



# NEWSLETTER

Tuesday 16th November  
[www.bexleygs.co.uk](http://www.bexleygs.co.uk)  
Sixth Form Open Day Edition

## Welcome to Bexley Grammar Sixth Form



Joining Bexley Grammar School as an external student, not knowing the school's environment nor many people within it, was a really unsettling feeling. As a result of Covid-19 restrictions, we had not been able to visit the school - and so such daunting ideas were magnified by this unknown factor. I really loved my secondary school and felt so comfortable there, so despite hearing such brilliant things about Bexley Grammar I was worried I wouldn't feel 'at home' in the same way I previously had. However, within a few days, I realised the overwhelming welcoming kindness that infiltrates every aspect of the school. It is a special place to be and a very special community to be a part of... everyone is so smiley!

After a particularly long summer, I was looking forward to getting back into a routine. I was excited about the academic adventures that I knew the IB was going to bring, but I was also apprehensive about the impending challenges that I anticipated facing. When I discovered what the IB consisted of, I was certain that it was the perfect next step for me. My big sister and others spoke so fondly about the diversity of the course and of the way in which Bexley Grammar delivers it. The decision to study the IB has provided me with the opportunity to continue with a wide variety of subjects which allow me many options in the future - this is something really important for me. Already, I can see how the IB course delves into more than academia, but also the development and growth of us as individuals, exploring the world around us as we grow into independent adults. The course challenges ideas, concepts and beliefs in ToK (Theory of Knowledge) lessons and contributes to the surrounding community through CAS (Creativity, Activity, Service). So far, I have found these particular aspects fundamental to maintain an academic and personal development balance. This balance is aided by the teachers, who are keen to do whatever they can to help. They give you all the support needed to make you feel confident in your abilities.

In our first week, our Head of Year, Miss Aspill, said in assembly that "Our most successful students are our busiest," and so she told us to, "not wait until Christmas to get involved!". As I have already mentioned, I thought that starting a new school was overwhelming enough and thought I would wait a while before getting involved. Although, it very soon became evident that within the first few weeks there was so much to be involved with, it was hard not to take part. This became a fantastic chance to meet new people and make friends. The division between internal and external students immediately blended and within five weeks it felt like I had been here five years.

Everyone, students and staff included, are all immensely generous with their time spent on helping you find your feet. Yes... It was an overwhelming and big shift from secondary school, but very quickly I realised that the period of feeling uncomfortable had already supplied me with a newly found independence and taught me so much about myself. The IB will challenge you, but as I not so long ago learnt ... this is where it begins.

***Sophia, former St Thomas More RC School student***



As an external student joining the school, I was quite nervous to start my Sixth Form career, as I had chosen to study the IB, make new friends, learn how to navigate the school, and also remember everyone's names. So far, however, I can comfortably say I have had an enjoyable experience fitting into this new school life.

Before joining Bexley Grammar, I had never studied the IB before; however, I can comfortably say I made the right decision. Personally, from when I first joined the school, everyone was polite, respectful and very friendly, always creating a positive atmosphere, in which you can socialise and learn. The teachers are all very friendly and helpful, truly giving you a sense of hospitality, and allowing you to feel as if you have been part of the school since the

beginning of Year 7. I feel Bexley Grammar is a safe, welcoming environment that always pushes you individually, and as a collective, to become a better student and a better person.

***Alexandros, former St Paul's Academy student***

When I first came to the school, I was slightly worried about making friends and settling in, as I was the only one from my secondary school joining. However, from the first day, there hasn't been a day I haven't smiled or laughed, and the experience of studying the IB at BGS is very enjoyable. The teachers are very constructive and passionate about what they do, and I've definitely already learnt a lot in just a few weeks. The older years, and even the younger ones, are very polite and welcoming, which is evident from when I walk around the school. Overall, I'm very happy here, and have already become one of the student ambassadors and languages prefects!

***Gabriella, former Dartford Grammar School for Girls' student***



Having been at BGS since Year 7, the IB has always been something that I have prepared for. However in my mind I always thought the transition between year 11 and 12 would be immensely difficult and now as I am currently completing that transition, I see that actually all my preconceived ideas about sixth form were not true. I thought that I would just be thrown into the IB without help but indeed my teachers have been more supportive than I could have ever asked for. Similarly, I used to believe that the IB was much more work than GCSE, and whilst it is a step up, the teachers here at BGS give you the time you need to help adjust to that change. Being a sixth former is definitely more responsibility than being a secondary school student, but with that responsibility comes great privileges (like being able to leave at lunchtime!).

I am so glad that I chose to study the IB at BGS, and although I have a rough idea of what I want to do in the future, the diversity of the subjects that you can take at IB level have allowed me to accommodate for if I want to change my mind in the future. Although it has only been a few months, I can already tell I'm going to love the IB and this new chapter of my life.

***Zara, student continuing to study at BGS***



When I came to Bexley Grammar as an external student, I had worries about my fitting into Bexley Grammar, as I didn't know whether I would be able to find my way around the school and make new friends. I was quite comfortable at my previous school, but I decided that it was time for a change of environment, and to embrace the opportunities that BGS has to offer. However, any concerns that I had before joining Bexley Grammar have been eradicated. I thought that I would be antisocial and find it difficult to make friends, but it turned out that I knew one of the internal students due to extracurricular activities, and I felt slightly better. As the days went by, I felt like I was more welcomed.

I have a passion for basketball, and I wanted to see if I could take part in that during my time at Bexley Grammar. During break and lunchtime, I love to play basketball, so I went to the cage and noticed that there were lots of students from the younger years participating. I made it my mission to share my passion with these students and develop the potential they have, so I asked the PE department if I could run some weekly basketball training with these students. I have been made to feel at home by students both in the years above and below, as we share similar hobbies. This is what I love about Bexley Grammar, they enforce hard work and ensure success.

***Former Haberdashers Aske's Hatcham student***





# A day in the life of an IB student

Higher Level: Chemistry, Biology and English  
Standard Level: German, Maths (Applications and Interpretations) and Anthropology

A typical day for me will start at 8:30, when I register with my form group and take down any whole school or year group notices I'll need for the rest of the week (sometimes, I have early morning extra-curricular activities or rehearsals for house activities, so this means I'm in school earlier). Then it's off to my first lesson which is usually chemistry- this can involve anything, from learning about mass spectrometry to drawing lewis structures for different molecules. At the moment, our focus is on designing and carrying out our Internal Assessments (worth 20% of our overall grade) which are a great way to show independent thinking and research skills. My next lesson is German where the topics range from 'Experiences' ('Erfahrungen') to 'Human Ingenuity' ('Menschliche Erfindungsgabe') and the whole lesson is entirely in German- this can be challenging, but is actually amazing preparation for the final exams!



After this I have a session of academic monitoring, where we cover topics such as PSHCE and UCAS applications as well as personal statements and mental health. Once a week I will have a Prefect meeting, where I get together with the Senior Leadership Team and the other Prefects to discuss ideas, proposals and issues that have been brought to us by the rest of the school. I also have a 'Top Universities' meeting, where we learn about applying to Russell group institutions and how best we can maximise our chances of having a successful application. After break, I have English where we study and discuss a range of literature including 'The Great Gatsby' and '1984'- doing two sciences at a higher level can be hard work, so I really enjoy taking a non-scientific higher subject as it allows me to explore a separate passion for reading and develop a different way of thinking.

Then it's into Maths where we are looking at calculus and differentiation- I found it quite tricky to pick which Maths course to study, so I would definitely recommend looking at the content of each of them and then basing your decision on that. My penultimate lesson is Biology, a really broad subject where we study lots of topics- from genetics and inheritance to plant biology, I really enjoy the content of the course and how it is structured. Lunch is next, where I can either go out to the local high street or eat inside our newly-refurbished Sixth-Form centre. There are also lots of lunchtime extracurricular, such as the Environmental Action group and Senior Science Society, which I got involved in at the start of Year 12. There are also Medicine and Law groups which are run to support students (like me) who are applying to these types of courses at university.

My final lesson of the day is Anthropology, a subject I had never heard of before the first year of IB. Despite only being a standard subject, I really enjoy it because we read lots of interesting ethnographies and study important contemporary topics like the Black Lives Matter movement and the Mediterranean Refugee Crisis. My advice for the lesser-known subjects would be to go for it! You never know what secret passions you might discover, if you don't give it a try. After school, I take part in activities such as being a 'Science Leader' or helping to tutor students lower down the school. As you can see, a day in the life of an IB student is never boring- one minute you are studying the structure of the heart, the next you are looking at the impact of Coronavirus on the German economy. After such a busy day, it's time to go home, finish my homework and then rewind!

**Charlotte**



# The IB Diploma at BGS

Students choose one subject from each of the groups 1 - 6 but in group 6 may select a further choice from groups 2, 3 or 4 instead of those offered in group 6. Students will choose three subjects to study at Higher Level and three at Standard Level and their choices should follow their interests and enjoyment of a subject. The IB structure encourages a balanced choice which includes the essential further study of English and Maths but also the depth required through the Higher Subject.



Group	Subjects on offer	
1. English	Literature Literature & Performance	
2. Languages	Chinese French German Italian	Japanese Latin Spanish
3. Individuals and Societies	Business Management Classics Economics Geography Philosophy of Religion and Ethics	History Global Politics Psychology Social & Cultural Anthropology
4. Sciences	Biology Chemistry Computer Science Design & Technology	Environmental Systems & Societies Physics Sports, Exercise & Health Science
5. Mathematics	Mathematics - Analysis and Approaches	Mathematics - Applications and Interpretations
6. Arts and Electives (or a further choice from groups 2, 3 and 4 above)	Film Music Theatre Visual Arts	



# 10 REASONS

## WHY THE IB DIPLOMA PROGRAMME IS IDEAL PREPARATION FOR UNIVERSITY

### 1 IT OFFERS ACADEMIC BREADTH & DEPTH

IB Diploma Programme students are 21% more likely to be admitted into 10 of the most prestigious universities, including Harvard, Princeton, Yale and Stanford.



### 2 COLLEGES VALUE STUDENTS WITH MEANINGFUL EXPERIENCES BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Creativity, action, service (CAS) encourages learning through direct experience.



### 3 IT'S A QUALIFICATION RECOGNIZED BY UNIVERSITIES

AROUND THE

The IB Diploma Programme is internationally benchmarked, allowing graduates to continue their studies anywhere in the world.

### 4 IT CREATES INDEPENDENT LEARNERS & STRONG WRITERS

The extended essay requires independent research through an in-depth study and a 4,000 word essay.



### 6 IT ASSESSES MORE THAN EXAMINATION TECHNIQUES

IB never teaches to the test—exams are externally assessed with no grade inflation for more than 30 years.

### 5 IT CULTIVATES AN INTERNATIONAL MINDSET



An international mindset is a key 21st century learning skill. Second language learning—an IB requirement—has been linked to higher achievement in school and university.

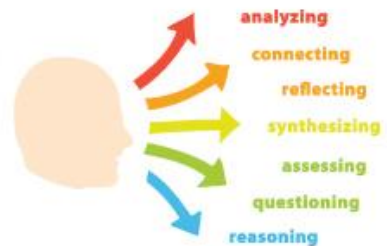
### 7 IB STUDENTS HAVE PROVEN TIME MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Research has found that IB students develop strong study habits and critical time management skills, key indicators of college readiness.



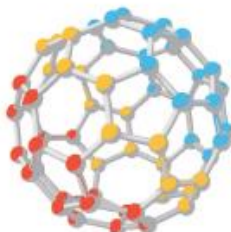
### 8 THE IB ENCOURAGES CRITICAL THINKING

Inquisitiveness and interpretation are among the key cognitive properties of an IB education.



### 9 SUBJECTS AREN'T TAUGHT IN ISOLATION

Theory of knowledge classes encourage students to make connections between subjects and gain the skills they need to be critical thinkers.



### AND HERE ARE 10 MORE REASONS...

The IB learner profile offers 10 qualities underpinning the Diploma Programme—from open-minded to risk-taker to balanced, they form a framework for an international education that meets the needs of a changing world.

For source attribution of any data contained herein, please refer to <http://www.ibo.org/research/>





## *The journey to university starts here!*

At Bexley Grammar School we are constantly providing opportunities for students to engage with the wider community particularly regarding careers. There are many things that our students can take part in that are extremely beneficial when deciding which university courses or career paths they are interested in and also to provide excellent material for those all-important UCAS personal statements.



Since September, our Sixth Formers have attended a number of talks in school delivered by professionals from a range of different specialisms. Firstly, an ex-student, Tommy Adeyefa, gave some insights into what it is like to study Law and provided some inspiration for our budding lawyers. This was particularly important as a number of students will be attending a mock bar trial later in the year. They will be competing against other schools and experiencing the pressures of a real courtroom for themselves. To prepare for this we have arranged a qualified barrister, John Robb of Essex Court Chambers to visit our students twice to work with them on their preparation- he has also invited students in the past to attend actual trials and given them mock interviews if they need them.

Additionally, a large number of BGS students go on to study STEM subjects at university and they were treated to three further lectures highlighting just a few of the exciting careers that we anticipate they will be moving on to. Dr Siew described her own varied career in biochemical research and lecturing that spanned the Atlantic and Ms Sophie Albosh outlined her PhD research on quantum technology. Finally, another ex-student, Dr Adam Ling spoke to our medical group about his experiences in this challenging career. He is also going to train some of our Year 12s to help him support a charity called Eye Heroes: once trained, they will be visiting primary schools to teach children to become ambassadors for eye health.

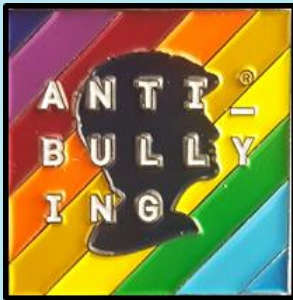
*"Almost all students leave the school for higher education, with very many applying and being accepted into the most prestigious universities." - Latest Ofsted report*

The Sixth Form team led by Ms Stoddard, runs three groups for Sixth Formers - the Medicine Group, the Law Group and the Top Universities Group. In the first two, they discuss relevant issues in the news and prepare for interviews and entrance tests. In the third, they discuss current affairs, philosophical ideas and how to strengthen an application. These support groups are invaluable in preparing for university application processes for both the Oxbridge and Russell Group Universities.

We hope that by providing this support and access to these speakers in school, we can demonstrate to our students the immense opportunities they have before them and encourage them to aim high and challenge themselves to strive for these top careers as we know that our students are capable of amazing things and we enjoy celebrating their successes year on year.

***Ms Lusted, STEM coordinator***

## Being a Peer Mentor at BGS



Peer mentors are a pastoral backbone for many students. They learn how to listen and solve problems effectively and also how to deal with their peers disclosing details for which they may need professional help, and how to pass this information on. They deal with a wide variety of problems and are passionate about helping others!

***"I love working with the younger students and seeing their confidence grow!"***

***Jenni, Peer Mentor***

Here is what happened at one of our Peer Mentor training days:

On Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March, a few Year 12 students and I attended a peer mentor training day where we learned a number of different skills that will be beneficial to us as peer mentors. We started by defining what a peer mentor was in our own terms and doing some exercises in listening to others. We then discussed how to effectively listen and respond when talking to students as well as what not to do. In addition to this, we had interesting discussions about what was important to us and took part in a fun trust exercise!

This training day was not only useful in learning how to be a good peer mentor and getting to know each other, but it was also incredibly important in establishing a safe space to explore personal experiences as well as worries, which will assist us in creating a similar environment for the students that we are going to help. As a whole, the training reinforced my reasons for wanting to become a peer mentor, as everything we learned, demonstrated the importance of having peer mentors and how much we could help people. It also allowed me to become more comfortable in talking about issues that may come up during my time as a peer mentor and assisted me in developing my confidence in speaking to others.

***Sarah***







# BGS House System

The house system is particularly important at BGS and this is yet another great opportunity to get to know students throughout the school. Their general responsibilities are to help with the running of the house events, and to advertise these events to members of their house to encourage participation. They will supervise, house events during and after school, particularly sport, and are expected to run rehearsals for house music, drama and dance.

## What does your role involve?

### Prothero - Grace and Molly

Our role involves running and organising events, such as House Sports and House Music, visiting the younger students on a weekly basis and overseeing/delegating roles to the other House captains.

### Johnson - Tolu

It involves running different events such as sports and quizzes while also dedicating large portions of time towards the larger events known as 'The Big Three', House Music, House Drama and House Dance. We also work closely with our heads of house to create weekly PowerPoints to show to the younger years as well as actively visiting their forms to get them excited for upcoming events.

### Mabbs - Kweku and Abbie

The House Captain role includes working together with a team of other House Captains to run assemblies, organise House Events, ranging from Senior Cooking to Intermediate Chess, and create weekly activities for students to complete in House Form time.

### Collins - Olivia

Our role as senior house captains involves coordinating a team of captains and students, competing with other houses in a range of creative and sporting events. We meet with the students weekly to organise representatives and to take part in quizzes and challenges that the other captains put together.

## What has been the best part of your role so far?

### Prothero - Grace and Molly

For us, the best part is seeing and celebrating the final outcome of our hard work. The feeling of having a finished product is really rewarding and we love being able to help create experiences for the younger years, which hopefully inspires them to take part in more events in the future.

### Johnson - Tolu

Meeting all of these new people! I've been given the opportunity to work with a supportive team of people I probably would've never paired up with if not given the chance and I enjoy it a lot. I also enjoy socializing with other house captains and the younger years since their energy can really make a long day at school a lot brighter :)

### Mabbs - Kweku and Abbie

For us, the best part has been the opportunity to work with students from across all year groups in order to create our house music performance. It was extremely rewarding, after weeks of hard work and rehearsals, to watch each house's performance and see what each house had come up with.





### Collins - Olivia

The best part of the role is definitely the feeling of reward after a house event. Regardless of how we place in the competitions, seeing all of our efforts manifest into an amazing performance or display makes all the time practising worthwhile. It's not just the captains that get that feeling as well, it's everyone who gets involved - captains and students alike.





# Mark Evison Foundation

All students in Year 12 have a fantastic opportunity to win funding of up to £500 to spend on a "challenge" over the summer before their return in Year 13. The money is awarded by the Mark Evison Foundation, who have built their charity based on the values and characters of Lt Mark Evison, who died in 2009 from a gunshot wound while serving as a British army officer in Helmand Province, Afghanistan. The awards granted must be based on these values: challenge, resilience, kindness, innovation, integrity and team support.



This year Bexley Grammar School was granted the most awards of any school in the country! The projects had to be challenging for all members of the team and completed on a strict budget. Over 40 students challenged themselves with hikes in Scotland, writing and recording songs, building a Go-kart from scratch and cycling to Brighton.

**Abbie, Ugne and Kweku** did a coast-to-coast cycle (150 miles!). This was their highlight: "today included a cycle through the Lake District and there is only one word that can describe the views we saw: phenomenal. It was exquisite being on top of the hills (which were an extremely hard challenge to climb and needed a ton of motivational music to get us to the top). But, when we were there, it all felt worth it. It felt like we were on top of the world (almost quite literally since we were so high up), and the atmosphere was incredible" Read more about this challenge [here](#).



**Simon and Ethan** built an electric go-kart from raw materials. They said "we feel that we got a lot out of this opportunity; being able to spread our proverbial wings in the maker space was massively rewarding, taking skills that we had learnt in a small environment (and many of them only being learnt in theory) we were able to apply these to a large scale and learn by doing." Read more about this project [here](#).



**George, Michael, Daniel and Harrison** walked Ben Nevis. A real challenge but they commented, "we all agreed that the hike up Ben Nevis was without a doubt the hardest escapade we embarked on with all of us admitting that we had underestimated the physical toll it would have on us, especially in 27 Degree heat." Read more about their challenge [here](#).



Please take a look at other reports and photos from various challenges below.

- [Highland Hike](#)
- [Song and Music Video](#)
- [Loch Ness](#)
- [Dartmoor Hike](#)
- [Song and Music Video 2](#)
- [South Loch Ness Trail](#)
- [Cycling to Brighton](#)
- [Architectural model of a house](#)

Let's see what fantastic challenges you'll get up to during your summer!





## The IB & Medicine

Typically, medical applicants have taken three A-levels in Biology, Chemistry and Maths (indeed, this was mainly the case in our school before we switched to a completely IB cohort). In other schools across the country, this continues to be the case as many aspiring medics disregard the IB as a route which is 'too complicated' or 'too much work'. But for me, the IB provided a fantastic opportunity not only to study a wider breadth of subjects, but also to develop the time management and research skills required in such a demanding career.



Were I to take the traditional route to medical school, I would probably not have been able to study a language- an increasingly sought after skill in today's world. I would also not have had the chance to study anthropology, a subject which has proven crucial in furthering my understanding of the society that our NHS treats. But most of all, the IB has taught me that I can do independent investigations to produce a piece of research that I am proud of; my Extended Essay in Chemistry allowed me to delve into an area that I was really interested in (and is something that will doubtless prove invaluable in an interview setting). So if you're thinking of applying to medicine, don't write off the IB at first glance- there's a reason why more and more students are choosing to study it!

**Charlotte**

## BGS Environmental Action Group

Have you ever wanted to make a positive difference? There is no better time than now. A particular threat for our generation is that of humanity's impact on our environment. Decisions and policies made today will affect us all in the future, so it's vital that we, as the next generation of leaders, play an active role in determining what we want that future to look like.



If you're interested in discussing important environmental issues, raising awareness, and working to make positive change in our school, and for our world, please get in touch!

**Sam**



# Recent Sixth Form Newsletter Stories

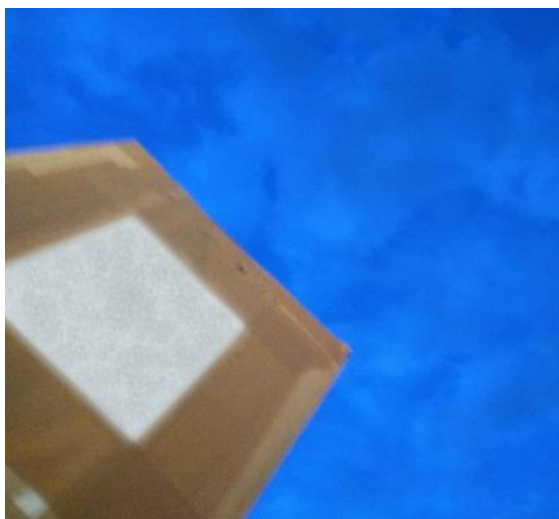
## MARSBalloon

### What is MARSBalloon?

MARSBalloon is a project where schools can build small, lightweight experiments to be sent on a weather balloon up to 30km up (just under a third of the way to space, and roughly three times the cruising altitude of commercial airliners!)

During the flight, which will last almost four hours as the weather balloon ascends, bursts, and falls back to the ground, the experiments will be subjected to conditions not entirely dissimilar to those on the surface of Mars: lower pressure, lower temperature, and less shielding from cosmic rays and radiation thanks to the thinner atmosphere.

We built two experiments which, if everything goes to plan, will launch some time this month, and be returned to us so we can analyse the results (stay tuned for more!)



'Take-off' artsy-atmospheric shot

# NEWS LETTER



10th June 2021

www.bexleygs.co.uk



## What are our experiments?

We've built two experiments:

- A small computer chip that will be used to analyse the effect of lower temperatures and increased cosmic rays on active (i.e. powered) electronics.
- Four SD cards to measure the effect of cosmic rays on passive electronics (i.e. they're unpowered, and just sit there), plus a Lego minifig, to see the effects on plastics

## Why does any of this matter?

Humans are natural explorers, and as such, many of us are captivated by the idea of reaching Mars.

Currently, humanity has managed to land several robotic rovers on the surface of the red planet (most recently the rover Perseverance and small helicopter Ingenuity, which made the news recently for performing the first powered flights on another planet!), and plans to send more.

It has, and continues to be, crucial to have a good understanding of the performance of electronics in a harsh Mars-like environment, so the rovers can survive.

When humanity takes its next great leap and lands people on Mars, they'll have to be able to rely on electronics in the equipment they use for their lives.

In short, before we can explore, we must first understand how to survive. MARSBalloon and our experiments serve to further our own understanding in the way that engineers would have when first designing and building rovers.

Closer to home, there are lots of hostile environments here on Earth too, whether that be cold places like the Arctic, or places with high levels of radiation such as Fukushima and Chernobyl - being able to build reliable electronics that can survive in these environments is also very important.

## What do we hope to accomplish?

Hopefully, we'll get some good data that teaches us important lessons. And who knows, perhaps other even more ambitious projects will follow in the future...!

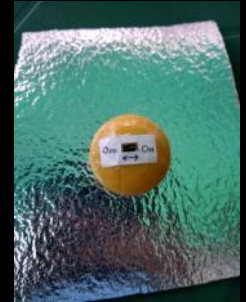
## Where can we go to find out more?

<https://www.thalesgroup.com/en/futuremartians> - the main page for the MARSBalloon project, as well as some data about the flight, plus information about careers in the space sector.

<https://twitter.com/futuremartianuk> - see here for updates about the flight, and more.

<https://www.instagram.com/mars.balloon/>

*Sam Wilson, Year 12*





# NEWS LETTER



8th July 2021

www.bexleygs.co.uk



CONGRATULATIONS  
BGS IB STUDENTS

## OUR BEST EVER IB RESULTS!

Year 13 make BGS history...

Year 13 students at BGS have set new records in every measure of achievement in the IB with a stunning set of results. Read the full report [here](#).

## MARSBalloon The exciting next instalment!

Though we haven't received our experiments back yet (they are on the way), a new photo has been released: Here, it's possible to see one of our experiments (3rd column from the left, 3rd capsule up), the ground below, the curvature of the Earth, and the stunning fade of the atmosphere to the blackness of space, all in a single image! It's incredible to think how high our experiments have gone!



Credit: [@futuremartianUK](#)

There's also a video available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G2QEzlvM9Sk>, which has some video clips from the flight, and tells the story of the preparation and recovery of the balloon.



We also have an exciting update to share:

## WE WON AN AWARD!

Last Friday, MARSBalloon announced the winners of its six awards: three for primary schools, and three for secondary schools. The very first school to be mentioned was... ours! We have won the VIP / Industry Choice award!

We were chosen by Paul Smith, Head of Robotics Exploration at none other than the UK Space Agency (how cool is that?!) He said:

*"Electronics and radiation are something every engineer and astronaut needs to take into account, but the team here identified a simple but elegant solution to testing for failure and identified that temperature may also have an impact and designed the software itself to be robust and self-rebooting. I was very impressed with their attention to detail and wider application of space exploration knowledge."*

I'm super proud and excited, and I really want to thank Mr Villazon for his support on the project and helping make it possible!

If you'd like to find out more, we've set up a Twitter account: [@BexleyGSSpace](https://twitter.com/BexleyGSSpace). Feel free to check it out if you're interested!

Stay tuned for more news when the experiments arrive back!

**Sam Wilson, Year 12**



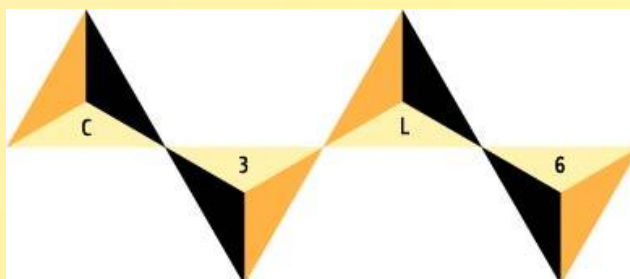
## Cambridge Chemistry Challenge Lower 6th

On Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> June, the following Year 12 students took part in the Chemistry Cambridge Challenge; Miriam Basheer, Kweku Brobbery, Weronika Bucko, Lauren Dempsey, Max Hickman, Victoria Joyce, Emilio Mendoza, Dilshanth Nagulathas, Alejandro Obeso Foreno, Emilija Verbaityte and Simon Woods.

The students completed a particularly challenging 90 minute paper with questions ranging from thiocyanates to oxidation, reduction and ferrets!

Congratulations to all students who participated and in particular to Weronika, Lauren, Dilshanth and Simon who achieved the Copper Award.

**Mrs Moore,  
Key Stage 5 Leader, Lead Teacher Chemistry**



Cambridge Chemistry Challenge Lower 6th





## How has the design of skateboards changed over time?

### First Skateboards

The first official use of a skateboard came about in the 1940s, however some sources claim skateboards first came about in the 1880s. The first skateboards that came about in the 1940's looked more like a scooter with four wheels than anything else. They had a handlebar, and were made of wood planks. The wheels were similar to that used by horse-drawn carts. It looked like this:



These were mainly used for transportation, as they weren't very manoeuvrable, as a modern day skateboard has to be able to perform a variety of tricks, which requires manoeuvrability.

### 1940-1950's skateboards

The first "modern" skateboards that we would recognise came in the late 1940's, and were improved on and iterated all the way to the modern day. They were known as DIY skateboards as all they first came about as simply roller skates crudely screwed by children onto planks of wood, sometimes from a fence! They were made by children, to share with their friends a fun, cheap outdoor activity, which was hard to find straight after World War II. They were crude and were not particularly manoeuvrable, however, they paved the way for pioneers to change the design into something incredibly popular nowadays by introducing everyone to the new sport.

In 1959, DIY skateboards became so popular that the first mass produced skateboard, called the Roller Derby Skateboard was manufactured in La Mirada, California.



This is a child making a DIY skateboard from some old roller skate

### 1960's Skateboards

In the 1960's, Skateboards started to become very popular, especially in California, hugely helped by the Roller Derby Skateboard seen above. It started as a branch off of surfing culture, which makes sense as skateboarding is very similar to surfing, just on land instead of the sea. The first skateboards in the 1960's were known as a cambered deck, as they had the ends drooped down lower than the rest of the deck, similar to penny boards of today. Due to the popularity of these new boards, skateboarding became so big and popular that skateboarding competitions started being broadcasted on national television, starting the formation of skate teams, skate brands were being born, and even skate shops started popping up, especially in California. These skate competitions consisted of mainly swerving through cones, and doing tricks on the board such as handstands, rather than tricks with the board as seen today. The fast growing popularity massively aided skateboarding popularity and got more people into it.



In 1969, Larry Stevens created the first modern skateboard, and from that moment on skateboarding was reinvented forever. His invention was the kicktail, and virtually all skateboards now have a kicktail, due to the massive amount of manoeuvrability it gives the skater.



### 1970's skateboarding

In the 1970's, with help from Larry Stevens kicktail invention, a man called Frank Natsworthy invented the polyurethane wheels, which helped skateboards become even better. Due to these incredible iterations by the innovators, new types of skateboarding came about, giving it the boost the sport needs to stay forever. From then boards started becoming made from plastic instead of wood, making them lighter and more durable, these were called the banana board. More iterations in the 1970's included a wider nose, however due to a lack of iterations the popularity started to dip in the late 1970's as you can only do so much with a board with one kicktail, as you will find out soon!



### 1980s skateboarding

In the 1980s, people started to customise boards. They started to use grip tape, and this had patterns on it. The boards were also changing in shape, common designs included looking like a fish or a coffin, which looked great, but didn't do much for functionality! Some boards also had a huge kicktail on them, which did help with some tricks, unlike the other customisation options!



### 1990s skateboarding

In the early 1990's, a new board design entered the world of skateboarding. It was called the Popsicle stick shape. This is the modern design, and has withstood the test of time. It has a twin tail and nose shape, rounded at each end, and being of a concave shape. Now that the board has a nose and tail it allows for a huge variety of tricks to be performed by skaters, and has paved the way for skateboarding and pioneered the sport into what it is today!

In just over 50 years skateboarding has turned from a DIY board made from a fence, or a 2X4 plank of wood, with some old roller skating wheels on them, into a carefully engineered, plastic board with sturdy, manoeuvrable trucks purpose built, and is recognised all over the world. Board sizes have also varied, from 7" to a whopping 9".

Thank you for reading my article on how skateboarding has been pioneered into what it is today. I suggest everyone try skateboarding, it's great fun! If you're interested in engineering your own skateboard, please email [Chan\\_A@bexleygs.co.uk](mailto:Chan_A@bexleygs.co.uk). Skateboard Club, takes place Wednesdays after school in September, hope to see you all there soon!



**George Bishop, Year 12**



## PE News

### Girls Football and Netball

A glorious sunny afternoon of sport! What a superb turn out to our afternoon of girls sport. Across the two Thursday clubs we had a staggering 80+ girls at netball and football. So lovely to see so many of you.

In the coming weeks, we have two Kent Cup games for the U13 and U16 football teams along with the Year 9s facing Trinity in Netball. Best of luck ladies! A big thank you to our Year 12 and 13 helpers at both the netball and football sessions. We couldn't have the run sessions without your help!

To help with your understanding of both sports, take a look at the FA Women's Super League Football Games and the Netball International Games next week. Have a think, who is your sporting role model?

***Mrs Kemp and Mrs Howard, PE Department***



### Bexley's London Youth Games

We're always pleased to see our students succeed in their sports outside school. A treat for us each year is seeing how you got on as part of Bexley's London Youth Games teams. This year Steph (Year 9) was part of the Kayak team which came first in the slalom competition and 5th in the sprint. Ben, Jamie (Year 10) and Tomas and Matthew (Year 9) all played for the hockey team who were runners up in the competition. Lydia and Leigh-Ann (Year 13) finished 4th in the beach volleyball.

Well done everyone!

***Mr Lines, Head of PE***





It has already been a busy start to the year for 'STEM'ers at BGS.

Timetable of clubs:

STEM Club	Years 7-8 Tuesday	M16 at lunchtime
Chemistry Club	Years 7-9 Thursday	M8 at lunchtime
Engineering Club	Years 10-11 Monday	H2 after school
Senior Science Society	Years 12-13	M6 at lunchtime

### Increasing Diversity in STEM

We are all well aware of the stereotypes around what an 'engineer' looks like and the lack of diversity in some STEM careers. At BGS we are passionate about levelling the playing field and ensuring everyone has high aspirations and the opportunities to achieve them. There is an amazing program coming up and I am pleased to help support our students in applying.

### Young Women in STEM - female talent programme

Female and non-binary students in Year 12 could get the opportunity to learn about the world of STEM through a series of group mentoring sessions, work experience and workshops. Plus meet the females leading top UK companies.

With the option to nominate only ten students and only 100 places available nationally, competition will be stiff but I hope to be reporting the successful application of our students in the coming weeks.



### Engineering Club- Special Event

**Open to all years!** 'I'm an Engineer, Get me out of here' SPACE edition!

When? Monday 18th October 3.15pm- 4.15pm  
Where? H2



We will be chatting live to real engineers who work in the field of space exploration and observation. Please email [lusted\\_r@bexleygs.co.uk](mailto:lusted_r@bexleygs.co.uk) if you are interested in joining us for this event.

The Senior Society have been researching and taking it in turns to present on topics of their own choosing and are looking at attending some online lectures.

You can join these lectures too using the link below:

<https://www.gresham.ac.uk/attend/>

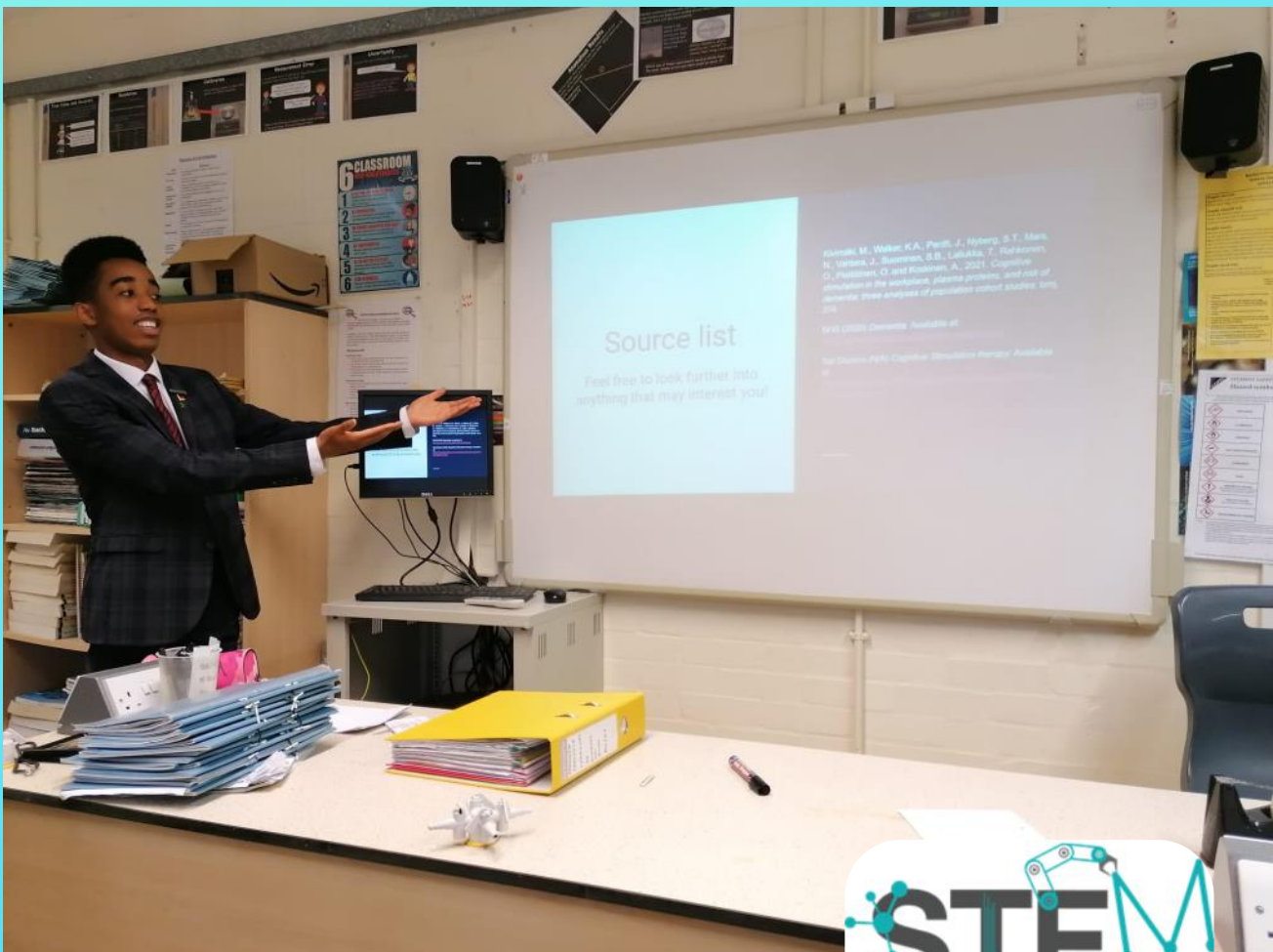




## The Senior Science Society

The Senior Science Society is a group of Sixth Form students that gather together once a week to present and discuss a range of scientific topics. From next-gen fighter jets to new Covid treatments, it provides an opportunity for students to come together and engage with scientific news around the world, as science should not be limited to the classroom. Recently, I was lucky enough to have the opportunity to deliver a presentation on Dementia and how cognitive stimulation in the workplace could lower the risks of developing the disease later on in life. The presentation allowed me to not only share new scientific knowledge with my peers, but also to start conversations about the validity of scientific experiments and what it means for a study to be "reliable". If there is one thing I really enjoy about the Senior Science Society, it is definitely the discussions we have after presentations. Hearing the variety of viewpoints and passionate ideas that other students have is refreshing, and further amplifies my belief that learning science is about keeping in touch with the world around you and how it relates back to what you know.

***Shannen Sarkodie, Year 13***





# NEWSLETTER

www.bexleygs.co.uk

30th September 2021



## Lecture with Questions & Answers from Sarah Lasoye, ex-BGS published poet!

From the faded hues of her past, to the electric present and palpable future, Sarah Lasoye's writing explores the boundaries of memories and experience through abstract and narrative poems without losing touch with the values that we should all hold dear.

The fantastic poet and alumna of Bexley Grammar came on Thursday 23rd of September to read and discuss poems from her debut collection of poems ("Fovea / Ages Ago"), which depict a timeline of her young life and the transition into adulthood through abstract and narrative stories in which she appears as vulnerable to the reader as possible. The sharing of inquisitive and personal contemplations on her childhood and growth as a person would remain a recurring theme throughout the first few poems where she starts the book discussing her impulsive need of lying to which she reflects on today as being a stairwell to discovering her true identity and comically saying it served as a mask hiding her evil spirit of being a child. After reciting a brief assembly of poems from her own book, Sarah Lasoye shared her experiences of talking to prosperous poets and how their guidance has had a tremendous impact on the way she fabricates poems nowadays.



She spoke of how she writes her poems, almost the opposite of the typical, solitary occupation that we often associate with writing; Lasoye revels in the inspiration of being in a communal space, taking in the mood and the atmosphere, always sourcing ideas from the urban environment around her. This is integral to her as a person, informing her view of the world and thus influencing her writing, leading to a wild array of poems covering each part of life and the limitless boundaries of our recollection in her chapbook.

*Do you feel it is important, when writing, to have the audience at the front of your mind?*

Yes and no. Sarah wanted to convey that the key idea when writing is not all the people who read your work will love it, in fact, some of them will hate it. But she didn't feel that this negative feedback was as important as we might think it to be; if you love writing and feel that it is your true purpose, no amount of cynical opinions can sway you from your true audience. And for Sarah, these are her close friends.

*Given that you take great inspiration from public spaces, how did the lockdown affect your writing?*





In isolation Sarah still met up with her friends over zoom, working together and reading and reviewing each other's work, so she still had that feeling of community to fuel her writing. This method of support was something that they had done before lockdown, retaining a sense of normality, but it helped her to tailor her work to an audience of like-minded people. Sometimes they gave back constructive criticism, that Sarah could then decide whether or not to take on board; she feels that there are some essential concepts in her writing that no amount of criticism could bring her to remove them.

Lasoye also addressed how finally being able to call herself a poet was a great mental milestone and wished she would've done so earlier, as many young aspiring poets and general people give up their dream of writing because they mistake the word to be of immense worth in the literary community (which it can be) and them not being worthy enough to attribute it to themselves, when in reality anyone can call themselves a poet and write literary pieces with just pen and paper, leaving readers to think that maybe her collection of poems could also serve as a symbol of inspiration to others who may think that they're not good enough to write because they aren't entitled poets or have a profession in such department. Sarah Lasoye talked about how she herself wasn't even close to a career path related to poetry in school, as she graduated with a biomedical science degree from university, clearly surpassing the social misunderstanding and going on to become a published artist with poems she would write in her spare time.

Finally, she showed the crowd some poems from her also published friends which were more "anarchist" and "wild" (as described by the poet herself!).

This makes her writing what it is, a gloriously abstract amalgamation that speaks true to who she is: a wonderful poet and a truly inspiring, charismatic individual.

Thank you to Mrs Quinton for arranging this fascinating poetry reading and Q & A session.

***Alex Ionita and Max Armstrong-Moulini, Year 12 English Prefects***





# NEWSLETTER

Thursday 21st October  
www.bexleygs.co.uk

## Fieldwork is BACK in Geography

We are delighted to be out on Geography fieldwork with our Year 12 IB students and this should mark the start of a year of Fieldwork at BGS.

Students worked in groups to collect data at 10 sites on the River Darent, Kent. We made our way from source to mouth collecting qualitative and quantitative data to examine how the river changes downstream and reflected on whether this is what the Bradshaw model would expect. It was a great day to get out in the countryside to carry out a practical enquiry and the Year 12s showed outstanding teamwork and progress with their learning.



On a grey cloudy day the Year 12 IB Geography students left BGS at 8am to head out to the River Darent to collect primary data for the internal assessments. Once all the students were on the coaches we left school and headed out. Miss Thurlow's and Miss Ashman's group headed to the first location near the rivers source while Mrs Belton-Owen's and Mrs Surplus' group went to site 2, a farmers field at Brastead 5km from the source. This year the field had sweet corn growing in it which made for an interesting walk to the river. For most the sweet corn was taller than their heads!



The first couple of study locations gave students the opportunity to get used to working in their groups and collecting the data, as this was the first time that they had completed fieldwork. Students collected primary data on river depth, width, velocity, wetted perimeter and gradient as well as drawing field sketches and taking photographs.

These photographs show some of our lovely Year 12 students completing river depth measurement at site 6, Farningham, now 23km from the start







of the River Darent. The day saw many students with wet feet and wellingtons full of water! But thankfully it stayed dry and we managed to collect all of the data that is required for this work. At site 9, the small bridge that crosses the river gave us the perfect opportunity as always for a group photo!

### *The Geography Department*

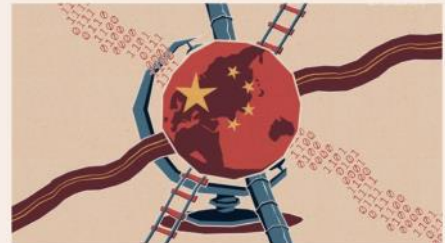


## Economics News

Year 12, BGS Economics students have published analysis in 'The Backseat Economist'. Click on the links below to read their reports.

'China's 'hidden debts' with Low-Income Countries'  
Researched by **Billy Ryan** and by written by **Rohan Dhir**.

<https://www.thebackseateconomist.com/post/china-s-hidden-debts-with-lics>



'The Truth behind Rishi Sunak's Speech',  
Researched by **Ibrahim Ahmed** and written by **Rohan Dhir**.

<https://www.thebackseateconomist.com/post/the-truth-behind-sunak-s-speech>





# NEWSLETTER



## Remembrance Day: A Celebration of Unity and Courage

Twenty one million injured. Over nine million soldiers killed. A tragedy forever in our minds.

From 1914 to 1918, Europe was brought to a standstill as World War One (WW1) raged throughout the continent. Over 30 nations declared war and seventy million military personnel were sent to fight for their countries. To honour their heroism, bravery and sacrifice, we have Remembrance Day. Celebrated annually, Remembrance Day is observed throughout the Commonwealth on the 11th of November at 11AM, at the time Germany surrendered to The Allies.

Many soldiers would have been young, encouraged by the omnipresent propaganda and galvanised by the rising patriotism in Britain, to enlist. As students ourselves, it's imperative to recognise the great number of lives lost at such a young age. Many were young: 17-19 years old. They were barely older than us, yet they were not comfortably learning in school but suffering in the trenches and dying on the battlefield. On the 11th of November, we must remember both the savagery of war that cut their lives short, and celebrate their sacrifices. Further than that, we must remain grateful for the opportunities in life given to us that were not possible for them, and choose to live life to the fullest...



This year, I'm also choosing to highlight those who aren't always celebrated on Remembrance Day. Soldiers on the battlefield faced great struggles; however, women left on the Homefront also faced problems and overcame them with admirable courage. These issues included food shortages, bomb strikes and a crippled economy. Fear and hardship were rife at home, yet those who suffered are often forgotten on Remembrance Day. Girl Guides picked up shovels and grew food for the whole nation; children knitted socks for soldiers; women became farmers, train drivers and factory workers. The bravery they displayed in face of great upheaval should not be forgotten, but celebrated alongside the actions of brave soldiers for their contribution in winning the war.



Many soldiers were also forgotten; in particular, 1.5 million soldiers from British colonies in Asia and Africa have been erased from history. Rather than being commemorated with headstones, like their comrades, their names were scrawled on a registrar and they were buried in mass graves. We never learn about their bravery, their truth and they remain forgotten. By choosing to highlight their bravery this Remembrance Day, we do not diminish the actions of British soldiers but instead embrace the strength and courage shown by all those who contributed in World War One, regardless of race and nationality.



In the sixty seconds we have on the 11th of November, let us remember all those who contributed to the war effort. Let us remember all the women, all the leaders and all the soldiers who helped secure our future. But most importantly?





Let us take their sense of unity and togetherness forward into the future. In face of recent problems, the world has fractured and each nation has chosen to pursue its own selfish interests. Countries have chosen to ignore each other's struggles and forced themselves to battle alone. This is not a viable solution. We must step into the future: **together and united.**

*Megan Lisle & Megan Le, Year 12*



## A Beautiful Tribute

A beautiful tribute from trumpeter James Orchard (Year 10) and Sam Bowles, video editing (Year 12) helping us to commemorate Remembrance day in our virtual assemblies today, Thursday 11th November 2021.

Link to video:

<https://youtu.be/sIKMRKYZIOA>

*Mrs Casling, Head of Music*

