward tried to disguise his mourning.

The bedroom materialised as he protested, "We all have to grow up at some point," but his defiance cracked mid-sentence. This ghost of Oxmas past needed only grin as he vanished into the ether.

Edward inspected his tea to see if it had been in any way spiked, before splaying himself out on the bed. "Hemingway and Earl Grey really do not agree with me," he muttered drowsily.

Edward's next visitor was too eccentric for the frippery of the door. This next phantom rapped at the window out of courtesy before phasing in. The fiend was unmistakably in the garb of Edward's lecturer: shabby shirt, bowtie and all. Rearing his head, Edward feared the ghost might do what its visage implied.

"Edward Bartholomew Stooze," hollered the ethereal academic. "Let me show you how insignificant insecurities be."

The pair were lifted into a well-known auditorium, suspended above the stage. Though he stood where generations of superior intellects had inspired and blunted the imagination, Edward was bombarded with the thoughts of the audience, his peers. "What does this guy mean?" cried one poor youth; "How will I read all my books?" soliloquised another; "Does he *really* like me?" "What am I having for dinner tonight?"

Trifles all! They were heavy burdens which satirised Edward's own.

As the teacher deposited his pupil in his room, he said, "You are not alone, even in your petty concerns." He determinedly made for the window, but an impulse stopped him. "One more thing: essay for Monday, no run-on sentences." He took his leave.

Judging by the rule of three, Edward sat, alert, in the foetal position, determined to be ready for the appearance of his final guest. This crafty poltergeist caught him off-guard still, by erupting from the floorboards. From his bright green chinos, Edward could not fail to identify the chaplain in this apparition. Edward refused to sit dumb. "What can you show me, then? Success? Love? Family? Disappointment? It's hardly very Christian of you to appear in such a fashion."

"I will pretend I did not hear that," replied the chaplain. "And I can show you all of the above, if you neglect my words."

To his surprise, Edward found himself not far afield, but in his very room. Something was amiss. Books began raining from the ceiling, clattering around his ears, sealing him in a hardback igloo; outside his door, he could make out the laughter of his friends, an uproar which drowned out the simultaneous conflagration of his term's work. The flames licking his skin, Edward begged forgiveness. And his call was answered.

In a cold sweat, Edward listened closely to the chaplain's closing words. "We have shown you all we can. Think on your welfare – and come to Evensong on Sunday."

Edward had what he wanted, to be solitary once more, yet it no longer sufficed, but created a hole: one which craved friendship, a desire work could not imitate.

Imbued with new purpose, Edward flew downstairs. His destination was that

chaplain's abode, the chapel. It was as if he knew the tower door would be open to him. No monetary fine he could incur would deter his spirit. Perched high above the dreaming spires, he sought to stir them with the most heartfelt "Merry Oxmas. Everyone," a man could muster. In the avenue below, a drunken, homebound Matthew returned his call jocularly, swaying to the symphony of bells.

By Charles Britton (Ex BGS Student currently in his first year at Oxford University)

Filmed

You are not the main

Neither are you a sidekick or a background character

You are simply you

Whilst in your skull you narrate the world around you

You live all day in your own brain

You think your own thoughts and commit to your own actions

You are not the main

The Camera does not focus on you

It does not focus on myself either

The camera does not exist, yet we are ruled by its screen

By its magnetic vision and metal exterior

We live in fear that one day it'll catch us existing outside of the norm

Maybe one day it'll find a glimpse of us living

**And I mean truly living, not strolling
sedately through a deceased field of
visions**

**Perhaps we can only give in to life
when we realize that we are not the
main and that everyone still believes
that they are**

**We all exist in every second of every
day**

**We can share in our atmosphere but
never truly in our inner sphere**

**Does that make us disconnected or will
that give us the excuse to mean it when
we ask**

How are you feeling?

If you've gotten to the point of feeling

Rayen

Real Dimension

"Did you know we're ruled by TV?"

someone once said.

Whether this is true is yet to be decided and
whether we'll ever even find an answer is
questionable.

Consider this though, in a world where
technology begins to become us,

will we eventually all be watching life
through metal visors?

How do you know that we're still even alive?

3D, HD, 4D, Real D

What is the real dimension?

If the real dimension is natural, then we have
long surpassed it.

So no, we do not live in the real dimension,
but instead in another

familiar yet controlled creation.

Modern reality is tangible materialistic
insanity

Commerciality is built into our memory and
projected by our daily duality

We love the earth but ignore its suffering

We love ourselves but hate our humanity

It will never make currency

So why enrich our morality? If it leads to no
currency...

Why recycle our empathy? It will lead to no
currency.

How will **you** make the most money?

Money is the new power, the new necessity,
our created obligatory duty.

Money means love, money means
supremacy, money means safety, money is
authority.

But do we own money or does it own us?

Broadcasting tells us that our lives are empty

We need to buy, we need to spend, consume
not food but fashion trends

We're malnourished of acceptance and
personality.

For TV dictates our
real morality

Rayen





Recipes

Christmas Spice Oat Cookies

This Christmas twist on your average oat cookie will certainly get in you the mood to binge eat -Paula

Ingredients

Melted baking butter- 200g
Powdered Sweetener- 45g (300g sugar will also work)
Eggs- 2
Orange extract – 1 Tsp
Plain flour- 200g
Bicarbonate of soda-1 Tsp
Ground cinnamon- 1 tsp
Ground cloves -1/2 tsp
Salt- Pinch
Rolled oats- 250 g
Almond Milk- 200ml (skimmed or full fat will also work)
Grated dark chocolate- 30g

Method

1-Gather ingredients and set oven to 180 Degrees

2-Melt butter and pour into the bowl. Pour in sweetener (sugar), eggs and orange extract. Stir into a smooth mixture.

3-Drop Cinnamon, ground cloves and bicarbonate of soda into bowl alongside a pinch of salt. Continue stirring.



4-Pour in milk and sift flour into the bowl. Mix well.

5-Pour in oats and grated chocolate slowly. The consistency should be quite thick.

6-Line and grease baking trays. Using a spoon, scoop mixture and place onto baking tray. Ensure that each separate spoonful is spread out, seeing as the cookie will grow in the oven.

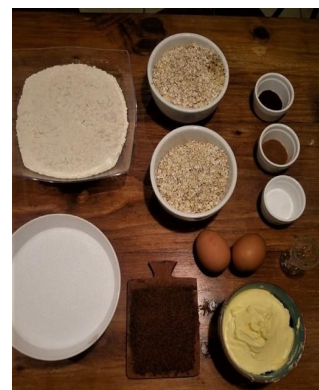
7-Carefully place into the oven and bake for 10 to 12 minutes until golden. Leave to cool for a few minutes.

8- Serve as dessert alongside a warm glass of milk or hot chocolate.

Tips

-Use a whisk until step 4, then use a wooden spoon.

-You can change the amount of milk if the consistency of the mixture is too thick or thin.



-Nutmeg can also be used alongside or instead of cinnamon and cloves.

- If you don't like orange extract, vanilla or peppermint can also be used.

Rosemary Pesto

This Italian inspired easy-to-make recipe with only 6 main ingredients takes a maximum of 20 minutes to make. It's a great accompaniment to any pasta dish and can be used as a spread or even as a dip. This recipe is a quirky adaptation to the classic you might find in your local supermarket. -Paula

INGREDIENTS



Fresh Basil-
30g
Rosemary
(preferably
fresh)-50g
Parmesan
Cheese- 50g
Pine Nuts-

50g

Fresh Parsley- 5g

Olive Oil- 150g

METHOD

1- Gather ingredients

2- (This step is optional but recommended)

Lightly toast pine nuts until golden brown in either an oven (200 c) or pan

(Medium- high)

for about 5

Minutes. (Leave to

cool whilst

you get on with other ingredients)

3- Grate Parmesan, roughly chop the basil and parsley and pick

Rosemary from twig.

4- Put all ingredients into a blender and pour in half of the olive oil.

Blitz for a few seconds until ingredients start to come together.

Do not blitz too much as you want the pesto to have some texture and

be slightly chunky. If it is not

blitzing properly, unplug blender and

mix ingredients with a spoon then

add some olive oil and continue blending.



5-Once it has all come together to a thick, chunky texture taste for

seasoning. It may require some salt or pepper to your liking. You're homemade Rosemary Pesto is now finished.



Reviews

Film: Doctor Strange

Writers: Jon Spaihts, Scott
Derrickson, C. Robert Cargill
Director: Scott Derrickson

The most recent film in the revolutionary Marvel Cinematic Universe, “Doctor Strange” follows the origins of Doctor Stephen Strange as he goes from neuro-surgeon to sorcerer, and his battles against a more ... sinister strand of magic.



The plot is very solid, and is paced very well, with no scene feeling useless or superficial. Characters find things out in a natural way, and motivations are obvious and believable. As an origin story, Strange’s journey feels

authentic and not at all contrived. There are several subplots and alternative points of view, but these never overshadow the main thread, while still getting enough exposure. The climax is resolved in a unique and interesting way, but without feeling like it comes from nowhere.

The characters are very complex, each with believable motivations and enough background to make them seem real. My personal favourite character is The Ancient One, but all the characters are believable and sympathetic to a degree. Even the villain has a viewpoint you can agree with, even if his methods are questionable. It is a testament to both the writers and actors when every main character is sympathetic in some way, as well as being fully fleshed out.

Speaking of the actors, each of the main cast are brilliant. Benedict Cumberbatch is a fantastic actor, and here he turns his smooth British baritone to a snarky American drawl. As Doctor Strange, he believably executes the intricate hand waving that the role demands (as do the whole cast), while also portraying the emotion of a man made humble (even if he isn’t actually ever humble). Tilda Swinton as The Ancient One is another stunning performance and, despite some controversy around her casting¹, she effectively delivers the ageless, seemingly omniscient being. Despite never outwardly showing emotion, her delivery of the lines conveys exactly what she’s feeling. Mads Mikkelsen is also amazing as Kaecilius, effectively portraying the malice and relish of a true villain, while showing his complete conviction in his beliefs as ‘right’.

While this is all fantastic, where the film really stands out is in the visuals. Oh. My.

¹ The casting was called out for whitewashing a traditionally Asian character to a white woman. However, I feel it’s justified, considering the alternative was a perpetuated stereotype of a wise, ancient old Asian man. I know which I’d rather.

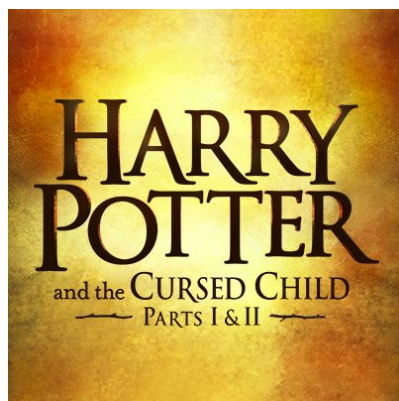
Word. Every frame is a work of art and the sets are stunning. The visual effects in certain sequences are so mind-bending (pardon the pun) that you want to watch the film just to see them again (or that might be just me). The sequence in New York is just phenomenal, with both the smallest detail and the largest effect looking spectacular. I'm running out of superlatives, so I'll wrap this up. Overall, this is a fantastic addition to the MCU, while being a beautiful film in its own right. All the casting is perfect (yes, even with the 'whitewashing'), and the script is perfectly solid, introducing us to this new facet of the MCU. Personally, I can't wait for the sequel.

Adam Dykes 12RAM

Book/Play: Harry Potter and the Cursed Child

By JK Rowling, John Tiffany and Jack Thorne

The latest instalment in the literary freight train that is Harry Potter, Cursed Child takes place after the



epilogue of the final book. It follows the plight of Harry's son Albus and his friend and fellow outcast Scorpius Malfoy, as they try to prevent Cedric Diggory from being killed. This has some... interesting ramifications, but no spoilers here.

The plot as a whole is rather flimsy, with only a tenuous link to a rather minor character in

the original series. Even when you gloss over that and get into the time travel portion, the plot and what drives it feels forced. The ending, too, feels contrived and almost too neat, with one of the plot motivations being waved off very easily. So, it's no surprise that a lot of people don't recognise this book/play as canonical.

For the most part, the two protagonists stand solidly. Rowling, Tiffany and Thorne do a good job of making them believable, and their friendship feels very real and strong. Their rapport feels genuine, and you definitely feel like they care for each other. My personal favourite is Scorpius. His wry humour and sarcastic attitude (great lines like "At this moment in time, I take no pleasure in being right." And "I am as excited as you are to be a rebel for the first time in my life – yay – train roof – fun.") made him instantly more likeable than the 'tormented soul' of Albus, who feels very much like the father he insists he isn't.

The villain, when they show up, is very believable, with decent motivations and quite a solid plan. There is no foreshadowing of this reveal, or if there is I can't see it, so it is quite unexpected.

Where the book/play falters, however, is on the characters we already know a lot about. Harry Potter, for example, the boy whose primary quality was his love for those close to him, has done a complete turn and suddenly distances himself from his own son for being in Slytherin. Amos Diggory too suffers cruel treatment, becoming an embittered old man intent on bringing his son back to life. And lest we forget, the sweet old lady with the sweet trolley is turned into a homicidal maniac.

However, where the book/play does succeed is with how entertaining it is. Okay, it's not perfect. The plot's sloppy and some of the characterisation is off, but it's fun. This makes it an enjoyable story, if not a good addition to the Harry Potter universe.

By Adam Dykes, 12RAM



TV: Class, Series 1

BBC3

Writer: Patrick Ness

Doctor Who may have been off air all year, but the latest



addition to the Whoniverse has certainly made its voice heard. “Class” follows a group of teenagers as they navigate life, school, and aliens.

The series as a whole feels very new and fresh, especially in a time of sequels, reboots, and true-story films. The aliens are original, the concept is a new take on familiar ideas (the aftermath of The Doctor’s adventures, only this time, without a former companion to help), and the characters are all unique and feel very new.

The series as a whole is very well-written, effortlessly balancing action, humour and emotion. The jokes never fall flat, and are almost always perfectly timed. Action is always grounded in reality and believable (even the alien bits). On top of that, the emotions that some of the cast portray are raw and human, and there is the full range: love, anger, fear, sadness, and joy (unfortunately, not as much as the others). Where this series really shines is in the characters. The five central teenagers, April, Charlie, Matteusz, Ram and Tanya (played by Sophie Hopkins, Greg Austin, Jordan Renzo, Fady Elsayed and Vivian Oparah respectively) are beautifully unique and diverse. I won’t spoil too much, but the chemistry and dynamic between Greg and Jordan, and Sophie and Fady are depicted fantastically. That having been said, every character stands up on their own merit strongly, and each actor effectively and convincingly conveys the emotions needed from them. Special congratulations must go to Vivian Oparah, for whom this was her first acting role.

Actors aside, the characters themselves are amazingly fleshed out by the writing, and feel very real. My personal favourite character is Matteusz. His calm attitude is very endearing, and his wise-beyond-his-years sincerity and innocent love for Charlie is multiple levels of adorable. Close second is Miss Quill, played by Katherine Kelly. As the begrudging adult, pseudo-protector of the teens, she has a lot to deal with. And deal with it she does. She is sassy and melodramatic (with such fantastic lines as “Leave us! We are DECORATING!”), with a sharp wit and brutal snark. All the plot arcs feel organic, with believable character motivations and satisfying resolutions. The Shadowkin are a believable threat (and visually stunning to boot), and the central tension is resolved in a simple yet fitting way. Charlie’s fate does feel a little too

familiar, but that doesn't detract from the emotion Greg displays one iota. So, to sum up, here we have a new and fresh series from (apparently) the master of YA fiction. I think it is basically perfect, and the world will be a tiny bit worse off without a season 2. BBC, take a hint.

Adam Dykes, 12 RAM

Game Review: Doom Series

Before I review this game series, I feel I need to give a little disclaimer. These games are not for the younger members of our school community. Seriously. They are rated 18 for a reason. That reason being violence and gore and plenty of it. Still, with that out of the way let's get down to reviewing each game in the series (note I'll be reviewing every officially released game with the exception of Doom RPG, because no-one likes or has even heard of Doom RPG) . I also want to mention that, unless stated otherwise, I'll be looking at the PC versions of the games (since all of them except for a certain game I'll get into later were initially released on PC). As the series tagline says: it's time to rip and tear!!!



Doom I

With the original Doom, it can be quite hard to know where to start. This is due to the fact that the game does show its age. As one of the earliest first person shooters, it's important to realise that this game has very different controls and graphics than most are probably used to and its structure is entirely different.

The best place to start is probably the gameplay. It's very simple, not even allowing you to look up and down, thought that's not an issue since, due to the age of the game, an enemy's position in the y axis actually has no effect. There is a reason for it but it's a tad complicated and, quite frankly, most people don't really care about the programming quirks that led to this gameplay oddity. The game is also very interestingly structured (note: interesting doesn't necessarily mean well). The game is split into chapters, each with its own levels. That's fairly standard. Except each chapter doesn't flow onto the next, nor do weapons and power ups flow into the next, which means at the start of each chapter you are left with just a pistol and your fists again.

Finally to the story, or rather, lack thereof. While the game has a bit of extensive backstory that I'll explain in a bit, the plot actually in the game is delivered through walls of text, most of which can be summarised as follows: You arrive on Mars and kill things; You go to Phobos and kill things; You go to Hell and kill things. The End. The backstory does actually help to get you more invested in the game though. A marine (known rather unimaginatively as "Doom Guy") is given "Mars duty" (basically forced labour on Mars) for beating his commanding officer to death (though only because his commanding officer ordered his squad to kill innocent civilians). While he's there an experimental teleporter goes wrong, accidentally opening a portal to Hell. Left as

the last marine on the planet and armed with just his fists and pistol, it's up to him to kill all the possessed scientists and demons on Mars and its moon, Phobos, as well as the "Spider Mastermind" in hell and save Earth. Short and to the point. He fails. I'm serious - although you manage to murder everything in your path, a portal is still opened and Earth overrun by hellspawn. Of course this would be followed up later but how does this original hold up? Actually, pretty well in my opinion. While the gameplay takes some getting used to and the structure can be annoying at times, the game is really fun overall; with new weapons to pick up and experiment with; hordes of demons to tackle and with difficulty settings ranging from ridiculously easy to infuriatingly hard, it offers you something, whether you just want to breeze through or really want a challenge.

In conclusion I can see why this game is considered a classic and it's worth the time of any curious gamer, particularly those who enjoy older games.

Doom II: Hell on Earth

The sequel to Doom does just about everything right. It leaves most of the game the same, while improving what didn't work. The chapter structure is gone, so now we can keep all our weapons and upgrades. Next, I'm happy to say, the weapons all return and we even get some new weapons such as the super shotgun. So what about the story? Well, Doom Guy finds his pet rabbit murdered and hunts down every last demon, slaughtering them all. Once again a simple plot and one almost played for laughs considering, yes, the man who beat his CO to death and murders demons with his bare hands is super distraught due to the death of his rabbit. And that's honestly all I've got on Doom II. Certainly a better game than the already stellar original, but if you weren't

convinced the first time around you won't find much here to intrigue you.

Master Levels for Doom II & Final Doom

I'll be brief with these, since there's even less to say than with Doom II. They're extra levels with no plot. And they're all terribly designed and are boring to play through. That's literally the extent of these 2 games. Don't buy them unless you are extremely curious.

Doom64

Released on the Nintendo 64 (hence the stupid title) Doom64 serves as somewhat of a reboot, though not a good one. Simply put: don't waste your time. With the N64 being the console upon which Goldeneye:007 was released (the game that revolutionised the first person shooter) it must have seemed like a no brainer to release a Doom game for the system. Sadly Doom64 is a game that has poor control and design that focuses more on puzzles and platforming rather than shooting and even when you are shooting the action feels sloppy and dull, a far cry from the fast paced, fun action of the first 2 Doom games. Much like the previous titles mentioned, this isn't a game I can recommend at all.

Doom 3 (and its DLC)

Doom 3 was yet another reboot, though this time it was one done well. The plot is largely the same as Doom I (albeit with extra detail), but the gameplay is much different. While still a shooter, the game actually starts with a survival horror approach: forcing you to fight off or run from powerful enemies that can kill you if you aren't careful, before giving you the armour and weapons that allow you to become the legendary demon-slayer you were born to be. While this is certainly a different approach from the older titles it is an interesting take on the series and the slower pace really allows you to look at the well designed levels of the game and appreciate every small element of the

design. This is a game I'd highly recommend. But what about the game's DLC? Is it worth paying extra money for? Well, the first piece of DLC: lost mission certainly isn't. It's just more of the same areas and enemies to play through. Certainly not bad but also not really worth the extra cash. Resurrection of Evil, however, certainly is. Not only does this include brand new enemies and bosses, but it also offers new powers and abilities to experiment with. Of course, some people may know that the game had a re-release called the BFG edition (BFG being a recurring gun in the series that does not stand for Big Friendly Giant but some words not appropriate to print in the magazine). It's Doom 3 but with all the DLC included in it. That's the version I'd recommend to buy if you're interested.

Doom (2016)

The final game to be released in the Doom series, this is yet another reboot. But it is by far, without a doubt, no questions asked, the best game in the series. It combines the slower horror pace of Doom 3 with explorable levels to find secrets. The break-neck action of the older games is beautifully updated without the cover and regenerating health of modern first person shooters. To recover lost health you kill. The story of this game is similar to the other games with one crucial difference. You actually get to see it. Also the scientists are all Satan worshippers.

By Ben Szczegolski-Jacobs, 12RAM

W	C	B	X	O	S	M	G	M	B	X	Q	E	L	V	E	S	E
I	S	F	B	T	A	Z	C	I	M	A	S	O	W	R	U	N	M
N	N	E	T	U	N	C	A	S	N	L	U	L	D	H	R	O	I
T	O	S	I	R	T	R	R	T	N	G	X	B	E	J	M	X	L
E	W	T	N	K	A	A	O	L	J	O	E	B	L	I	O	U	I
R	M	I	S	E	Y	C	L	E	H	M	W	R	D	E	G	V	G
G	A	V	E	Y	M	K	S	T	L	J	K	X	B	A	I	H	H
C	N	E	L	U	B	E	B	O	N	I	B	M	B	R	S	L	T
O	W	O	D	R	Y	R	R	E	X	O	X	H	L	U	E	J	S
Q	C	H	R	I	S	T	M	A	S	Q	E	J	E	D	O	A	A
K	V	N	R	U	D	O	L	P	H	Z	W	L	T	Q	G	X	D
R	C	W	R	E	A	T	H	V	P	R	E	S	E	N	T	S	R

Find the following words in the puzzle.

Words are hidden → ↓ and ↘ .

BAUBLE
CAROLS
CHRISTMAS
CRACKER
ELVES
FESTIVE
GINGERBREAD

LIGHTS
MISTLETOE
NOEL
PRESENTS
RUDOLPH
SANTA
SLEIGH

SNOW
SNOWMAN
TINSEL
TURKEY
WINTER
WREATH





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