



## Trip to Japan October 2017

### Japan Trip for Current Years 9 - 12

The Modern Language Department would like to open up the invitation to all current Year 9 - 12 students who would like to join the trip to Japan from 19<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> October 2017. The trip includes sight-seeing in Kyoto, Hiroshima and Tokyo as well as a visit to a prestigious school, Keio High School. In fact, part of the trip will be a homestay in pairs with families from the school (with which we have already forged a connection) so that students can really experience the Japanese way of life. We would hope that you would be able to reciprocate a homestay of a few days the following year, though this is not obligatory and can be discussed at a later date.

This promises to be an incredible opportunity for anyone interested in Japanese culture, or simply travelling - students do not need to be studying Japanese in order to partake. The trip will cost in the region of £1600, hopefully less, for everything. The letter and forms for signing up are on the website or can be obtained by contacting [bgstrips@bexleygs.co.uk](mailto:bgstrips@bexleygs.co.uk). **The initial deposit of £300 was due for today, Friday 6<sup>th</sup> January, but we will of course extend it if you contact me directly, stating your interest and intention by Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> January.** Alternatively, if you would like more information, please contact [Everett\\_M@bexleygs.co.uk](mailto:Everett_M@bexleygs.co.uk) or read the following report from the 2016 trip to Japan.

*Mrs Everett, Modern Foreign Languages*



*Students who travelled to Japan in 2016*

## Memories of the School trip to Japan - July 2016

On the 11<sup>th</sup> July, 11 BGS students in Years 10 - 13, along with Mrs Everett and Mr Martin-Lopez went on a school trip to Japan. Over the thirteen days we were there, we did various activities which enriched our understanding and appreciation of the Japanese culture and of the country itself.

The first four days were spent in the Mie Prefecture, the southern area of the main island of Honshu. During our time there, we visited a local high school: *Kawagoe Prefectural High School*, and we observed the multiple sporting events taking place, as it was their sports day. Afterwards, we participated in a tea ceremony, Karate and calligraphy sessions. We attended the Karate practice session and it was fun. At the end of the day, the host families were kind enough to throw a BBQ party for us.

Other things we did during our stay in the first city include visiting the Nagoya Castle, which dates back to the 17<sup>th</sup> Century; visiting -*Ōsu*, a popular shopping district in Nagoya; and visiting a Ninja museum, where we had the opportunity to attempt shuriken throwing, which is definitely harder than it looks.

The next city we went to was Kyoto, where we stayed at a youth hostel. In the city, a few of us went to the main city during the night to see a famous Gion Festival procession taking place. As Kyoto is renowned for its many temples, we also visited two temples in the area: *Kinkaku-ji* the Golden Temple and *Kiyomizu-dera*, the temple built on a cliff known for its three streams which represents beauty, longevity and wisdom. We also had the opportunity to see traditional performances in a theatre in the Gion District, the most well-known geisha district in Japan.

On one of the days in Kyoto we took a bullet train west to the city of Hiroshima, to donate our 1000 cranes to the Peace Park and visit the War Museum. We also had the lucky opportunity of meeting one of the few remaining atomic bomb survivors, who gave us a presentation and inspired us to strive for a future without conflict.

Our last stop on the trip was the Tokyo metropolitan area. We stayed with the families of our partner students who attend *Keio Shonan Fujisawa High School*, which is one of the prestigious schools in Japan. On one of the days we visited the school. We were given a tour of the sites, as the junior high, senior high and university buildings were on the same campus. Afterwards, we did activities with our partner students, such as calligraphy, participating in a tea ceremony and a traditional card game called "Karuta".

Other places we visited while in the Tokyo area include visiting *Asakusa*, which has the *Sensō-ji* temple; *Harajuku*, the area known for its eccentric fashion; and *Akihabara* Electric Town, a district popular with lovers of anime and manga.

In all, the Japan trip is a trip I definitely recommend going on. It has improved my knowledge in Japanese history and it has offered me an insight into a culture different to that of western countries. This trip is open to students in Years 10 - 12, so make sure you apply for the next one.

*Fatima Mansaray, Year 13*



## House Swimming Gala

The Annual House Swimming Gala was held on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> December at Crook Log Leisure centre with competitors from Years 7 and 8 taking part; some Year 7 and 8 pupils were able to come along and spectate. Between the spectators and the competitors it was a deafening experience! Every House was able to enter a competitor for every race, and the whole gala ran very smoothly thanks to the PE department.

The winners of the individual events were: Roisin Wynne, Lucas Zurdo Symons, Marina Thwaites, Ethan Hosier, Kacey-May Smith, Harvey Gosling, Isabelle Fosh, David Langley, Isabel Daly, Lewis Bailey, Elsbeth Bradley, Oscar Zurdo Symons.

*Mrs Snelling, Head of House*



## Young Carers

### Kids That Care



Bexley Grammar Young Carers

Take a break  
come and join us  
on our evenings out

Email

[haslam\\_c@bexleygs.co.uk](mailto:haslam_c@bexleygs.co.uk)

## Forthcoming Events

### January

**Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup>** ~ Year 12 Parents' Evening

**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

## News items you may have missed

### Adult Language Evening Classes

After a very successful first term, our language assistants are continuing to offer adult evening classes in French, Spanish, German and Italian, as well as individual tuition on a private basis. So whether you're looking to brush up for a holiday, are looking to master the basics or to get a little bit more fluency and confidence with a language you already know, there's something for you.



There will be 3 levels of language available:

**Beginners** (suitable for people with little to no experience in the language, or anyone not having taken the course from September): **6.00pm - 7.15pm**

**Beginners Plus** (suitable for those with basic knowledge - even if from a few/many years ago, or those who took the Beginners course from September): **7.15pm - 8.15pm**



**Intermediate** (suitable for those with knowledge of tenses and some confidence, but wanting to improve or brush up): **8.15pm - 9.15pm**

The courses will take place on Wednesdays, commencing on the 11<sup>th</sup> January, in the L block (please park in the lower car park or drive around to park in the Le Feuvre playground to ease access during the building works.) This will be an 11 week course for £135 (not including the half term Wednesday) - cheques made payable directly to the assistants, paid at the first lesson.

In order to confirm your place on the course, please email the relevant assistant (email address below.)

Private lessons for adults or students cost £20 per hour and can be arranged directly through the assistants, whose email addresses are:

[Nott\\_A@bexleygs.co.uk](mailto:Nott_A@bexleygs.co.uk) (Ann-Kathrin; German)

[Legalois\\_C@bexleygs.co.uk](mailto:Legalois_C@bexleygs.co.uk) (Charlene; French)

[Debernard\\_M@bexleygs.co.uk](mailto:Debernard_M@bexleygs.co.uk) (Marzia; Italian)

[Guardiola\\_C@bexleygs.co.uk](mailto:Guardiola_C@bexleygs.co.uk) (Carlos; Spanish)

Many thanks for your interest,

*Mrs Meyer, Head of MFL*

## Oxford University Computer Science Fair

On a hazy Wednesday morning I woke up at 4.30am, dazed but excited. Today was the day I was going to Oxford University for their Computer Science Fair. I was lucky enough to be chosen by Mr Collins and the Computer Science Department to join a group of 8 students from BGS to attend a fair that was designed to attract young talent in the UK.

At 7.30am we caught a train from Paddington Station to Oxford and from there travelled to the University for a 9.30am start. We arrived and saw what seemed to live up to Oxford's reputation; dreamy spires and old beautiful buildings. We made

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

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



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

All in all this trip really cemented for me the fact that I want to study Computer Science at university. Even if not at Oxford, seeing what is possible if I put my mind to it and seeing what amazing opportunities there are available to us, really inspired me.

So, about those exams...

*Jeevan Bhogal, Year 11*

## **Bar Mock Trial Competition 2016**

On 26<sup>th</sup> November 2016, a group of 14 Sixth Formers travelled to the Inner London Crown Court, to be pitted against other London schools in two law trials: one of witness intimidation and the other of assault. For the second time, Bexley Grammar School participated in the Citizenship Foundation's Bar Mock Trial. Jack Dalton, Sam Sherr, Cathryn Harding, Alex Sutcliffe, Noah Robinson and I all acted as prosecution and defence barristers, which was a great learning experience for us, as the trials were judged by professional judges who were kind enough to help out on a Saturday. Sam Co, Swechha Kansakar, Laura Castel-Hallier, Georgina Leeson, Suzanne Nasery, Tiann Odogwu remained calm under the pressure of their role as witnesses. And finally, Kristine Tran and Jess Kelleher worked diligently as the court officials.



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

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

*Abisola Bishi, Year 12*

