



## Politics Students visit the Cabinet Office

**A trip to the Cabinet Office, Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2016**

At the end of the Christmas term, Mr Goodall organised a trip for Politics students to visit No 10 Downing Street and the Cabinet Office, which was in the process of celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> year of existence.

\*As a quick side note, the Cabinet Office is essentially the administrative body of the Government, as they are involved in developing, coordinating and implementing policies. Its role is to assist the Prime Minister and Cabinet in delivering the government's programme. It is a part of the UK's Civil Service\*

Our trip started off by visiting the heart of our Government: Downing Street. With a large Christmas tree outside, No 10 looked remarkably festive, even the on duty, guard sharing in some of the festive spirit with a few tongue-in-cheek remarks. Of course a few ground rules were laid down, things like no shouting, no photographs of the interior, and of course the one we all laughed at, no nudity. Having taken individual pictures for our various social media profile pictures, we left to visit the Cabinet Office itself.



The Office building itself has a long history, with parts dating back to Henry VIII's rule over Tudor England. Other parts contain the Cabinet room for King George III, in which rests his throne which he sat on. Also in the same room was the table on which the Act of Union between England and Scotland was signed. Therefore, even before the introduction of a Cabinet Office in 1916, the whole building contained such important political history. In that very room we met two very important speakers, who led a PowerPoint show on the history of the Cabinet Office and its current function and roles. These two guests were Ben Gummer MP, Minister for the Cabinet Office, and Sir Jeremy Heywood – head of the Civil Service, Cabinet Secretary and the country's highest Civil Servant. Along with the PowerPoint, they also briefly spoke about their own professions and roles within government, with Sir Jeremy explaining how he has regular contact with the Prime Minister and worked under the Coalition Government, keeping that functioning as efficiently as possible. Finally, there was an open question and



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answer session for our esteemed speakers. Naturally, with the Referendum on EU membership still in recent memory, Mr Gummer was asked by one of my fellow Government and Politics Students on whether Britain was seeking a Hard or Soft Brexit. Now, I don't suppose for a moment he would know the answer to that question himself, however, he gave a very good and of course stereotypical politician answer to the question.

Afterwards, we were taken on a tour of the Office, where we went into several rooms of interest, such as the Chief Whip's office and various meeting rooms for Government ministers. This also involved looking at various documents held by the national archives, which hold many fascinating documents from history. These include Hitler's will, the Cabinet Meeting discussing the Munich Agreement in 1938 and the dropping of the atomic bomb by the US in 1945.

We then spoke with people who work with the Treasury – as this is a vital part of the Civil Service - who organised an activity on government spending priority. This was a simplified version of showing how the Government must prioritise expenditure in on certain departments, by choosing whichever departments they felt needed the money the most. This selection of where to put government money is what is announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Autumn Statement.

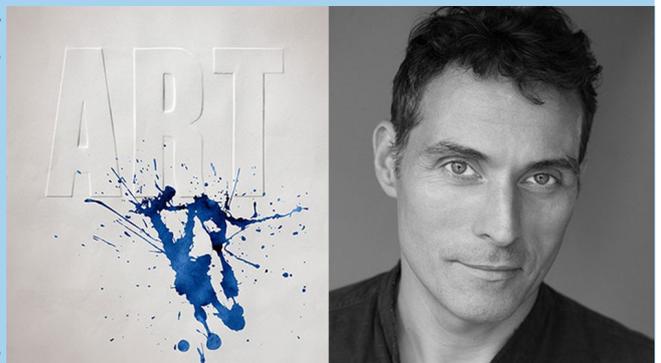
Last but by no means least; we spoke with apprentices at the Office, who gave us all an insight into the various schemes offered by the Civil Service in general, though more specifically with the Cabinet Office. As someone who has considered doing not necessarily an apprenticeship, but a sponsorship scheme, I found this part of the trip incredibly useful, especially given the enormous range of career paths offered to post Sixth form and post Graduate students.

All in all, this was really an eye-opening trip. We all saw the inner workings of our government, a body that affects our everyday lives and even got to meet some very important figures that we would never have had the opportunity to meet elsewhere. For that reason, I would like to thank Mr Goodall for organising the trip. Let's just hope it serves as an inspiration to at least achieve high grades in Government and Politics, if not one day to help run the country!

*Ben Leadbetter, Year 12*

## Yasmina Reza's 'Art' - Sixth Form Culture Club Review

Last Wednesday, students and staff took in a show of Yasmina Reza's 'ART' at The Old Vic Theatre as part of the Sixth Form Culture Club. The play offered us a glimpse at the fractured, yet comedic, friendship of three men: Yvan (Tim Key), Marc (Paul Ritter) and Serge (Rufus Sewell), whose gradual annoyance with one another has begun to divide them, and weigh on their relationships. Centred around Serge's impulse to buy a white painting (with diagonal white lines), the following 90 minutes are full of hilarious satire and dry humour, accompanied by a message of the dangers of self-indulgence that left the audience both charmed and entertained. The simplicity of the set and the ability of the actors really turned an impeccably well-written script into a marvellous little gem of a production that I would highly recommend seeing before its run ends.



*Jack Dalton, Year 12*

## House Music 18<sup>th</sup> January 2017

This year's House Music competition was unlike any other in the competition's history. For the first time ever no musical instruments were allowed in any section of the competition. The 'choir' section was to be sung *a cappella* and the instrumental section was to be performed with home-made instruments or using the body as a percussion instrument. Each House took on the challenge with enthusiasm and it was clear that everyone involved had spent a lot of time rehearsing.

**Collins** was the first House to perform, the choir sang an Arctic Monkey medley involving students of all ages; their instrumental performance was very inventive using 'found' objects as instruments. They started with the members of their group sitting amongst the audience and gradually joining in, it was very entertaining and very creative.

**Kirkman** were second to perform, starting with an ambitious arrangement of a Michael Jackson medley. Their rhythmic instrumental piece created beats and rhythms using clapping and call and response with some great rhythms as well as some vocal 'instruments'.

**Mabbs** were third and they started with their rhythmical piece. Adam Kelly choreographed and executed an excellent piece accompanied by other students of different ages, this was the first piece to include movement and was very impressive. The *a cappella* group of six students then sang an impressive Bruno Mars arrangement to a raucous response from everyone watching in the hall, everyone jumped to their feet applauding at the end of this performance.

**Wellman** were fourth to perform. They started with their improvised instruments and a rendition of 'Stand by me'. They had a good age range of students, but unfortunately were a little unrehearsed. Their vocal piece was a compilation of a number of songs, 'Say my name', 'Cry me a river', chorally very strong with some excellent soloists of all ages.

**Prothero** were the penultimate act and brought as usual a strong sense of unity and discipline to their performance. They started with their rhythmic piece, everyone tightly on the beat, very well-choreographed; a visually impressive performance. They then sang an arrangement of three songs, *Stand by me*, *Lean on me*, and 'Somebody to lean on'.

**Johnson** brought the competition to a close with an energetic vocal performance of 'This is Gospel', very confidently sung with great commitment and passion. The competition closed with their performance on a homemade 'pipe tube' instrument created and played by Lewis Watson with spatulas and accompanied by four other students on buckets and wooden spoons. Despite suffering a few spatula breakages they played with panache to a greatly entertained audience, a fantastic end to the whole competition.

The judges, Ms Hanington, Mrs Eacott and Mrs Triggs, had a tough job ranking these performances which showed in the final results, the points were very close:

- 1<sup>st</sup> **Prothero** – 22/24 points
- 2<sup>nd</sup> **Mabbs** – 21/24 points
- 3<sup>rd</sup> equal **Johnson** and **Kirkman** with 19/24 points
- 5<sup>th</sup> **Collins** – 18/24 points
- 6<sup>th</sup> **Wellman** – 16/24 points.

The usual allocation of 12, 10, 8, 6, 4, 2 points is added on top to make the competition out of 36 points.

Thank you to all who took part, the Judges and especially the House Captains for taking the time to organise and rehearse these performances. Instruments will be allowed next year!

Mrs J Snelling, House Leader



## Forthcoming Events

### January

**Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup>** ~ ECM Day 3

### February

**Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup>** ~ \*KS4 Musical Showcase

**Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup>** ~ **Inset Day (School closed to students)**

**Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup>** ~ Year 9 Parents' Evening

**Monday 13<sup>th</sup>** ~ Half Term

**Monday 20<sup>th</sup>** ~ First school day after half term

### March

**Monday 13<sup>th</sup>** ~ \*A Level and IB Solo Recitals

**Thursday 16<sup>th</sup>** ~ \*A Level and IB Solo Recitals

\*For more details see Music Department Notices below.



**Friday 3 February**

**Doors open 7pm for  
7:30 start**

**Tickets £5 per person,  
max. 8 per team**

**Bring own food & drink**

You can register your team by clicking on the link below or by completing the form which has been emailed via ParentPay.

[Quiz Night Application Form](#)

## News Items You May Have Missed

### Music Department Notices

#### INSTRUMENTAL LESSONS

If you wish to start instrumental lessons, please apply online:

<http://www.bgspanperformingarts.com/instrumental-lessons.html>

Students will be placed with a teacher as soon as a space becomes available.

#### UPCOMING CONCERTS:

##### Key Stage 4 Showcase - Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> February

An informal concert featuring our GCSE students in Years 10 and 11 in solos, and ensembles. £3/£2 entry, tickets on the door only. 6 pm in the Hall.

##### A Level and IB Solo Recitals - Monday 13<sup>th</sup> & Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March, 4 pm in the Hall both days.

Solo recitals from all our Sixth Form Music students, recorded as part of their coursework.

*Miss Swadkin, Head of Music*



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