



**Bexley
Grammar
School**

NEWSLETTER

www.bexleygs.co.uk

9th June 2017

BGS Summer Fayre & Sports Day Tomorrow

Saturday 10th June 2017

We're all set for the Summer Fayre and we're looking forward to seeing you there!

Students in Years 7 to 10 and Year 12 will attend school from 9.30am until approximately 2.45pm. Parents, friends and Years 11 and 13 are welcome to join us from 10.30am to approximately 2.15pm but please note that there will be no parking available on site. Please remember to plan for the day off in lieu on Monday 12th June when the school is closed (apart from public examinations).

It's not too late to donate or to help out the Parents' Association. Please come along to the PA Raffle Stall if you would like to bring a donation or help out.

Fingers crossed for sunshine!

Mrs S Sword, Assistant Head

Sixth Form Psychology trip to Goldsmiths University

On Wednesday 24th May, 11 IB Psychology students attended a lecture hosted by Goldsmiths University in Lewisham on the topic of 'Magic, Lies and Deception'.

Magic is one of the oldest art forms, and for thousands of years, magicians have amazed people with their astonishing illusions. We discovered, from demonstrations by a member of the Magic Circle himself, that magicians have developed very clever psychological tricks that exploit limitations in our cognition, as we perceive less than we think we do, and that which we do perceive can be unreliable.

One prime example of how we were deceived by these illusions and 'magic' tricks were through misdirection of our attention; visual and auditory distractions e.g. snapping fingers, averted our gaze, so we didn't notice that the magician was dropping an object into his lap instead of making it 'disappear'. However, once aware that this misdirection was taking place, we were able to see the object dropping into the magician's lap in an identical repeat of the trick.

We were all excited to also become participants in an experiment investigating attitudes towards psychic abilities. After answering questionnaires about our beliefs and attitudes towards psychic abilities, we witnessed a 'psychic' accurately guess the colour of audience members' 'auras', as well as read an audience member, guessing correctly about her personality and recent life events. However, in our instructions, it was revealed to half of the participants that the 'psychic' was in fact a professional magician, employing common tricks used by psychics such as 'cold reading' (make generic statements which we then fit to apply to our own life), and using a confederate as the 'participant' being read, to confirm that the performer's statements about her life were correct.

After being fully debriefed, we were then asked to refill out the initial questionnaire, to see whether our attitudes towards paranormal abilities had changed after the so-called 'psychic' abilities had been explained through psychological explanations. This was a replication of a real piece of research which, as Dr Gustav Kuhn explained, found that despite participants being fully debriefed about the falsehood of the 'psychic', on a 7-point scale, participants still endorsed psychic abilities at an astonishing 4.4 points on average; demonstrating how rigid and stubborn people's mystical beliefs can be.

In the second talk, Dr Gordon Wright explored our ability to detect lies and deception. Researchers suggest that some people – so-called "Lie Wizards" – are particularly skilled at spotting lies. But for those of us who aren't bestowed with magical powers of lie detection, how can we really detect when we are being lied to? How do we train police to detect lies in investigative interviews? How do we train computers to detect lies in product reviews and online communications?

All the talks we were lucky enough to attend were extremely revealing about our own behaviour and how we can manipulate, or be manipulated by, other people. It was also beneficial for us as psychology students to participate in a real experiment, as we were able to gain an insider's perspective from the mind-set of a participant, as well as see first-hand how research methods are put into practice. For some of us, the lecture day not only provided a useful supplement to our studies, but consolidated our enthusiasm for the subject, which we hope to study at university.

Sapphira McBride, Year 12



Geography field trip to Iceland

From the 30th March to the 3rd April, the Geography department took 20 of their students to Iceland for a fantastic field trip. If we're talking about the ancient feud between the History and Geography Departments, Geography is definitely in the lead! The trip began at 7.15am in the BGS canteen and didn't finish until 10pm Monday night on the 3rd.

As soon as we arrived at Keflavik Airport, we were taken to Gunnhver Geothermal Power Station to see bubbling mud pools and steam vents. It was an incredible sight, especially considering it's where 90% of Iceland's energy comes from. The smell was less incredible. Or maybe, incredible in a unique way. The smell of eggs (sulphur) followed us everywhere... even in the showers at one hotel! However, we all got strangely accustomed to it and it was part of the experience...

In this short article, I couldn't possibly write about every activity we did, seeing as we travelled to four or five places a day, so I'll give you the highlights. On the second day, we went to the Secret Lagoon (similar to the Blue Lagoon, but not as crowded). We got there early in the morning so it was actually empty when we arrived. The water was beautifully clear, surrounded by steaming vents and bubbling pools in the 4-degree Icelandic air. It was so hot in fact, we had to keep getting out to cool off, rather a strange feeling when we considered where we were. The scenery resembled that of something out of *The Hobbit* or *Lord of the Rings*; Bilbo would have felt completely at home – yet it lies in the small village, Flúðir. That was probably the thing I found most striking about Iceland, wherever we were: travelling or visiting a particular site, the scenery was absolutely breath-taking. From deep snow drifts to granite stacks of rock in the wild seas to vast deserted glaciers, the physical environment was awesome.

We also visited many waterfalls, Gullfoss and Hraunfossar being the most spectacular ones. These were 1km wide and the water from Hraunfossar gushed out from under the lava into the Hvítá River. We climbed a volcano, saw powerful geysers erupting to heights of 30m, explored a national park, visited the Mid-Atlantic Ridge and went to Reykjavik, where the Harpa building was particularly dazzling. Each night we went to different guesthouses where the staff were extremely friendly and served great food (not too authentically Icelandic, fortunately). Each night we stayed up in anticipation of the Northern Lights, under clear starry skies. On our very first night the green waves danced delicately across the sky. Our trip had begun.

Molly Johnson and Isobel Kaul, Year 12



IB Students - Researching for their first draft Extended Essay

Next week the Year 12 IB students will be off timetable (Tuesday to Thursday) in order to conduct research and produce their first draft of their Extended Essay.

For those who are not familiar with the workings of the IB Diploma the Extended Essay is an in-depth 4000 word study undertaken by all IB students into an area they are interested in. It is normally undertaken in one of the students Higher Level subjects. The Extended Essay is particularly valued by universities as it is designed to promote independent learning, research and writing skills. IB students often use their experiences in completing their essay in their personal statement in the UCAS application.

Conducting a piece of academic research is challenging for all students and I am sure that parents of the current Year 12 students will have shared in of some of the twists and turns involved in trying to come up with a suitable research question. Our students aren't left on their own however, and every student has a supervisor who is there to help them and guide them through the process. Students will undertake three formal reflection sessions with their supervisor as well as a number of informal meetings before the work is completed.

For the Year 12 students next week is the opportunity to lay the foundations of a successful essay. Students have been well briefed and the expectation is that they will return to school with a substantial preparatory draft completed ready for their second formal meeting with their supervisor before the June 21st.

Best of luck Year 12 and work hard!

Mr Brown, IB Coordinator

BGS Shimmers

A Quick Update...

This week we planned our presentation. We began by brainstorming our presentation style, and by the end of the meeting we came up with a final plan. We based it around the most popular book, Salt to The Sea (by Ruta Sepetys), and we hope it impresses everyone who sees it. We look forward to meeting all of the other schools at the award ceremony who also took part in the award. We also look forward to seeing what they have produced, and can't wait to see the winning book and author. We wish the best to all the books in the running, especially Ruta's! This week we had some brilliant biscuits, with an array of: custard creams, digestives and bourbons. The inventor of all these treats must be one smart cookie! Next week we- Oh crumbs! Got to go! (See what we did there...).

Olivia Harry & Brook Lord, Year 8



Year 9 Immunisations

On 19th June, the Immunisation team will be in school doing DTP and Meningitis injections for Year 9 Students. Forms will be given out to students in class this week, so please could you fill it in and return to reception as soon as possible, even if your child is not having them. If you require an electronic copy of the form please e-mail me at beasley_v@bexleygs.co.uk and I will forward it to you.



Many Thanks.

Mrs Beasley, Reception

Examinations News



Year 11 Students

Please click on the link below to view Mrs Boulden's letter which contains details of arrangements for study leave and other important dates for your diary.

[Year 11 Study Leave arrangements & dates for the diary](#)



Spamalot Tickets

Lovingly ripped off from the classic film comedy MONTY PYTHON AND THE HOLY GRAIL, '**SPAMALOT**' retells the legend of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table, and features many comical situations and bizarre events, including coconuts, flying cows, killer rabbits, and French people! The 2005 Broadway production won three Tony Awards, including "Best Musical," and received 14 Tony Award nominations. Like the film, it is a highly irreverent parody of the Arthurian Legend, but it differs from the film in many ways. One of the musical's creators, Eric Idle, explained the title in a February 2004 press release: "I like the title 'Spamalot' a lot. We tested it with audiences on my recent US tour and they liked it as much as I did, which is gratifying... It comes from a line in the movie which goes: "we eat ham, and jam, and Spam a lot."

The Python phenomenon developed from the television series into something larger in scope and impact, including touring stage shows, films, numerous albums, several books, and a stage musical, and the group's influence on comedy has been compared to the Beatles' influence on music. Our show is a specially produced schools' edition, and can be enjoyed on many levels. However, the show is probably most suited to older children.

**The show will take place at 7.00pm on each of the following nights:
Tuesday 4th – Friday 7th July 2017**

Initially, tickets will be on sale, only for Tuesday, Thursday and Friday evenings. The performance on Wednesday 5th July will be a Gala Performance, following a special viewing of the A level Art Exhibition at 6pm. Therefore, there will only be a limited number of tickets available for this night and they will not be released for sale to the general public until a fortnight before the show.

We anticipate all four nights shows selling out very quickly, so please ensure you book your tickets early. Seating is allocated, and please note that we cannot re-allocate or change ticket orders once seating has been assigned. Refreshments will be served in the interval by our school PA and the World Challenge teams.

Tickets for this fundraising event are now available to buy online, please go to <https://yourboxoffice.co.uk> and choose Bexley Grammar School from the 'Producer' menu. Once you have purchased your tickets, simply print out the confirmation and bring it with you to the show. Tickets cost £8.50 per adult and £6.50 for children/concessions.

I look forward to seeing you at one of the performances!

Miss Swadkin, Director



Forthcoming Events**June**

Saturday 10th ~ Sports Day & Summer Fayre (normal school day for students)

Monday 12th ~ **Day off in lieu of Sports Day/Summer Fayre**

Friday 16th ~ ECM Day

Tuesday 27th ~ Sixth Form Induction Day

Thursday 29th ~ Sixth Form Induction Day

July

Tuesday 4th ~ Spamalot Production

Wednesday 5th ~ **Gala Evening** including Art & Design Exhibition and Spamalot Production

Thursday 6th ~ Spamalot Production

Friday 7th ~ Spamalot Production