



The Sakura Project Tree Planting Ceremony

Some of you may have noticed the new addition to the school grounds. Some of you may even have witnessed the planting ceremony from your form or office window on the chilly (but thankfully dry!) morning of 26th January. But, thanks to the Japan Society and in recognition of the school's ongoing efforts to promote learning and understanding of Japanese language and culture, Bexley Grammar is the proud recipient of a beautiful young Somei-Yoshino cherry tree sapling.



NEWS LETTER



3rd February 2022

www.bexleygs.co.uk





The cherry tree and its blossoms are one of the most immediate and enduring symbols of Japan. You can find it on their currency and displayed proudly on the chests of the country's national rugby teams. And pretty much every tourist montage of Japan includes masses of the pink and white trees in full bloom. In Japan hanami - cherry blossom viewing - is one of the most eagerly awaited events of the year, with tens of millions of Japanese heading to sit beneath their nearest cherry trees and gaze up at their beauty. With some tasty snacks, too, of course!

The gifting of the tree is part of The Sakura Project, which was launched in the autumn of 2017 during a meeting between the Japanese and British Prime Ministers of the time as a symbol of and means to deepen ties between the two countries. Mr Elphick and Mrs Meyer were guests at the ceremony alongside students from Year 8 – Year 13.

Mrs Meyer, who has been involved with the project from the outset four years ago remarked how neatly this mirrored our students' journey through KS3 and KS4 up to GCSE. Mr Elphick remarked that he hoped that the event would also mark a return to the normal running of our exchange programme with Keio Shonan Fujisawa School.

Ashna Adhikari, a Year 8 student of Japanese said of the event, "The tree planting ceremony was a very special event to me. I love how through it, I was able to expose myself to Japanese culture by experiencing this event. Sometimes, we have culture lessons in our Japanese classes, which help to show me the importance of the Sakura tree to the country. I think culture plays a crucial part in Japan, so I'm glad I was able to learn more about Japan with this."

The blooming of cherry blossoms is very much determined by climate and weather and the Somei-Yoshino tree that we now have can be expected to put forth its white blossoms in late March or early April, allowing us to do our own hanami here at Bexley Grammar School.

Mr Adams, MFL Department





10ML Welcomes the Reverend Jim Smith

10ML were delighted to welcome Reverend Jim Smith to school on Friday to tell us about his work with the Bexley Winter Shelter. 10ML have chosen to support this charity in 2022 and it was very kind of Reverend Smith to come and tell us about the Shelter's work and history helping rough sleepers in the borough. It's a cause that is very easy to empathise with, and we can now focus on coming up with some effective fundraising ideas.

Mr Lines, 10ML Form Tutor



GCSE Music

Here is an insight on some of the current solo pieces that have been performed by students at GCSE Music- there is a range of genres, instruments, and musical expressions offered by the Music course. Take a listen to this compilation of different performances- from drumming to singing, piano to brass!

Deya Dimitrova, Year 9



7MAM Sustainability assembly



To 7MAM who have delivered the first tutor led assembly of the year virtually to all of the Year 7 tutor groups. The students involved had researched a number of issues about environmental sustainability, which links back to the work that has been completed in PSHCE lessons.

There were an incredible amount of facts about the impact of plastic on the environment. "You may not realise it but 60,000,000 plastic bottles are thrown away carelessly EVERY DAY! And 22 billion are thrown away ANNUALLY!" some of these are pretty mind blowing when you take a moment to think about the volumes of plastic involved. The assembly included ideas about what we can do at school to reduce plastic and recycle more. Including the easiest solution of all, to sort out our rubbish into the right bins as well as ensuring that there is clear signage so staff and students know which bin to put their rubbish in.

Joshua Chukwu-Ike created a short animation to show the value of shopping in stores where you can take your containers to buy dry goods. Really impressive and what a skill!

Taran **Maung** had made a short video looking at transport and how we travel to school. This showed really clearly the importance of using public transport to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. Well done.

Thank you 7MAM for your assembly, an impressive effort from you and Ms Millbank.





PE News

Sixth Form Basketball

We had a fun afternoon with the Sixth Form basketball team. The boys won a great game 34-32 after a good fight back by Christ the King. These guys have worked hard to organise their team and run their own training, so it was great for them to enjoy a competitive fixture and a win. Well done!



Sixth Form Football

Well done also to the sixth form football team who won their first league game of the season. 2 goals from Jonas and another from Adam secured a 3-2 win over Hayes on Wednesday. Well-deserved for all their hard work this season.

Mr Lines, Head of PE



Year 7 Football

This week saw back to back games for one of our Year 7 Football squads. Both were North Kent Cup fixtures against local opposition so the boys knew that there was a lot riding on them. Monday saw us take on a Hurstmere team that were already in the Quarter Finals of the Kent competition. The boys started a little shaky, probably giving too much respect to the opposition, but nerves settled quickly and it became a hotly contested game. We took the lead twice only to be pegged back each time. The game ended in a 2-2 draw and so it went down to penalties to see who got the bonus point. The Bexley boys held their nerves and comfortably won the shootout 4-2.



On Tuesday afternoon we hosted Bexleyheath Academy. We spoke about starting this game how we finished against Hurstmere. The boys didn't disappoint. We took control early on and kept possession for large parts of the game. The passing was accurate and their finishing was clinical as we finished the half 4-0 up. A few changes to the way we were playing and people's positions didn't dampen our play in the second half as the boys delivered more of the same, eventually ending 8-1 victors. Well done to all of the boys but special mentions to Connor who scored 2, Luke who scored 2 and Austin who gained his first hat trick for the school.

We look forward to our next game whoever that may be...

Mr Skinner, PE Department



LGBTQ+ History Month

My student Library Assistants have been on flag duty this week, and have made the library a proud and colourful place to be. Please come up to see the large collection of books for LGBTQ+ History Month, many of which were bought using money from our generous PTA.

Mrs Carey, School Librarian

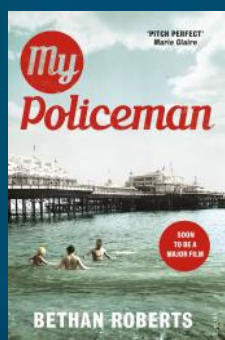


Student LGBTQ+ book recommendations

Heartstopper - Alice Oseman

I recommend the graphic book series Heartstopper by Alice Oseman! It's a lovely book surrounding the lives of Nick and Charlie and their challenges that needed to be overcome to be accepted by their family and school as well as lots of light-hearted comedic scenes! It's such a heart warming series and Oseman is such a great writer and illustrator. My favourite character is Oliver, Charlie's little brother! This book is a must for anyone interested in reading LGBTQ+ books!

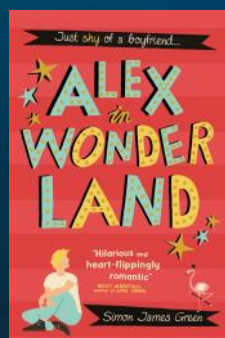
Jessica, Year 8



My Policeman - Bethan Roberts

I read the book My Policeman a couple of months ago. It is about three characters called Tom, Patrick and Marion, in which Tom and Marion are supposedly in a relationship with each other as Tom begins to fall in love with a museum curator he met called Patrick. As they play it off as a close friendship, their secret relationship grows behind Marion's back, as being gay was illegal at the time. I love this book because it's interesting to see the lengths people will go to, to be with the person they love and the risks they would take to conceal it at a time when they can't express their love. I recommend this book to Year nine and above.

Mya, Year 11



LGBTQ+ HISTORY MONTH



Heartstopper - Alice Oseman

I really enjoyed the book 'Heartstopper' as it talks about the hardships and mental health issues that formulate due to homophobia. It shows that there isn't a shortcut to mental health recovery. I also liked the bond between Nick and Charlie.

Isabelle, Year 8

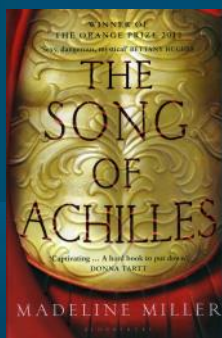


The Song of Achilles - Madeline Miller

Set in Ancient Greece, The Song of Achilles is a book following the hidden romance of Achilles, a half-god destined for greatness, and Patroclus, a banished prince. As the friendship grows into something more, they're faced with a series of complex challenges and opposers to their relationship. A retelling of the well-known story, Achilles and Patroclus are called to war and the test of their bonds are pushed to the limits. I love this book as it's not only a beautiful relationship, from friends to lovers, but also because of the different perspective provided. I would

recommend this book to not just ancient history/ history lovers, but to everyone - from age Year 9+.

Scarlett, Year 11



Heartstopper, Simon vs the Homo Sapiens Agenda, Alex in Wonderland, Beautiful Music for Ugly Children, The Art of Being Normal and Buy Meets Boy are all amazing.

Alex, Year 9



LGBTQ+ HISTORY MONTH



Geography News

Geography is everywhere!

There have been so many engaging, informative and fun Geographical based programmes in the last month. Here is a quick review just in case you have missed any or need some inspiration over the half term.

Green Planet: BBC 1 iPlayer

Amazing. A must see. David Attenborough has done it again, by showing us the incredible world of plants up close and personal. Having dipped in and out of this series it is now very much on my watch list for the half term. I was amazed to see how trees communicate with each other in the forest to tell each other about diseases that may be there, which would then give other trees the opportunity to protect themselves. The images that showed the underground web of roots was fascinating. The film photography that showed the seed dispersal of dandelions was beautiful as thousands of small seeds were carried in the wind away from the field. Another highlight was the science behind the colour of flowers and how this helped to attract bees. I certainly did not know that the yellow of daisy makes the centre of the flower warmer, so when the bees land to collect the pollen they also warm up!



Around the world in 80 days. BBC iPlayer

A true adventure drama that I have loved watching. Based on the fictional story of Phileas Fogg's eighty-day record to travel around the world. The drama is a real family watch and shows a whole host of countries, cultures and wild adventures. The journey starts in London with a bet that Phileas Fogg makes with a friend that it is possible to travel around the world in 80 days, his crazy idea soon sees him travel across the English Channel to Europe, where he arrives in Paris. From here it is on to the Middle East and Yemen, before arriving in India. The journey continues to Hong Kong before travelling across the Pacific Ocean to the USA and a dramatic stagecoach journey across the Rocky Mountains. 7JOO have in their Geography lessons completed their own journey around the world that they have mapped. They had to show at least 2 countries per continent and include a stop off in each capital... I think this would be far more challenging than the fictional journey undertaken by Phileas Fogg.



Don't Look up: Netflix

An interesting take on how the world is dealing with climate change. I enjoyed the "tongue in cheek" approach to this bigger geographical issue, which certainly placed the lack of decisions and apathy from global leaders at the forefront of the film. Meryl Streep makes for an interesting US President who just cannot see the value of the science that is placed in front of her.



Mrs Belton-Owen, Geography Department



Congratulations Dylan

Dylan Baker, Year 7 has PASSED his Bronze Arts Award with flying colours; a level 1 certificate in the arts which is equivalent to a GCSE Grade 3-1 (previously D-G). This is an amazing achievement and demonstrates his teamwork and dedication. Click on the link below to see his digital portfolio by following this link:

<http://www.e2ecrewdb.weebly.com>



... from concept to creation



Free Webinar for parents!



Help your child learn more effectively!

A great way for you to understand how learning works, so you can best support your kids.

Free tickets: <https://bit.ly/Parents-Webinar-Learning>



15th Feb



Patrice Bain

@PatriceBain1

- **Speaker:** Patrice Bain
- **Date & Time:** Tuesday, 15th February, 5.30 pm, online
- **Costs:** Free
- **Description:** Have you watched your child struggle with schoolwork? Would you like to know how best to help your child with learning? Patrice Bain (@PatriceBain1), teacher and parent, has worked with cognitive scientists for over 15 years in identifying principles and strategies that increase learning and decrease anxiety. Author of Powerful Teaching: "Unleash the Science of Learning" and "A Parent's Guide to Powerful Teaching", Patrice will discuss evidence-based tools and strategies that work.
- **Link to register:** <https://bit.ly/Parents-Webinar-Learning>



Safeguarding and e-Safety Notice

Dear Parents/ Carers,

You may be aware that it's Safer Internet Day on 8th February and different year teams are delivering resources to suit their Year groups this week. You can find some information here:

<https://saferinternet.org.uk/safer-internet-day/safer-internet-day-2022>



The Internet Matters website has produced a report into the effects of living in a digital world on children's wellbeing. You can find the full report here:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/hub/news-blogs/internet-matters-launches-childrens-wellbeing-in-a-digital-world-index-report-2022/>

Some of the key findings include:

- As children get older and spend more time with digital technology, they experience more positive and negative impacts on wellbeing.
- While displaying some positive impacts, greater social media use, especially among girls, was associated with increased negative impacts on social wellbeing.
- Greater time spent gaming was associated, particularly for boys, with an increased negative impact on developmental and physical wellbeing, underlining the importance of managing time spent in game play to achieve a healthy balance of on and offline activities.
- Vulnerable children experience more of the negative impacts of digital technology on wellbeing than their less vulnerable peers. However, vulnerable children also scored slightly higher in relation to feeling good about themselves as a result of their digital behaviour.
- Children and their parents are broadly aligned on how digital activity affects them, but having a supportive environment appears critical.

Best wishes,

H.J. Gilmore
Deputy Head and Designated Safeguarding Lead



**internet
matters.org**



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Time to Talk Day 2022

Time to Talk Day 2022 is run by Mind and Rethink Mental Illness in England. The day is all about creating supportive communities by having conversations with family, friends, or colleagues

about mental health. We all have mental health, by talking about it we can support ourselves and others.

Why talking is important

One in four of us will experience a mental health problem in any given year.

We want everyone to feel comfortable talking about mental health – whenever they like. Talking about mental health reduces stigma, helping to create supportive communities where we can talk openly about mental health and feel empowered to seek help when we need it.

That's why opening up the conversation about mental health problems is so important – by talking about it we can support ourselves and others.

However you do it, have a conversation about mental health. Here are 5 tips to help make that conversation a little easier:

1

Ask questions and listen

Asking questions can give the person space to express how they're feeling and what they're going through, and it will help you to understand their experience better. Try to ask questions that are open and not leading or judgmental, like "how does that affect you?" or "what does it feel like?"

Think about the time and place

Sometimes it's easier to talk side by side rather than face to face. So, if you do talk in person, you might want to chat while you are doing something else. You could start a conversation when you're walking, cooking or stuck in traffic. However, don't let the search for the perfect place put you off!

2



3

Don't try and fix it

It can be hard to see someone you care about having a difficult time but try to resist the urge to offer quick fixes to what they're going through. Learning to manage or recover from a mental health problem can be a long journey, and they've likely already considered lots of different tools and strategies. Just talking can be really powerful, so unless they've asked for advice directly, it might be best just to listen.

Treat them the same

When someone has a mental health problem, they're still the same person as they were before. And that means when a friend or loved one opens up about mental health, they don't want to be treated any differently. If you want to support them, keep it simple. Do the things you'd normally do.



4



5

Be patient

No matter how hard you try, some people might not be ready to talk about what they're going through. That's ok - the fact that you've tried to talk to them about it may make it easier for them to open up another time.



Time to Talk Day 2022



News items you may have missed



All BGS parents are welcome
to attend our meetings!
The next dates are:

23 FEBRUARY
16 MARCH
20 APRIL
18 MAY

PA meetings will be held from 7.30-9.00pm
either at school or on Zoom.

Please email bgspa@bexleygs.co.uk
to confirm the meeting place.



SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS DEPARTMENT



Please email Mrs Haslam
haslam_c@bexleygs.co.uk
if you would like to speak about
any concerns you may
have regarding your child.

Forthcoming Events

February

Monday 7th ~ Year 9 SchoolCloud Virtual Parents' Evening booking system closes at midday

Tuesday 8th ~ Year 9 Virtual Parents' Evening

Friday 11th ~ Last full school day before half term

Monday 14th to Friday 18th Half Term ~ school closed to students

Monday 21st ~ First school day following the half term

Tuesday 22nd ~ Deadline to submit Year 9 options

Wednesday 23rd ~ PA Meeting (see notice)

March

Wednesday 9th ~ Closing date for Sutton Trust Summer School Applications (see notice)

Wednesday 16th ~ PA Meeting (see notice)

April

Wednesday 20th ~ PA Meeting (see notice)

May

Wednesday 18th ~ PA Meeting (see notice)

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16 MARCH
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